

NOTaMAP

Saski Garden

1 TRIP THROUGH TIME

Welcome to the **Saski (Saxon) Garden**, the first public park in Poland, which has been open to the local community for nearly 300 years. We want to invite you on a trip through time. Find the sundial and put your finger on the tip of its gnomon (i.e. the part that casts a shadow). Now, close your eyes and imagine the park over a century ago. Elegant couples strolling along the alleys and drinking mineral water, children having fun rolling hoops (like in a hula hoop) with a stick, and the clock on the meteorological pillar striking every hour (you can see what the clock looked like in old photos available online). At the end of the day, a guard shakes a rattle to announce that the gates are about to close. Now, open your eyes and look around. What would the people from those times find surprising if they were in the park at this moment?

2 GUARDIANS OF HISTORY

While strolling through the Saski Garden, walk up to the **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier**. Look at its arcades (columns with arches at the top). Just above them, you can see reconstructed fragments of eight columns. There used to be 24 of those, and they connected two wings of the grand Saski Palace, which was destroyed during World War II. Soldiers guard the Tomb, and there's a grand vigil light, always burning to honour all the soldiers who gave their lives for Poland, even those whose names are long forgotten. The guards must stand at attention in full uniform until the changing of the watch. It's not an easy task. Want to see for yourself? Try standing at attention without moving or talking for one minute.

3 SOUND OF WATER

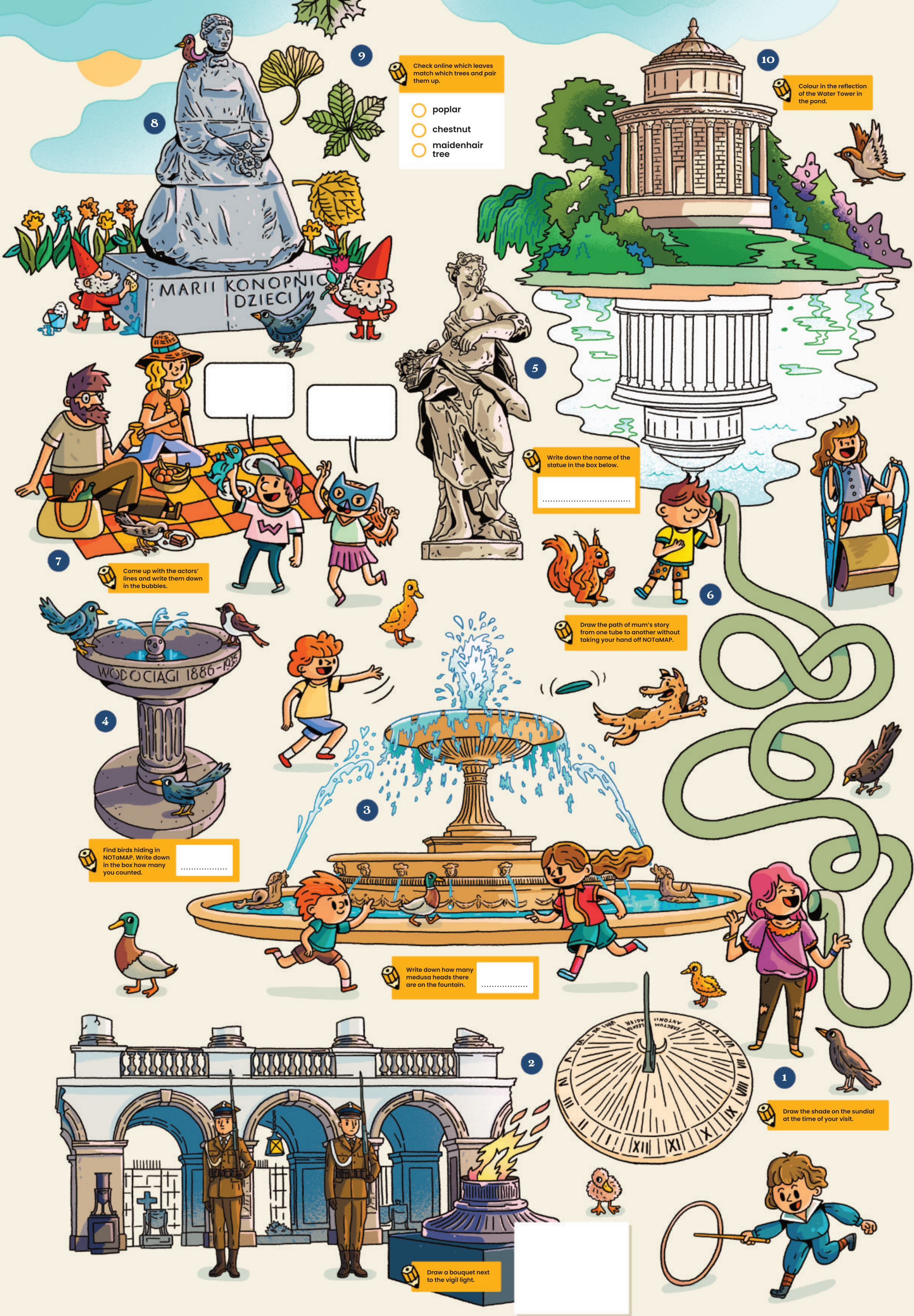
The Fountain in the Saski Garden has seen very old days – it's almost 170 years old! Nowadays, it's controlled by a computer and lights up at night-time. It's built directly on the Saxon Axis, which is a view line marked out by the builders of old Warsaw. If only it could tell us about all the things it has seen through the years – look, it has eyes on every side. The carved heads of figures called “medusas”, bursting with water, are placed evenly all around the fountain. Try to count them! To make the task easier, you can choose a head at the same level as one of the dolphins and start from there. Write how many you have found in the box next to the picture of the fountain.

