

ELASTIC ISLAND ADVENTURES

Blong the Cat's Costume Caper

By Karen McMillan

Published by Duckling Publishing

About the Book

From the bestselling *Elastic Island Adventures* series comes a delightful stand-alone book featuring one of its favourite characters, Blong the Cat.

Blong goes shopping to buy a special outfit to wear to a wedding, but not everyone likes his choices! A story of costumes, numbers and dancing, all wrapped up in a bow of kindness.

Blong the Cat is based on the real-life cat who Karen and her husband adopted from Vanuatu to live with them in Auckland. Just like the fictional cat, Blong loves cuddles and music.

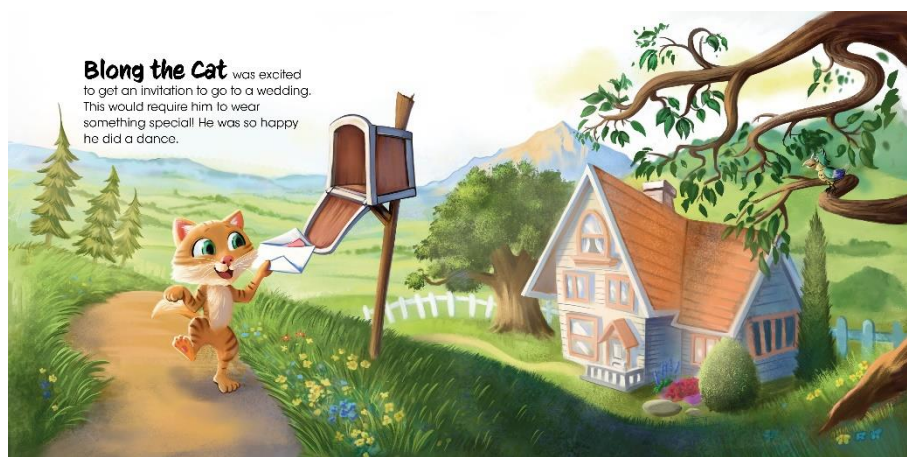


About the Author

Karen McMillan lives in New Zealand, and she has written a bunch of bestselling books for adults but is now enjoying writing the popular *Elastic Island Adventures* books for children.

Illustrations

The illustrations are by Dmitry Chizhov, who lives in Russia. The illustrations are colourful, imaginative and fun. Blong is based on the author's real-life cat, and Emma and Ethan also are characters in the *Elastic Island Adventures* series of books for older children aged 8 to 12 years.



Writing Style

The story is written in third-person point of view prose in a 36-page picture book. Blong the Cat has been invited to a wedding, so Emma takes him shopping to buy something special to wear. Blong is excited and dances in front of the mirror as he tries on different outfits. Unfortunately, Emma's brother Ethan doesn't want to be there, and he is thoughtlessly unkind to Blong with what he says. Blong tries on increasingly more absurd costumes until everything reaches a climax, and Ethan realises that he has upset Blong. Ethan apologises, Blong decides on what he wants to wear, and all is resolved.

There is lots of fun alliteration and repetition in this book. *Bling-Blong, Cling-Clong, Ding-Dong..* And children learn a lot of positive, encouraging words, such as *handsome, fetching, attractive...*

The book is suitable for children 3 to 7 years but can also be read to children a little younger, and an older child may also enjoy the story.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Look at the cover. What do you think the tone of the story might be?
- How has the author set the scene on the first page?
- What do you think of Blong the Cat?
- How would you describe Emma after meeting her on the second spread in the book?
- Why do you think Ethan doesn't want to go shopping with Emma and Blong?
- There are ten costumes in the book. Which one do you like best?
- There are ten dances in the book. What sort of music would go with each dance?
- Did you notice the shoes on the bottom right-hand corner in the book? Can you count to ten using the shoes as your guide?
- There are a lot of words that rhyme with 'Blong'. Can you name some of these words?
- Near the end of the book, why is Blong so upset?
- Do you think Ethan meant to be unkind, or was it an accident? Was it a good thing that he apologised? What lesson did Ethan learn from this experience?
- What do you think of Blong's final choice of costume? Do you like the bow tie, or would you have picked something else?

Activities

ACTIVITY 1: DANCE PERFORMANCE

There are many different types of dance styles in this book. Choose a song that you like and try one of the dances from the book to perform.

ACTIVITY: COSTUME FUN

Blong the Cat tries on 10 different outfits. Think of a costume you would like to wear and draw a picture!

