

# Deer Creek

The Homophones Adventure



## *Teacher's Guide*



# Introduction

Deer Creek is an educational *text adventure* that is designed to support the teaching of **homophones** (and related topics such as puns and wordplay) to primary school students.

The recommended age for the game is **8 years+**.

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Deer Creek was written and designed by Gareth Pitchford.

It was programmed using Adventure Classroom

Game © 2019 Primary Resources / G Pitchford

Teacher's Guide – Version 1.0 (August 2019)

## Curriculum Links

'Deer Creek' can be used as a classroom resource to help support work in several curriculum areas. Many of the activities mentioned below are discussed in more detail later in this guide.

### **English & ICT / Computing / Coding**

Playing the game can help support work on **homophones**, homonyms and homographs.

The game contains many examples of **puns & wordplay**.

Activities involving writing game tips can link to the topic of **explanation** and **instructional texts**.

Students can go on to write their own text adventures, covering many aspects of **coding** in the computing curriculum and this work will also touch on many elements of fiction writing, such as **characters** and **settings**.

### **Geography & Mathematics**

Links can be made to work on **map making** and **positional language** (compass directions).

### **History**

Further study of text adventures and retro computing can link to history topics such as the **1970s** and **1980s**.

# Playing the Game

Deer's Creek is a traditional parser-driven text adventure.

You play the game by entering simple *one* or *two* word commands.

Just use a **verb** and a **noun**.

You don't need to use 'little' words like *the*, *to*, *a*, etc.

GET BOX    DROP HAT    WEAR SOCKS    TALK MAN

## Useful commands...

Type...

**HELP** for help.

**LOOK** or **R** to refresh the screen.

**INVENTORY** or **I** to see what you are carrying.

**N**, **S**, **E**, **W** to navigate using compass directions.

**GET OBJECT** to pick up an object.

**DROP OBJECT** to drop an object.

**EXAMINE OBJECT** or **X OBJECT** to look at something.

**SEARCH OBJECT** to investigate further.

**WEAR OBJECT** to put an object on and

**REMOVE OBJECT** to take it off again.

**TALK PERSON** to have a conversation.

**GIVE ITEM** to give an object to a person.

**GO PLACE** to travel to a place you've been before.

**QUIT** to end your game.

## The Structure of the Game

The game starts out with a brief introduction to set the scene.

There is an initial tutorial section, where players are taught all the basic commands that they will need to complete the game.

Players are then able to freely wander around the game world, solving puzzles as they go.

The game ends when the final puzzle is solved by repairing the car near the starting location.

## Using the Game in your Classroom

The game is suitable to use as a whole class activity (on a projection screen) or by individual students and groups of children working on PCs, portable computers or mobile devices.

A mixture of approaches can be used. You could start off by introducing the game to the whole class, before allowing children to play the game themselves. This might either be a focussed, structured or time-limited activity, or the game might be made available as an ongoing challenge over a longer period. The adventure could, for example, be used as an extension task that runs throughout the week.

Teachers may like to encourage students to draw a map. Depending on their ability or the chosen learning objective, some students might be given a completed map, or a blank map template. You may decide that students can make their map themselves on blank or squared paper. The bottom left hand corner of the page should be given as the starting point. The command GO can be used as shortcut to move around the game. You may decide **not** to tell the students about this.

Children could be encouraged to share their progress with each other, either through verbal reports, or by writing clues and tips for other students, using their knowledge of instructional texts. Students may also like to plan, write and perform a *Let's Play*-style commentary for the game.

While playing the adventure, students could be asked to collect examples of homophones (noting them down on a sheet or in a booklet).

Pupils might be asked to identify times where homophones are used to create jokes. They could use these homophones to construct their own jokes or collect similar puns from elsewhere. A class joke book, of jokes that use such word play, could be compiled.

Students could also be asked to watch out for specific varieties of homophones, such as homographs (where the spellings of the two words are the same but the meanings are different).

## **History Links**

Retro gaming and retro computing can be an interesting area to explore as part of a 1970s or 1980s history topic.

Originally appearing in the latter half of the 1970s, text adventures are a form of gaming that was very popular in the 1980s.

A ZX Spectrum version of 'Deer Creek' is available, that has the same content as the browser-based version. This will run on real ZX Spectrum if you have access to the original hardware.

Alternatively, the game (and many text adventures from the 1980s and 1990s) can be played through emulators.

# Making Your Own Text Adventures

After playing the game the students may wish to have a go at making their own interactive fiction game.

