



Adventures close to home



## Cosmic Comic Capers

### Westport Lake

An out-of-this-world wildlife adventure!

[storyquest.org.uk](http://storyquest.org.uk)

f - StokeLiteracyTrust

This story trail will guide you on an out-of-this-world adventure around Westport Lake.

Story Quest is a free activity for your family to enjoy together in your local area. These exciting story trails make reading fun, with written and physical challenges to do along the way. You can find out cool Stoke facts, explore local places, and travel through time to uncover Stoke-on-Trent's history and nature. There are so many stories for you to explore.



### **Starting point:**

Green Door, next to Westport Lake car park.

### **Trail information:**

This trail is a 2 kilometer circular route which takes you around Westport Lake, through a woodland path, around a small lake and finishes at a playground. The route is wheelchair and pram friendly.

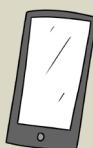
### **Time needed:**

Around 1 hour depending on how long you spend completing the challenges.

### **Before you begin:**

You might want to pack...

- Phone or camera to take some pictures
- A pencil and notebook



## **CAPTURE YOUR QUEST**

Every time you see the phone symbol, take a photo to capture your quest!

# MEET THE ADVENTURERS!



**Zosia**

[Age 7]

Loves muddy ditches and taking pictures



**Babcia**

[Age, never you mind!]

Loves puzzling words and watching birds



**Antoni**

[Age 10]

Loves comic books and scuttling bugs



**Marthania**

Loves exploring new planets, flying her spaceship and amazing her mates with fascinating facts



**Marzoid**

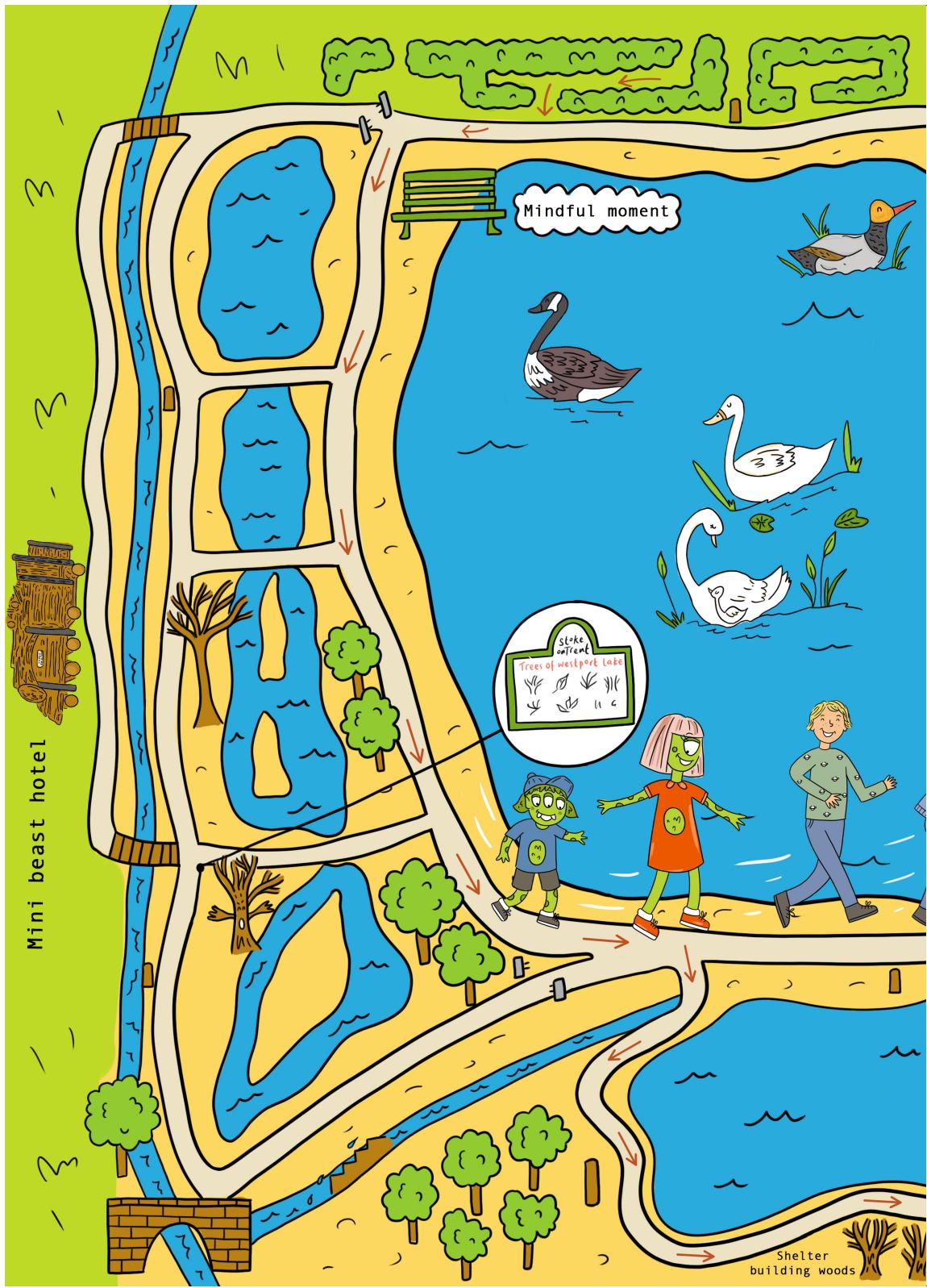
Enjoys playing games, adventuring in the awesome outdoors and solving brain boggling puzzles



