

# Story Quest

Adventures close to home

Complete  
4/4  
them all!



## Cosmic Comic Capers Westport Lake

An out-of-this-world wildlife adventure!

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

f – Stoke Reads

## Starting point:

Green Door, next to Westport Lake car park.

## Getting there:

From Burslem: 20 minute walk

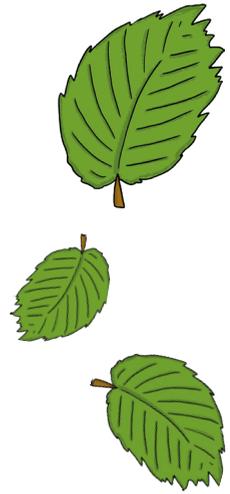
From Tunstall: 15 minute journey on bus no. 99

## Trail information:

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

## Time needed:

Around 1 hour 15 minutes depending on how long you spend completing the challenges and bug hunting.



## Before you begin

### You might want to pack...

- Phone or camera to take some pictures
- A pencil and notebook
- Bird seed to feed feathered friends along the trail
- Picnic snacks to enjoy at the end of your cosmic quest



## CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

Every time you see the phone symbol, take a photo to capture your quest! Check out the back page to find out how to share your fab photos with other members of the Story Quest community.

# 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



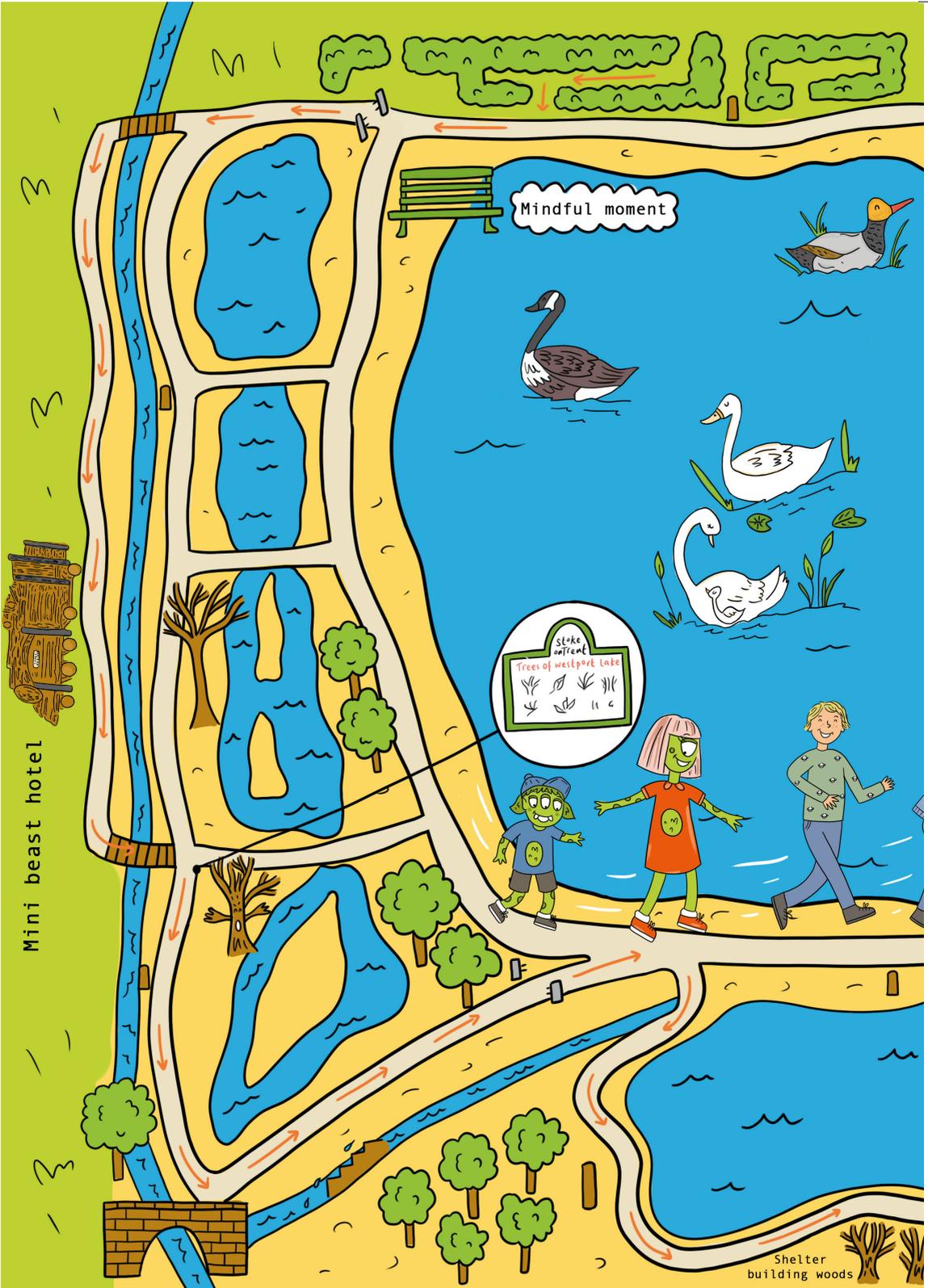
**Marzoid**

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



**LOTTERY FUNDED**





Mini beast hotel

Mindful moment

Stake art tent  
Trees of westport Lake

Shelter building woods



Maze

Welcome to Westport

Green Door

Visitors Centre

Green Door

Start

Finish

Playground

Car park

THE Boat

MENU

# 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!

### Take a Mindful Moment...

Phew! 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 from when we toured Middleport Pottery? The Humanoids of Stoke mustn't realise we're from Mars."

"I remember," Marzoid replied, in Humanoid English this time. "We're here today 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!