This could be a simple, multiple-choice, branching story using familiar software, such as Powerpoint or Scratch. Alternatively, students may wish to have a go at creating a full, parser-driven text adventure.

Deer Creek was created using **Adventuron Classroom**. This is a relatively simple to use tool designed for users of all ages to make their own text adventures with.

**Adventuron** is browser-based, allowing it to run on most PCs, mobile devices, and laptops with no additional software downloads required.

Please see...

**<https://adventuron.io/>**

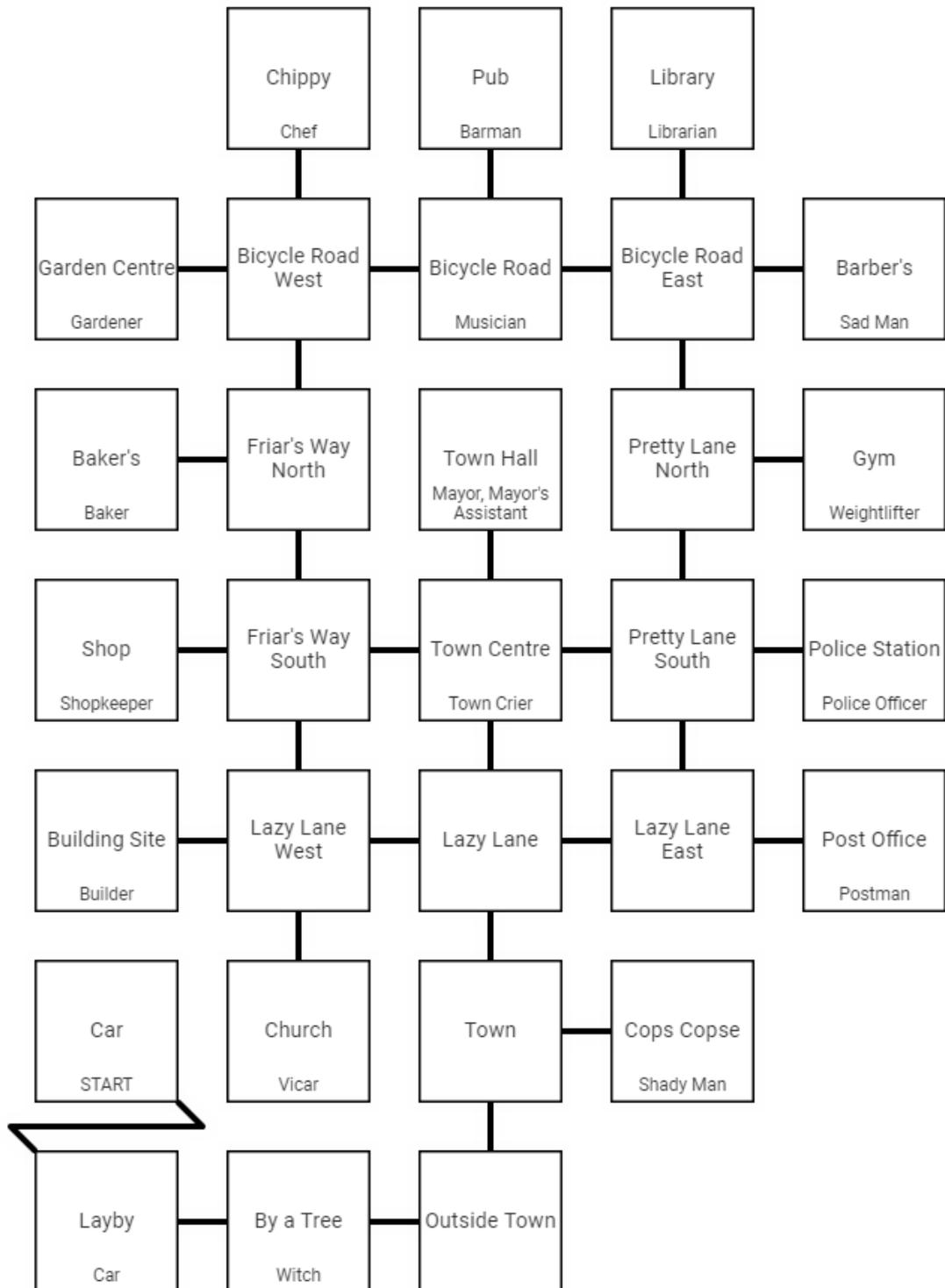
...for more details.

Note: The source code for 'Deer Creek' has been made available for students to study. Teachers might find sharing sections of this code quite useful for work on coding, even if the students don't go on to develop their own games.

