

What can you see in the picture?

Who do you think these people could be?

Who do you think is jealous?



Look at the following words. What do you think the story is about?

king wife *castle*

4 children jealous magic

swans *900 years* lonely



The Children of Lir

A Once upon a time, King Lir lived with his wife and four children: Fionnuala, Aodh, Fiachra and Conn, in a castle in the Irish countryside. When Lir's wife **passed away**, they were all heartbroken. After several years, Lir was introduced to another woman called Aoife; they soon got married.

Aoife was a jealous woman and believed that Lir adored his children more than her. Before long, Aoife decided **to get rid of** the children.

B One warm day in the summer, when Aoife was **looking after** the children, she decided to take the children swimming in a lake near the castle. The children were really **looking forward to** their day out. When the children were playing in the water, Aoife suddenly took a magic wand from her coat and waved it at the children. There was a flash of light and the children disappeared. Now, in their place, were four beautiful white swans.

C Aoife laughed, "Now, you will be swans for nine hundred years, until you hear the ring of a Christian bell".

Aoife raced back to the castle and told Lir that the four children had drowned in the lake. Lir **broke down** before racing down to the lake, but all he could see were four beautiful swans. One of the swans suddenly spoke. It was Fionnuala. She explained that Aoife had **turned** them **into** swans. Lir spent the rest of his life by the lake and when Lir died, many years later, the children were again heartbroken. They had now lost both their parents.

D The children lived a lonely life for hundreds of years. Early one morning, they couldn't believe their ears; it was the sound of a Christian bell. They were all instantly **turned back** in to humans. Fionnuala put her arms around her brothers and they all suddenly fell on the ground. A monk **came across** them by the lake and buried them all together in one grave. That night he had a dream of four swans flying through the clouds. He then knew the children of Lir would be reunited with their parents in heaven.