After emerging from their flying saucer, the Martian explorers stepped onto the lake (being aliens, they were able to hover above the surface of the water to avoid getting wet). On reaching land, Marthania pressed a button on her remote-control pad, and the saucer from space slipped beneath the lake's surface.



“I can’t see many wildlife wonders here,” Marzoid complained.  
 “That’s because we’re still in the car park,” Marthania explained. “Let’s ask the Humanoids near that little building if they know the best places to explore.”

## OVER TO YOU!

Find the Green Door Project sign on the building, then answer these questions:

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



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

Fill in the blanks below:

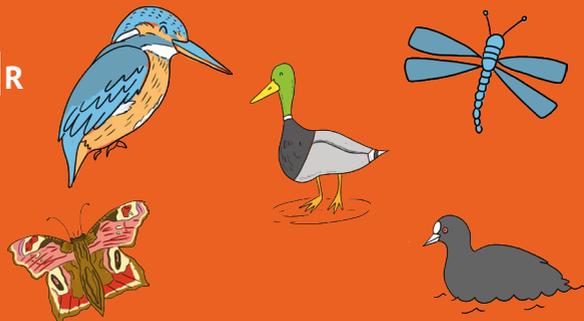
K   G      R

B  T   R   Y

D R  G   F

D

C   T



“Lovely day for a walk, isn’t it?” said the tallest of the three Humanoids.

“We’re here because my granddaughter has decided she wants to be a nature photographer when she grows up, and my grandson is looking for ideas for his new comic strip project. Struggling a bit so far though, aren’t you duck?”

He usually writes about space and monsters, you see. Let’s hope inspiration strikes soon!”

“I think it just struck,” said the middle-sized Humanoid, grabbing his sketchbook as he looked the newcomers up and down. “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, with a click of her camera. “Ant is short for ‘Antoni’, but he likes insects and stuff like that, so he shortened his name. You’re funny!”

“You can say that again,” Ant agreed.

“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.”

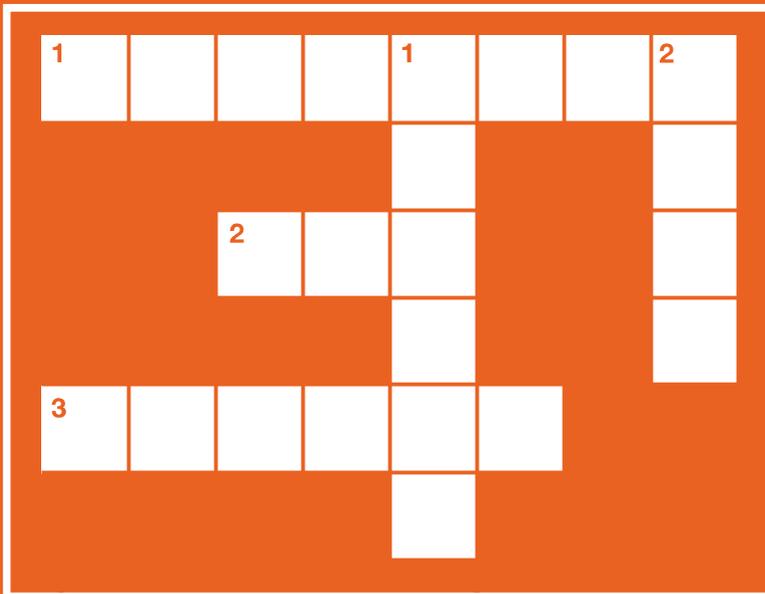
“You heard right!” gleamed Babcia. “I know the perfect route around the lake for you. Come with us and I’ll show you on the sign over there.”