4 BIRDSONG

Birds are regular residents of the Saski Garden. Watch them closely. Sparrows like to sit on the heads of statues – it makes them look as if they are a part of those sculptures. In spring, blackbirds start their families in special nesting boxes hanging on the trees, and mallard ducks swim peacefully in the pond. You can spot a lot of our feathered friends at the birdbath. Do you want to know how to feed the birds the right way? There are instructions in the park which tell you how to do it. If you visit the garden in the winter, don't forget to bring groats, cereal grains, or oat flakes.

5 TIME TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

There are 21 **statues of muses, virtues and seasons** standing along the Saxon Axis around the fountain. Say “hi” to each of them, tell them a little bit about yourself, and check their names. Historia (History) wants to know when your birthday is and will happily listen to the stories about the most significant moments of your life. You can chat with Zima (Winter) about your favourite snow activities, and Muzyka (Music) would love to hear you sing your favourite song. There's a bench nearby set up here to honour of Frederic Chopin's 200th birthday. Would you like to listen to his Polonaise in A-flat major? And now, a task for a real detective – try to find the statue pictured in NOTaMAP and check its name on the pedestal.



6 TIME TO PLAY

What do Tiggers like best? **Playgrounds!** In this one, you can find, for example, a rolling barrel on which you can run in place. Playgrounds used to be a little different than they are now, and the one in the Saski Garden was one of the first to open in Warsaw. Back then, it was called Rau's Garden, after its founder. Children loved to come here and walk on stilts, play ball games, the bear game or serso (all the games are explained on the other side of NOTaMAP). There were monkey bars, sandpits and swings, and, later on, even a swimming pool for children. Try to imagine what your grandparents liked doing when they were your age. Use the sound installation in the play-ground and talk to your mom or dad through the tubes about the games they liked to play when they were little. If you can't reach the tube, ask your parents for help and you will surely come up together with some creative way to solve that problem.

