

The Girl and the Duck



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Mia lived in a small house at the end of a winding lane. Every morning, she pulled on her yellow rain boots and blue overalls. She loved to explore the world around her. One sunny day, she followed a path she had never taken before. It led to a sparkling pond hidden behind tall reeds. Mia wondered what she might find there. (61 words)



At the edge of the pond, a plump white duck with a cream chest and a bright orange bill paddled in circles. Its cheerful upturned tail wiggled as it swam. Mia crouched down and whispered, "Hello, little duck!" The duck tilted its glossy dark eyes and quacked softly. Mia smiled, and her freckles crinkled. She knew she had found a new friend. (62 words)



The duck waddled onto the bank and shook its feathers. Mia noticed something shiny in the water near the reeds. It was a crumpled juice box and some old leaves floating on the surface. "Oh dear," Mia said. "This pond should be clean and fresh for you." The duck quacked as if it agreed. Mia decided right then to help. (59 words)



Mia looked around and found a wooden stick. She used it to fish out the juice box and other bits of litter. Then she scooped up handfuls of soggy leaves and piled them under a bush. The duck watched with its head tilted, curious. "There," Mia said. "That's better already." The water looked a little clearer, and the duck splashed happily. (63 words)



The next day, Mia brought a small bag for collecting trash. She walked slowly around the pond, picking up every bit she could find. She found a plastic bottle, a paper cup, and some tangled string. The duck followed her, quacking softly. "You're helping too," Mia laughed. "Your little feet stir up the water and show me what to clean." (63 words)



As the days passed, Mia learned more about what ducks need. She asked her neighbor, Mr. Lee, who kept ducks of his own. "Ducks need clean water to swim in and healthy food to eat," he told her. "And they need a safe, tidy place to call home." Mia nodded and thought about her pond. She wanted it to be perfect for her feathered friend. (67 words)



Mia decided to make the pond a proper sanctuary. She cleared away broken branches and old leaves that had piled up along the bank. She made sure no sharp sticks stuck out of the muddy edges. The duck waddled behind her, inspecting her work. "We'll make this the best home for you," Mia said. The duck flapped its wings and quacked with delight. (64 words)



One afternoon, Mia noticed that the water looked cloudy after a big rainstorm. She worried that the duck might not like it. She remembered that clean water was important. So she used a small net to skim off floating twigs and leaves. Slowly, the pond began to sparkle again. The duck dove under and came up with a happy splash. (62 words)



Mia also learned that ducks need good food. She asked Mr. Lee what to feed her friend. "Ducks love grains and greens," he said. "But don't give them bread—it's not healthy for them." Mia nodded and brought a handful of oats and some chopped lettuce. The duck gobbled them up and quacked for more. "You're a hungry little friend," Mia giggled. (66 words)



Word spread about the clean pond, and soon other ducks flew in to visit. They paddled and splashed and dove for tasty water plants. Mia was delighted to see so many new friends. "Your home is a happy place now," she told her first duck. The duck puffed out its cream chest and quacked proudly, as if to say, "I know!" (63 words)



Then one morning, Mia saw that someone had left a plastic bag near the pond. It was tangled in the reeds. "Oh no," she said. "This could hurt a duck." She carefully pulled it out and put it in her trash bag. The duck swam close and nudged her boot with its orange bill. Mia felt glad she could keep her friend safe. (63 words)



Mia realized that caring for animals means caring for their home, too. Every day, she visited the pond with her trash bag and her net. She picked up litter and cleared old leaves. She made sure the water stayed fresh and clean. The duck and its friends swam happily in the sparkling pond. Mia felt proud to help. (61 words)



The duck quacked with joy and splashed its wings. It swam right up to Mia and tilted its head. "You like it, don't you?" Mia said softly. The duck quacked again, louder this time, and did a little dance in the water. Mia laughed and clapped her hands. She knew her hard work had made a real difference. (61 words)



Now the pond is a happy, healthy place for the duck and all its friends. They paddle in the clear water and rest on the clean banks. Mia visits every day to say hello and make sure everything is tidy. She loves watching the ducks swim and dive. She knows that a clean home makes a big difference for her animal friends. (63 words)



Mia learned that even small acts of care can make a big difference. By picking up litter and keeping the water clean, she gave the duck a safe and happy home. The duck quacks its thanks every time she comes near. And Mia smiles, knowing that caring for animals means caring for their world, too. (57 words)



So if you ever visit the pond behind the tall reeds, you might see a girl in yellow boots and blue overalls. She'll be there with her bag, keeping the water clear and the banks tidy. And a plump white duck with an orange bill will swim right up to her, quacking with joy. That's Mia and her duck, in their happy, healthy home. (65 words)