## 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.



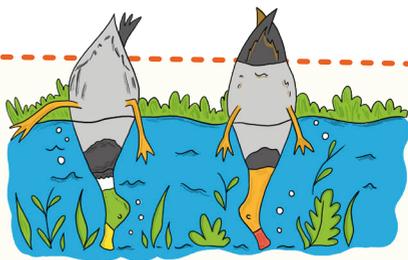
### ACROSS

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.”



## CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

Scan the scene to spot some feathered friends to photograph.

“I’ll do a quick sketch in case I can include  
them in my project,” said Ant.



## OVER TO YOU!

### Avian Art

If you brought a pencil and notebook, follow Ant’s  
example and sketch the birds on the sign.

“They look great, Ant,” praised Zosia. “But shall we get going? I’ll  
race to you to that bench. On your marks, get set...GO!” She scooted  
off, splashing in puddles along the way.



## OVER TO YOU!

### Reach for the Stars

Follow in Zosia’s footsteps by jogging past the Visitor’s Centre and  
along the path that runs beside Westport Lake. Stop when you see  
a post marked with the number six. **TOP TIP:** It’s near a green bench.  
Now do six star jumps to celebrate getting stuck into your Story Quest!



“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!

### Take a Mindful Moment

After losing (and finding!) yourself in the maze, sit on the bench that looks across the lake and take four deep breaths.

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

1. Something fluffy?
2. Something gold?
3. Something round?
4. Something old?



“Lovely, isn’t it?” said Zosia, capturing the scene with her camera.



### CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

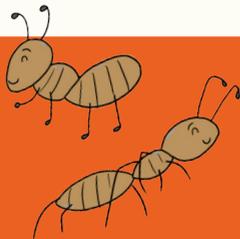
Take a landscape photo of the lovely view across the lake.



“Beautiful,” Marzoid agreed. “We don’t have lakes on Mar...”

“Where to next?” Marthania jumped in before Marzoid gave the game away (again).

“The best place for wildlife wonders,” beamed Babcia. “We’re going on a woodland walk.”



## OVER TO YOU!

### Walk on the Wild Side

Turn right off the lakeside path, cross the bridge and follow the path onwards into a woodland area. Check out your map to help you find the way.

Now follow the woodland path that runs alongside the railway track. If you brought seeds, keep an eye out for the bird tables on the fence posts.

“What’s that train made of sticks for?” asked Marthania, leaning in to get a closer look.

“That’s a Minibeast Hotel” beamed Ant, proud to show off his knowledge. “Minibeasts, or invertebrates to use their proper name, are bugs or creatures that don’t have a backbone. Minibeasts are amazing because they do things like help to pollinate plants, recycle dead matter by eating it and they are an important part of the food chain. Shall we have a closer look?”



### CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

Have your camera at the ready to get lots of shots of minibeast marvels!



# OVER TO YOU!

All Aboard the Insect Express – lets go on a minibeast hunt.

Reader, can you find the Minibeast Hotel disguised as a train?

Go for a bug hunt and see what you can spot in the train and the surrounding area. Can you find any of these beautiful beasts? Tick them off if you spot one.

Please remember that you are very big and scary to our minibeast friends, so be kind and gentle with them and don't take them away from their home.

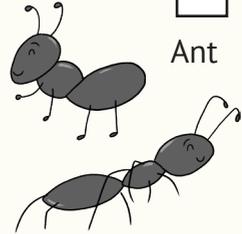
Spider



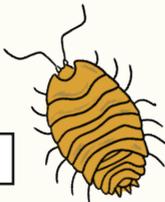
Ladybird



Ant



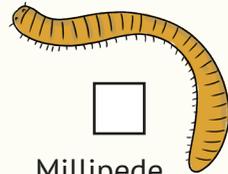
Woodlouse



Beetle



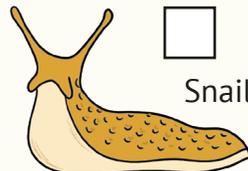
Millipede



Worm



Snail





Scan me!

Visit the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust website for more fun facts and marvellous minibeast activities.

