

# Swindon

Coate Water Park Story Trail



# Welcome

This trail is aimed at children aged 2 to 5 and their families and carers.

Follow the map and the story of Uncle Josh, Mia, Kai and Tufty the dog to explore your park. What can you see and do? Can you tick off each activity?

Remember to stay safe, keep your distance from other families and sanitise your hands.

Read the story aloud to your little explorers and have fun chatting and playing along the route.

You may want to bring some blank paper and pencils so your little ones can make the most out of the trail – we would love to see photos of your little ones carrying out the activities!

This walk will take up to **30 mins** depending on your pace.

**Tufty**



**Mia**



**Uncle Josh**



**Kai**



# Coate Water Park Story Trail

## Sites

- 1 Diving board
- 2 Picnic spot and mini harbour
- 3 Tree-lined path
- 4 Hollowed-out tree
- 5 Mini golf hill to roll down and sandpit



# Diving board

1

What's that?' asked Mia, pointing to a set of large, white-grey stone steps jutting out of the lake water.

'The old diving board?' asked Uncle Josh.

'Really? It looks more like... a mast from a shipwreck.'

'Wow!' said Kai, Mia's little brother.

'Wow indeed,' said Uncle Josh.

**'What happened to the ship?'**

'Well!' said Mia. 'This is actually a magic lake. And the ship got lost here. And it crashed! And all the sailors and passengers turned into...'

'Swan!' called Kai, pointing to the elegant white birds swimming across the lake.

**'They all turned into swans,'**

said Mia.

Uncle Josh's dog Tufty pulled on his lead and yapped.

'Come on,' said Uncle Josh. 'Let's start walking.'

'No, let's glide like swans,' said Mia. She and Kai put their arms out and flapped as they ran.

Kai giggled. 'Flying!' he said.

Can YOU fly  
or glide like  
a swan?





2

# Picnic spot and mini harbour

Tufty scampered over to the water's edge by the picnic spot. 'Careful!' said Uncle Josh.

'Swans!' said Kai.

'There are lots more swans,' said Mia.

**'Look! Look!  
A black swan!'**

Sure enough, a black swan swam into the mini harbour next to them.

'That's the shipwreck captain,' said Mia. 'He's practising for when he turns back into a human.'

*Toot toot!* A deep honking sound came from across the lake.

'What do you think that noise was?' asked Uncle Josh.

'Train?' asked Kai.

'It was the swan captain, blowing the underwater ship horn,' said Mia.

Uncle Josh laughed. 'Maybe it was both!'

*Yap!* barked Tufty.

**What else can you see across the lake?** Use your pencil and paper to write down all the different colours you can see, or you could draw a picture of the lake!



3

# Tree-lined path

Kai ran after Tufty through the tree-lined path, but tripped up on a tree root and fell over.

**‘Ow!’**

Kai burst into tears.

Uncle Josh picked him up and dusted off his knees.  
‘Shush, it’s okay.’

***Cheep cheep cheep!***

Can you play hide-and-seek between the trees?



Kai stopped crying and listened.  
‘Birds?’ he asked.

Mia smiled. Birds always cheered her little brother up. But something else made him even happier. She covered her eyes and counted to ten loudly.

**‘Hiding!’**

said Kai, and he ran around behind the nearest tree.

Then they played hide-and-seek all the way down the tree-lined path.

# Hollowed-out tree

4

Mia ran ahead but Kai stopped by a fork in the path. 'Tired,' he said.

Uncle Josh picked up Kai. 'Can you see Mia? Where's Mia?' she asked.

Then – 'BOO!' – Mia jumped out from a hollowed-out tree.

'Wow!' said Kai, wriggling down to stand in the tree, too.

They walked back a little way and sat on the bench by the fork in the path.

'That was a magic tree, you know,' said Mia.

'It was?' asked Uncle Josh.

'Yes!' said Mia. 'Once upon a time, there was a boat that got lost in a magic lake. It crashed! And all the sailors turned into beautiful white swans and the captain turned into a black swan. Some of the sailors really liked being swans. It's a very pretty lake and the people who visit feed them tasty seeds. But some other sailors really wanted to turn human again. So they found the magic tree and said the magic word.'

**Can you spot any other unusual trees or plants?**



Do you think any of them are magic?

'Abracadabra!' said Kai.

Mia nodded. 'Exactly. Then they turned around three times inside the tree and... ta-da! They became people again!'

'But the captain is still the black swan?' asked Uncle Josh.

'Yes, she shows the other swans the magic,' said Mia.

'Of course,' said Uncle Josh.

*Yap yap yap!* said Tufty, meaning that it was time to head back.



# Mini golf hill to roll down and sand pit

**What was your favourite thing you saw in the park today?** Use your pencil and paper to write down or draw a picture of your favourite part!



‘Can we stay and play in the sand pit?’ asked Mia.

Tufty ran off to the sand and Uncle Josh laughed. ‘Of course!’ she said.

‘Look!’ called Mia, and they all looked up to see the black swan fly overhead.

Mia and Kai twirled like flying swans all the way back to the mini golf course.

‘Hill!’ yelled Kai and ran up the little hill, then rolled down it again. Mia joined in.





# Well done, you made it to the end of the Story Trail!

We would love to have your feedback. Please click here to answer some questions and be in with the chance of winning a prize!

**Click here to complete this short survey**

You can find more fun activities to add to your routine at **wordsforlife.org.uk** and **hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk**

You can also join the online conversation using the hashtag **#HLMStoryTrails**



@SwindonStories



@Literacy\_Trust



@literacy\_trust



National Literacy Trust

**National Literacy Trust**  
68 South Lambeth Road  
London, SW8 1RL

Author: **Rebecca Lewis-Oakes**

Illustrator: **Aaron Cushley**

Local partner: **Swindon Stories and Swindon Early Years Team**



Swindon Libraries