7 THEATRICAL PICNIC

First, the opera house called **Operalnia** was built, and then the wooden **Summer Theatre**. In fact, the Saski Garden was the birthplace of the National Theatre. Those buildings are no longer standing – in the place of Operalnia there is a commemorative stone, and you can find pictures and photos of the Summer Theatre online. Have a grand theatrical family picnic and put on a little show: you, your siblings and your favourite toys can be the actors. Prepare your play beforehand and make tickets for your parents. Dress elegantly (wear a fancy hat, if you have one) – a long time ago it was the requirement for entering the Saski Garden. Then, you can feel just like the former visitors of the garden, who used to drink mineral water from the pump room and savour fruits from the fruit stand. Have fun and enjoy your picnic!

8 IN THE WORLD OF DWARFS

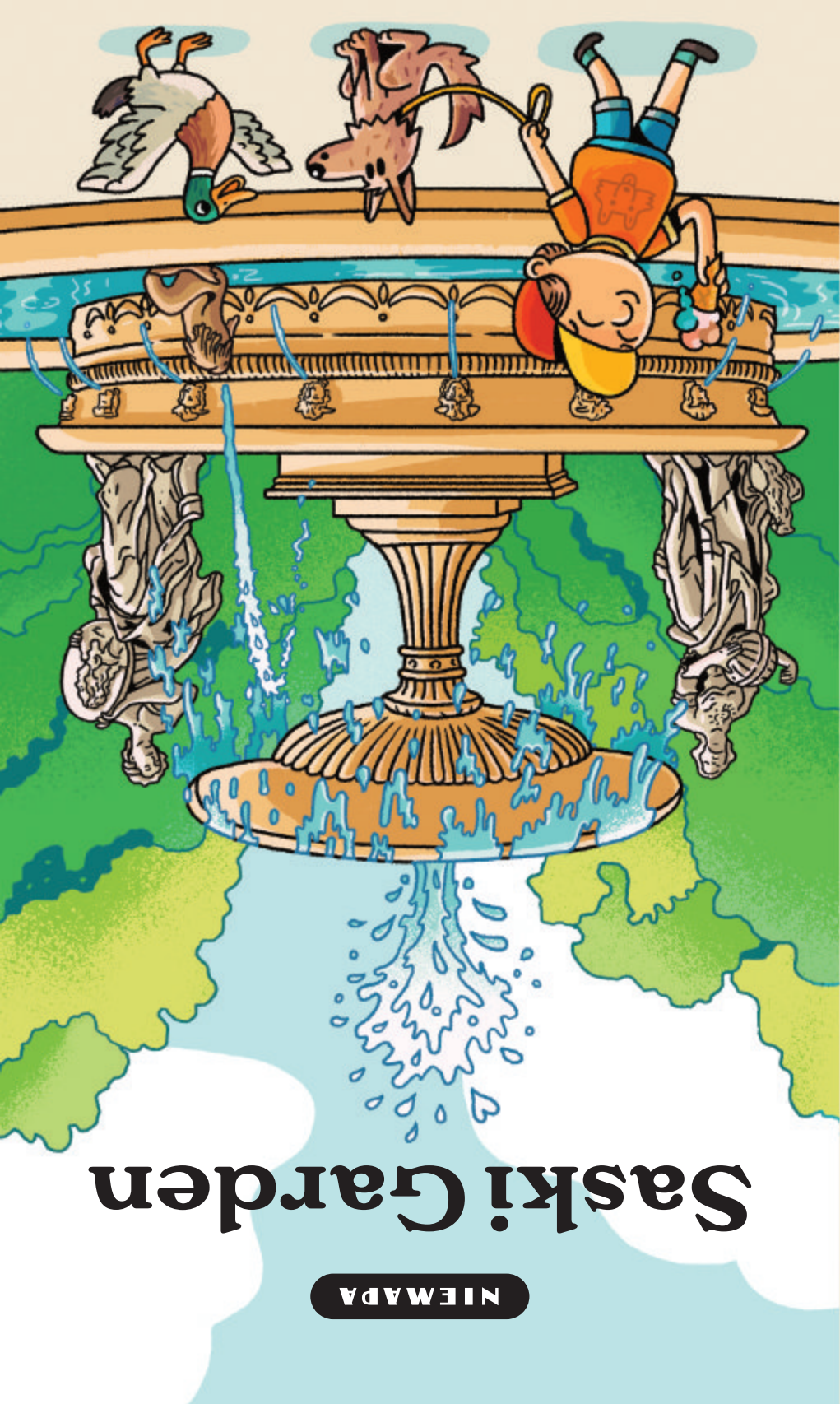
Maria Konopnicka is sitting in the shade of the trees and bushes in the Saski Garden. Can you spot her? This famous poet wrote poems for children, too. The characters created by her are well-known to Polish kids. She also wrote a book called “Of Dwarfs and Little Orphan Mary”, which tells stories of dwarfs with funny names, for example Koszałek Opalek, Podziomek and King Błystek. In the book, the dwarfs spend autumn and winter underground, and in spring and summer they come out to help people. Who will you help today? You can take a piece of chalk and draw dwarfs all through the alleyways (just remember not to draw on benches or statues). If you visit the garden in the autumn, you can make dwarfs from chestnuts and bring them to the **Maria Konopnicka statue**.