After searching for minibeasts, the wildlife wanderers continued along the path until they came to a bridge.

“Let’s check out this sign about the trees in the woodland,” Zosia suggested.



## OVER TO YOU!



### Take the Tree-mendous Challenge

Turn right when you reach the bridge and look out for a sign showing local trees and shrubs. Use the sign to help you answer these puzzling rhyming riddles:

1. I cast dappled shade in beautiful glades: ■ S ■
2. I like streams, lakes and bogs and I’m used to make clogs: A ■ D ■ ■
3. In hedgerows I’m merry and birds bite my berries: H ■ W ■ ■ ■ R ■

“These trees look like ancient giants!” said Zosia, as she caught it on camera.

“Thanks, sis!” Ant grinned. “You’ve given me an idea for a comic book character - The Abominable Oak Monster, or maybe the Terrifying Tree Troll.”



### CAPTURE YOUR QUEST

Take a few photos of the towering trees.

“M\*@oozka!” Marzoid shuddered. “I mean, that sounds scary. Are we safe?”

“M\*@oozka!” laughed Babcia. “That sounds like a word from one of Ant’s stories. We’re safe, pet, don’t you worry. There are no Abominable Oak Monsters here, though we do have a bridge that trolls might hide under. It’s further along this path.”

## OVER TO YOU!

Follow the path along the stream to the post marked with the number three. Then continue to the corner until you reach a bridge.

### Take a Mindful Moment

Pause in this picturesque place to enjoy the sounds of nature.

Can you hear:

1. Water whooshing?  2. Leaves swooshing?  3. Wind whispering?

What else can you hear?

“That looks like our language!” Marzoid murmured as the outdoor explorers continued along the path and passed through the barrier gate with some unusual symbols on it.

“What language is that?” asked Ant suspiciously. “They look like symbols from a secret code.”

## OVER TO YOU!

### Create a Cosmic Code

Can YOU see the symbols Ant is talking about, Story Questers?

CLUE: they’re cut into the barrier gate and look like ‘K’ written backwards and ‘B’.

Use the space below to write your name in a secret code - you could write it backwards, with the letters backwards too!

My name is

“Always joking around,” said Marthania, shooting Marzoid a warning glance as they walked on and a view of Westport Lake opened up on their left. “We’re close to my favourite area now. Way-hay!” Zosia sang as she whizzed down the winding path.



## **OVER TO YOU!**

### **Make Dazzling Dens**



When you reach the lake, turn right and right again on the path which takes you around the small lake. Whizz along until a wooded area opens up on your right. Gather loose leaves, twigs and stones from the ground, then choose a spot to build some homely habitats for wildlife.

How about crafting a dormouse den, vole villa, or beetle bungalow? What about making a mansion for mini Martians?!



### **CAPTURE YOUR QUEST**

Be sure to snap shots of your dazzling den!

After building a host of habitats, including a school for snails and a library for ladybirds, the nature-lovers wandered on around the path. 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!” Zosia laughed.

## **OVER TO YOU!**

### **Astral Activities**

Head to the playground and imagine you’re an astronaut in your very own space station. Clamber the frames as if you’re fixing a spaceship. Zoom down the slide like you’re making an emergency moon landing.



### **CAPTURE YOUR QUEST**

Take a selfie of you and your fellow Story Questers enjoying astral activities!

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.

“It’s been a blast!” Marzoid added.

After saying their goodbyes, Babcia turned to Ant and Zosia. “I don’t know about you, but I’m 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

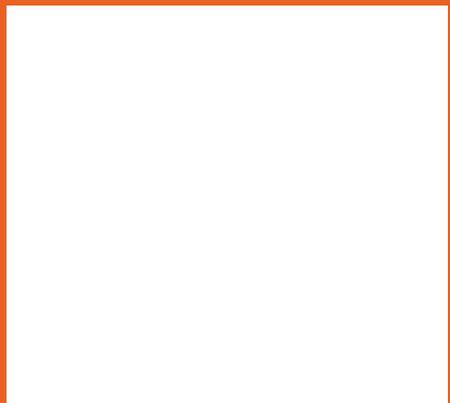
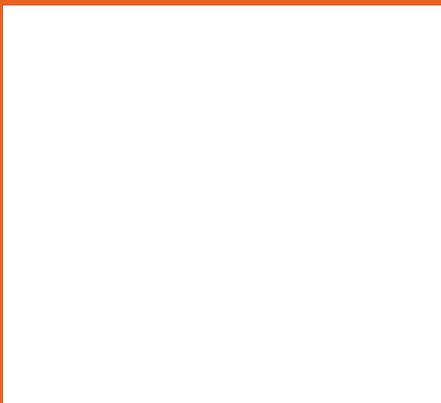
# We hope you enjoyed this Story Quest!