In partnership with



**LOTTERY FUNDED**





# Cosmic Comic Capers



One sunny afternoon, something strange happened in the city of Stoke-on-Trent. First a rosy glow appeared through a cloud hovering over Westport Lake. Then a silver flying saucer emerged from the cloud. Next, when its Martian pilots found what they were looking for, the saucer shimmered down and landed on the lake.

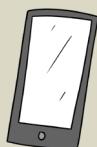
## OVER TO YOU! Wildlife explorers warm up.

**P**hew! After landing their flying saucer, the Martians need to stretch and relax. To show them how, extend your arms and move them in an outward motion, as if you're swimming breast stroke.

“Wizz-waxx-afoon\*!@,” said Marzoid, which is how Martians say ‘what a lovely afternoon’.

“Stop speaking Martian!” Marthania warned. “Don’t you remember, the Humanoids of Stoke mustn’t realise we’re from Mars.”

“I remember,” Marzoid replied, in Humanoid English this time. “And I remember that we’re here on a secret research mission to find out about the wildlife wonders of Planet Earth.”



## CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

Take a selfie of you and your fellow Story Questers at the start of your Secret Mission!

"I can't wait to see all the wildlife here," said Marzoid.

"In fact, I think I can spot some birds already!"

"Isn't it exciting. This lake is beautiful! Look, there's a sign on that building that might help us with our mission," said Marthania. "And those three Humanoids might be able to tell us the best places to visit."



## OVER TO YOU!

Find the Green Door building and make your way to the project sign to answer these questions:

1. What kind of people is Stoke-on-Trent blessed with?

2. Can you identify some of the wildlife wonders shown on the sign?

Fill in the blanks below:

K   G     R

B  T   R   Y

D R  G   F

D

C   T



"Hello, lovely to meet you. Are you here for a walk?" said the tallest of the three Humanoids. "We're here so my granddaughter can practice her wildlife photography and my grandson can look for ideas for his new comic strip. He usually writes about space, so this is a challenge for him. Let's hope inspiration strikes soon."

"I think it just struck," said the middle-sized Humanoid. "You look familiar," he remarked, through narrowed eyes. "Have we met before?"

"That's impossible. We're not from round here.

I'm Marthania, and this is my friend Marzoid."

"Hi, I'm Ant. This is Zosia, and this is our Babcia."

"You're an ant?!" gulped Marzoid. "I thought ants were tiny six-legged creatures."



## OVER TO YOU!

### Ants in Your Pants-ercise

Warm yourself up for your cosmic Story Quest by wobbling and jiggling and jumping as if you have ants in your pants!

"My brother's not an ant, silly!" Zosia giggled. "Ant is short for 'Antoni', but he likes insects and stuff, so he shortened his name." "Marzoid was only joking," Marthania hurriedly explained before their true identity was revealed. "We're really interested in things like ants. That's why we're here. We heard Westport Lake is a good place for wildlife wonders."

