

Not Cute

By Philip Bunting

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Once there was a quokka.
Quokka was very cute.
But Quokka did not like being cute.
Not one bit...

This is the romping, stomping, chomping tale of one stubbornly adorable marsupial. But beneath its many costumes, *Not Cute* is a simple story about self-acceptance, listening to others, and not succumbing to your own delusions.



Themes:

- Quokkas
- Self-acceptance
- Listening to others
- Perceptions
- Australian animals

Discussion Questions and Activities:

- Can you tell, just by looking at the cover, which animal the story is about?
- Do you know what a quokka is? You might want to show a few photos of real life quokkas to the class before or after reading.
- Quokka did not want to be called cute. Why do you think that was the case?
- What does 'cute' mean? When you think of the word cute, what immediately comes to mind?
- Can you recall some of the things that Quokka wanted to be instead? E.g. scary, dangerous.
- What animal did Quokka associate with each of these attributes? Do you associate those attributes with those animals too? Think of another attribute for each animal in the story.
- Which attribute would you most like to have and why?
- Why do you think Quokka was so intent on not listening to those around him?
- Can you remember a time when you were headstrong like Quokka was?
- Did the ending of the story surprise you? If so, how and why?
- There is a quote at the back of the book by Aesop - "The stubborn listen to nobody's advice and become a victim of their own delusions." Discuss this and how it relates to Quokka in this story.

Activity:

- In small groups, conduct a research project on quokkas. Find out at least five interesting facts about them, including where they live, and what they eat.