Here are some cosmic activities to try at home.

## 1) 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? Or you could take inspiration from Ant and write about an *Abominable Oak Monster* or a *Terrifying Tree Troll*.



## 2) TAKE TRANQUILLITY TIPS FROM TREES

Root, rise, relax, repeat - this tree-inspired technique is a great way to relax.

Stand tall and straight with your feet apart and firmly rooted like a strong tree.

Breathe in slowly, feeling your breath rise all the way up from your feet, up through your knees and spine, up to the top of your head.

As you breathe out slowly, bend over and reach down to touch the ground (bend your knees if you need to)...

- Hold this pose for the count of five
- Breathe in deeply as you rise, rise, rise from the ground to a standing position, reaching up with your arms like a tree stretching towards sunlight
- Repeat three times to feel truly relaxed and ready for anything



## 3) FIND PHOTOGRAPHY FAME

If you followed the CAPTURE YOUR QUEST boxes and kept a cool photographic record of your Story Quest, send them to the **Stoke Reads Facebook page** and claim your place in the extra special online gallery!

### Here's a checklist of the suggestions:

- Snap a selfie at the start of your Story Quest
- Photograph feathered friends
- Take a landscape photo of the lake
- Get lots of shots of mini-beast marvels
- Take photos of towering trees
- Snap shots of your dazzling den
- Take an astral activities selfie



There are lots more Story Quests to complete around Stoke-on-Trent!

**The Mammoth Mystery**  
Tunstall Park

**Flight to Fame**  
Westport Lake

**Pitch Perfect**  
Burslem Park

**Tunstall Time Travel**  
Whitfield Valley Nature Reserve

**City Safari**  
Burslem Town Centre

**Tunstall Treasure**  
Tunstall Town Centre

**The Christmas History Mystery**  
Hanley Town Centre

**Just the Ticket**  
Burslem Park

**Stoke Squad vs. Magpie Man**  
Tunstall Park

**Picnic Party in the Park**  
Central Forest Park

**Summer Scavenger Hunt**  
Ford Green Hall

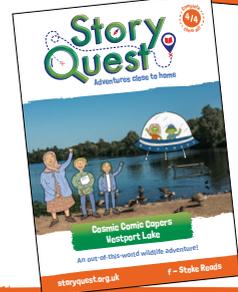
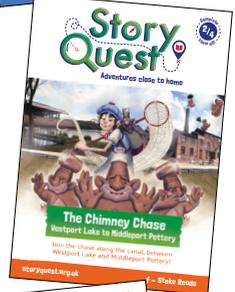
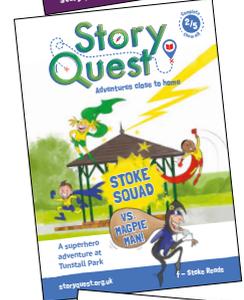
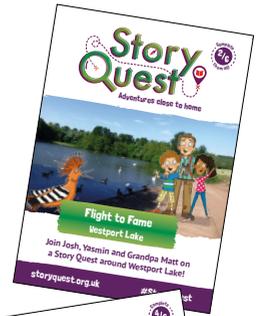
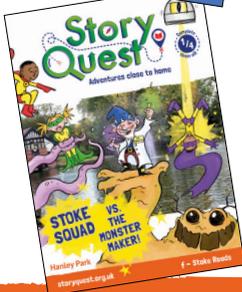
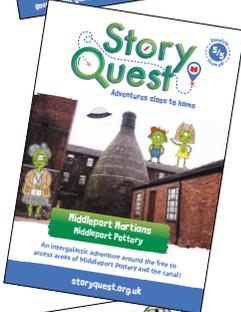
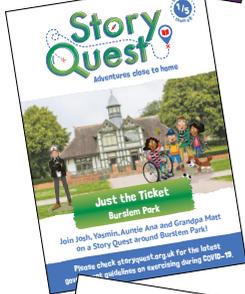
**Middleport Martians**  
Middleport Pottery

**Stoke Squad vs. the Monster Maker**  
Hanley Park

**The Chimney Chase**  
Westport to Middleport

**The Colliery Crew**  
Chatterley Whitfield

**Cosmic Comic Capers**  
Westport Lake



Find out more at [storyquest.org.uk](http://storyquest.org.uk) or call 07849 353729