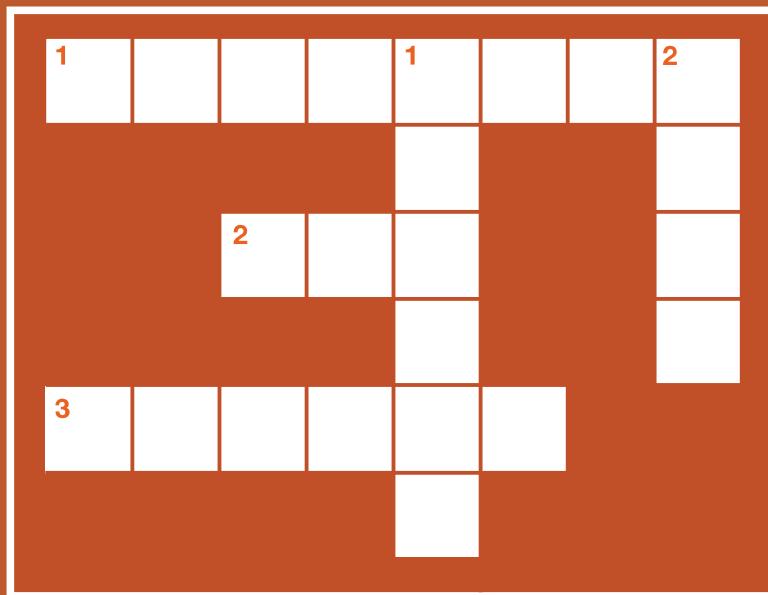
"You heard right!" gleamed Babcia. "I know the perfect route around the lake for you. Come with us and I'll show you on the sign."

## OVER TO YOU!

### History Mystery

Find the sign by the lake that says 'Welcome to Westport Lake' to help you complete this crossword.

**CLUE:** the sign is next to the lake in between Green Door and the visitors centre.



#### ACROSS

1. What was the surname of the fair owner?
2. What glass container could be used to pay for fairground rides?
3. What type of firing ovens used to be common in the area?

#### DOWN

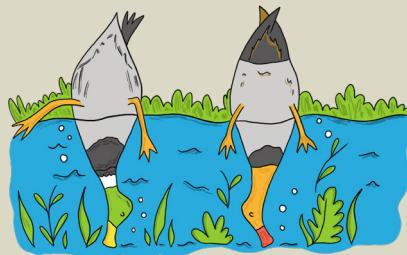
1. What cottage was built in 1824?
2. A bottle oven is a type of what?

"Fascinating stuff," said Marthania.

"Don't forget the wildlife wonders!" Babcia reminded.

"The sign also shows the birds we could spot here."

"Great, we'll see if we can find any of those on the way around," said Zosia. "Let's get going".



## OVER TO YOU!

### Reach for the Stars

Follow in Zosia's footsteps by heading past the Visitor's Centre, anti-clockwise on the path around the lake. Stop when you see a post marked with the number six.

**TOP TIP:** It is a short wooden post with a little duck carved into it, by a green bench.

When you find the bench, reach for the stars by doing six star jumps!



“Reaching for the stars is FUN!” panted Marzoid, leaping with such force that his cap flew into the air.

“You might want to check your head,” Ant frowned. “I’m pretty sure I saw a green worm wiggling around on it.”

“What a wild imagination you have, pet!” chirped Babcia. “Must come from reading all those comic books.”

“Maybe,” Ant shrugged. “Or maybe I really saw something,” he added under his breath. “Either way, I’m gathering loads of amazing material for my comic strip project.”

“Talking of amazing,” Zosia winked. “I know a place that’s exactly that!”

## OVER TO YOU!

### A-maze-ing Cosmic Capers

Continue along the path to find the a-maze-ing place Zosia mentioned.

Why not pretend to be a comic book character as you explore the woodland maze that runs alongside the path? You could be a super- hero, or an intergalactic Martian!



"Well that was fun!" said Zosia as she sat down on a bench overlooking the lake. They needed a rest after all that running around in the maze. "Let's take a quiet moment here and see what wildlife we can spot."

## OVER TO YOU!

### Take a mindful moment

After losing (and finding!) yourself in the maze, have a rest on the bench that has a beautiful view across the lake and take four deep breaths – look on the map to help you find it.



Now take in the view across the lake. Can you see...

1. Something fluffy?
2. Something white?
3. Something round?
4. Something bright?

After the eco-explorers finished their rest, it was time to continue their adventure around the lake.

"Lovely, isn't it?" said Zosia, capturing the scene with her camera.



## CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

Take a landscape photo of the lovely view across the lake.



"Beautiful," Marzoid agreed. "We don't have lakes on Mar..."

"Let's carry on exploring" Marthania jumped in before Marzoid gave the game away – again!