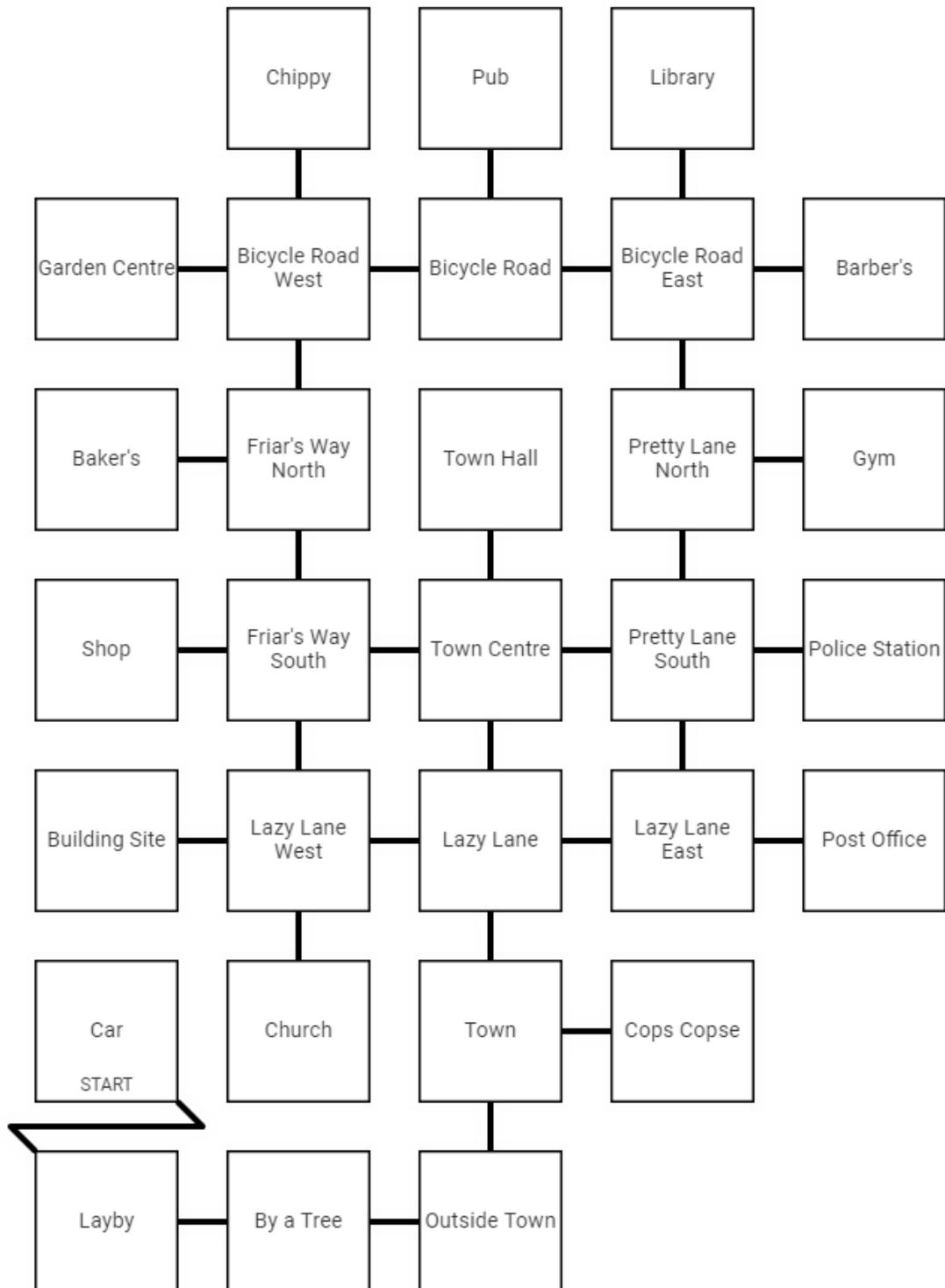
For example, this piece of code illustrates an if... else... statement.

```
: match "x bench" {
  : if (is_at "lazy") {
    : if (has_not_created "ring") {
      : print "You find something underneath the
bench...";
      : create "ring";
      : press_any_key;
      : redscribe;}
    : else {
      : print "Just a normal wooden bench.";
      : done;}}}
```

