

Olli and the Upside-Down Sign

A helpful message begins with its reader.



Olli was making signs for a riverside picnic. He painted a bright arrow on a wooden board, then carried it to the place where two garden paths met.



He added a basket picture, then tied the board to a low branch. The arrow pointed towards the picnic clearing. 'Now everyone will find us,' he said, pleased with his careful work.



But when Duck arrived, she waddled down the other path. Olli hurried after her. 'The picnic is this way!' Duck looked puzzled. 'I followed your arrow,' she said.



Olli went back to the sign. A breeze had turned it upside down. The arrow pointed the wrong way. He untied the board and fastened both ends securely.



Next came Wombat. She walked straight past. 'Didn't you see the sign?' Olli asked. Wombat shook her head. The hanging leaves had hidden it from her view.



Olli crouched to Wombat's height. He could hardly see the arrow either. He moved the board to a clear wooden post beside the path, below the leaves.



Then Frog arrived from the stream. He stopped behind the sign. The back was plain wood. 'Which way?' he called. Olli had forgotten that friends came from different directions.



He walked around the post and looked from every path. With Duck holding the paint pot, he added a second arrow on the back, pointing towards the clearing.



Frog studied the new arrow. 'What is over there?' he asked. Olli fetched his brush again and painted a little picnic basket on this side too, round and easy to recognise.



Now the sign showed a basket and the right direction. Wombat tried the path first. Duck came from the garden. Frog hopped up from the stream. Everyone found the clearing.



Olli arrived carrying the last bowl. His sign was not very fancy. One basket handle was wobbly. But it had helped all his friends find their way.



After lunch, Olli took the sign down for next time. Before painting another message, he knew what he would do: stand where someone else would stand and look.

The End

A little story. A moment to share.

What did you notice?

Which moment would you like to talk about?



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