# OVER TO YOU!

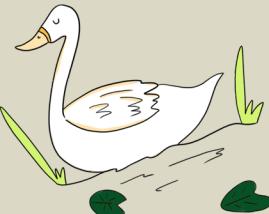
As you continue along the path around the lake, join our Martian mates in a wildlife spotting adventure. Keep a look out for the animals listed below and tick them off as you see them.



Ducks



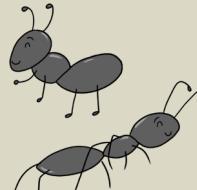
Swans



Canadian Geese



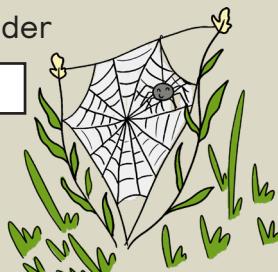
Squirrel



Ants



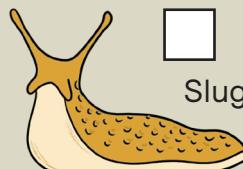
Spider



Coot



Slug



“Wow, we have so many animals to write about in our secret report on Earth’s wildlife,” exclaimed Marzoid.

“Don’t you mean in our school report!” corrected Marthania.

Ant looked at them both suspiciously, but he decided not to say anything as he was getting so many ideas for his next comic!

“I’ve got a great idea for your report. Follow me!” said Zosia as she took a right off the main lake.



## OVER TO YOU!



As you make your way back toward to visitors centre, keep a look out for a small lake on your right (use your map to help you find it). Walk right around the lake and stop when you find the small wooded area.

### Make Dazzling Dens



Gather loose leaves, twigs, stones and feathers from the ground and build some homely dens for the wildlife you’ve spotted on your journey. This could be an ant apartment, or a squirrel sanctuary. Have fun and explore.



After building a host of habitats, the group headed towards the car park. It wasn’t long before Marzoid spotted something amazing.

“What are those metal and wooden frameworks over there?” he asked, pointing ahead to the right. “Are they Humanoid dens?”

“That’s the playground, silly! Let’s go!” Zosia laughed.

## OVER TO YOU!

Introduce Marzoid and Marthania to your favorite bits of the playground. When it’s time for a rest, take a seat and enjoy the end of this trail.

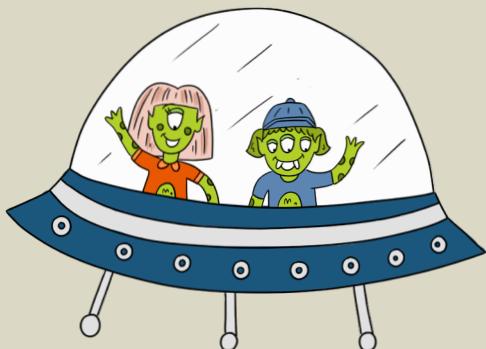
After a LOT of zipping, zooming, whizzing and whooshing, everyone took a seat at the picnic table.

"Thank you for such a fun, informative day," said Marthania.

After saying their goodbyes, Babcia turned to Ant and Zosia. "I'm feeling a bit peckish after all that exploring. Pass the sandwiches, Ant."

As he rummaged in his rucksack, Ant's eyes began to boggle. "You're not going to believe this." Hands trembling, he showed Babcia and Zosia the comic book he'd been reading. There, on the cover, were the words "Martian Quest" and a picture of two alien creatures that looked exactly like Marthania and Marzoid.

"I knew they looked familiar, and now I know exactly what my new comic strip will be about - today's adventure! But there's a problem." Ant sighed. "No one will believe it actually happened." "Seeing is believing," grinned Zosia. "I took tonnes of photos today." Just then, a flash of silver and scarlet caught her eye.



She clicked just in time to capture the strange sight of a flying saucer shimmering up, up and away over the city of Stoke-on-Trent. "And the camera never lies!"

**Over to you answers:** 1. The warmest and most considerate! 2. Kingfisher; Butterfly; Dragonfly; Duck; Coot. 3. Ash 4. Alder 5. Hawthorn

**Crossword answers:** Across; 1. Chadwick 2. Jar 3. Bottle. Down; 1. Wardle 2. Kiln

# We hope you enjoyed this Story Quest!

Here is a cosmic activity to try at home.

## CREATE YOUR OWN COSMIC COMIC STRIP

Creating comic strips is a cool way to tell a story using words and pictures. Use the boxes below to draw and write a comic strip story about your Story Quest around Westport Lake.

Or, if you sketched birds at the start of this trail, why not transform them into comic strip characters, like Super Swallow, or The Mighty Mallard?