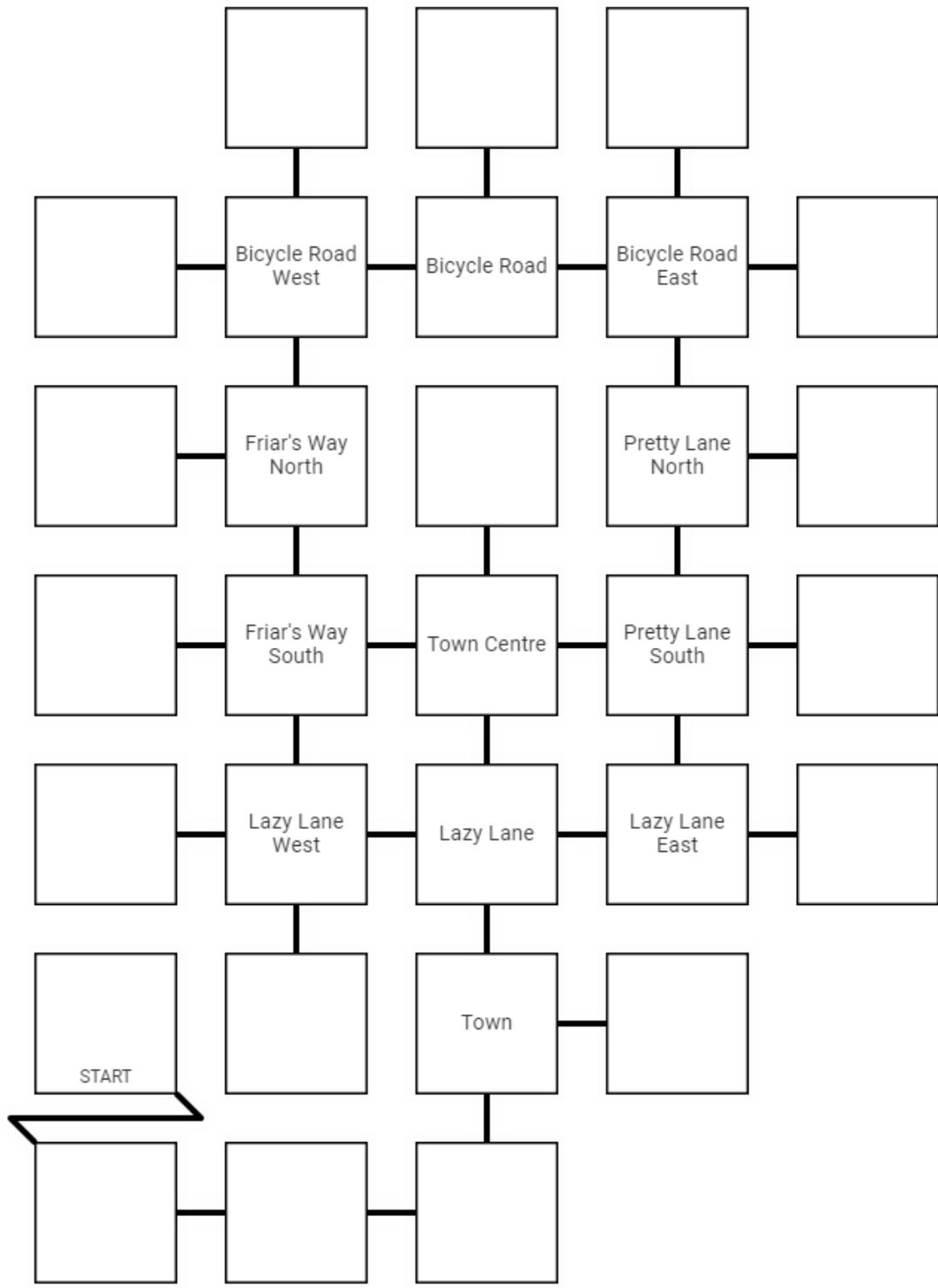
# 'Deer Creek' Map (FULL)



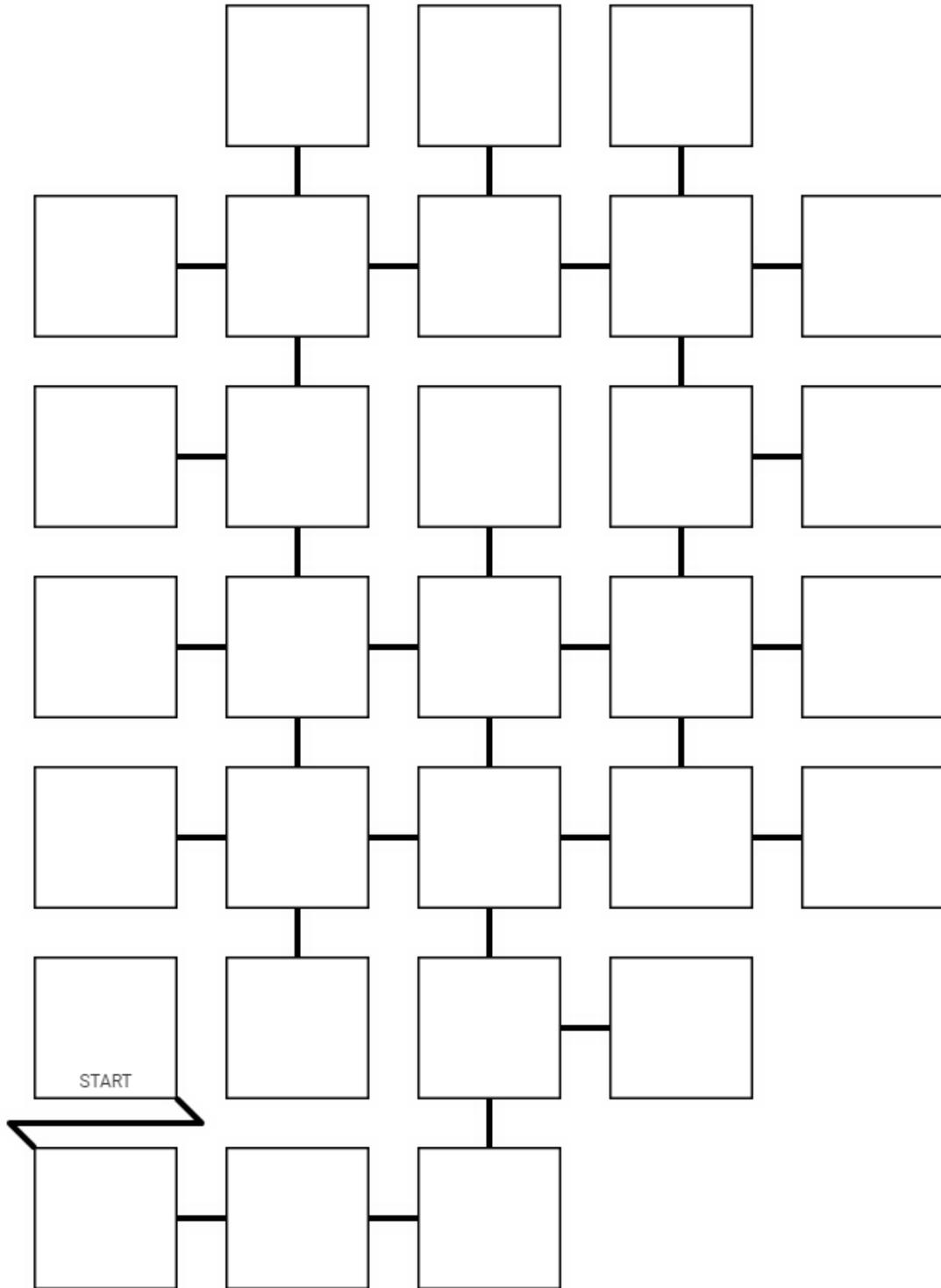
# 'Deer Creek' Map



# 'Deer Creek' Map (ROADS)



# 'Deer Creek' Map (BLANK)



## 'Deer Creek' - Useful Commands

Use *VERB NOUN* commands.

Type...

**HELP** for help.

**LOOK** or **R** to refresh the screen.

**INVENTORY** or **I** to see what you are carrying.

**N, S, E, W** to navigate using compass directions.

**GET OBJECT** to pick up an object.

**DROP OBJECT** to drop an object.

**EXAMINE OBJECT** or **X OBJECT** to look at something.

**SEARCH OBJECT** to investigate further.

**WEAR OBJECT** to put an object on and

**REMOVE OBJECT** to take it off again.

**TALK PERSON** to have a conversation.

**GIVE ITEM** to give an object to a person.

**GO PLACE** to travel to a place you've been before.

**QUIT** to end your game.

# 'Deer Creek' – Homophones Quest

How many homophones can you find? Are there any that are spelt the same but have different meanings?

deer		creek	
hair		site	
font		story	
weight		place	
horse		flower	
road		witch	
loot		leeks	
rose		crook	
sale		tire	
need		rap	
beech		letters	

## Extension Task:

Choose \_\_\_\_ of the pairs of words you have found and write **definitions** (explanations of what each of the words mean) to help younger children understand the differences between them.