9 GREEN GAME

What's an obligatory feature of a park? Trees, of course! And the ones in the Saski Garden are definitely worth looking at. You may notice an intriguing thickening around the trunks of some trees, just above the ground – this means that the gardeners once grafted decorative varieties into them. The fancy shapes of the branches may hide some incredible stories. Look carefully and see how one of the linden trees between the main alleyway and the Water Tower grows in an unusual way. Although it was damaged during the Second World War, it was one of the few trees in the garden to survive. Soon after, the weakened linden tree was broken by the wind and lost its crown, but somehow it managed to survive again. It grew new branches going straight up. Now, once again, it's surrounded by other trees, although they are much younger. There are six other natural monuments nearby, which also remember the times before the war: these are four maidenhair trees, a chestnut and a poplar. You will recognise them thanks to the green plaques with an eagle.

10 THE WATER TOWER

Climb to the highest peak in the Saski Garden and look at it from this level. You can see a beautiful **Water Tower** – a pressure tower which was formerly used to pump water, not only to the fountain nearby, but to other parts of Warsaw as well. Did you know that this building has its twin near Rome? Its design was inspired by an ancient temple in Tivoli. Swans used to swim in the pond next to it, which, in wintertime, turned into an ice rink. Now a task for you – run around the building, measure your time and see how fast you are!



Saski Garden

NIEMAPA

Keep an eye out!

Look at the plan and find the spots described on the other side of your NOTaMAP. Circle your favourite spots in the Saski Garden, such as the place for a theatrical family picnic.

Today

- 1 TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER
- 2 FOUNTAIN
- 3 SUNDIAL
- 4 FREDERIC CHOPIN'S BENCH
- 5 COLLECTION OF STATUES
- 6 BIRDBATH
- 7 PLAYGROUND
- 8 BRAVE-HEARTED LINDEN
- 9 WATER TOWER
- 10 MARIA KONOPNICKA'S STATUE

Long Ago

- 1 METEOROLOGY PILLAR
- 2 PALM HOUSE – TODAY THERE'S A GREEN ZONE BETWEEN THE LANES OF MARSZAŁKOWSKA STREET IN THIS PLACE
- 3 OPERALNIA – TODAY A STONE COMMEMORATING THE START OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE CAN BE FOUND HERE
- 4 SUMMER THEATRE
- 5 SWIMMING POOL FOR CHILDREN
- 6 NEWSSTAND

Rebuilding

- 1 THE SASKI PALACE
- 2 THE BRÜHL PALACE
- 3 TENEMENT HOUSES AT 6, 8, 10/12 KRÓLEWSKA STREET



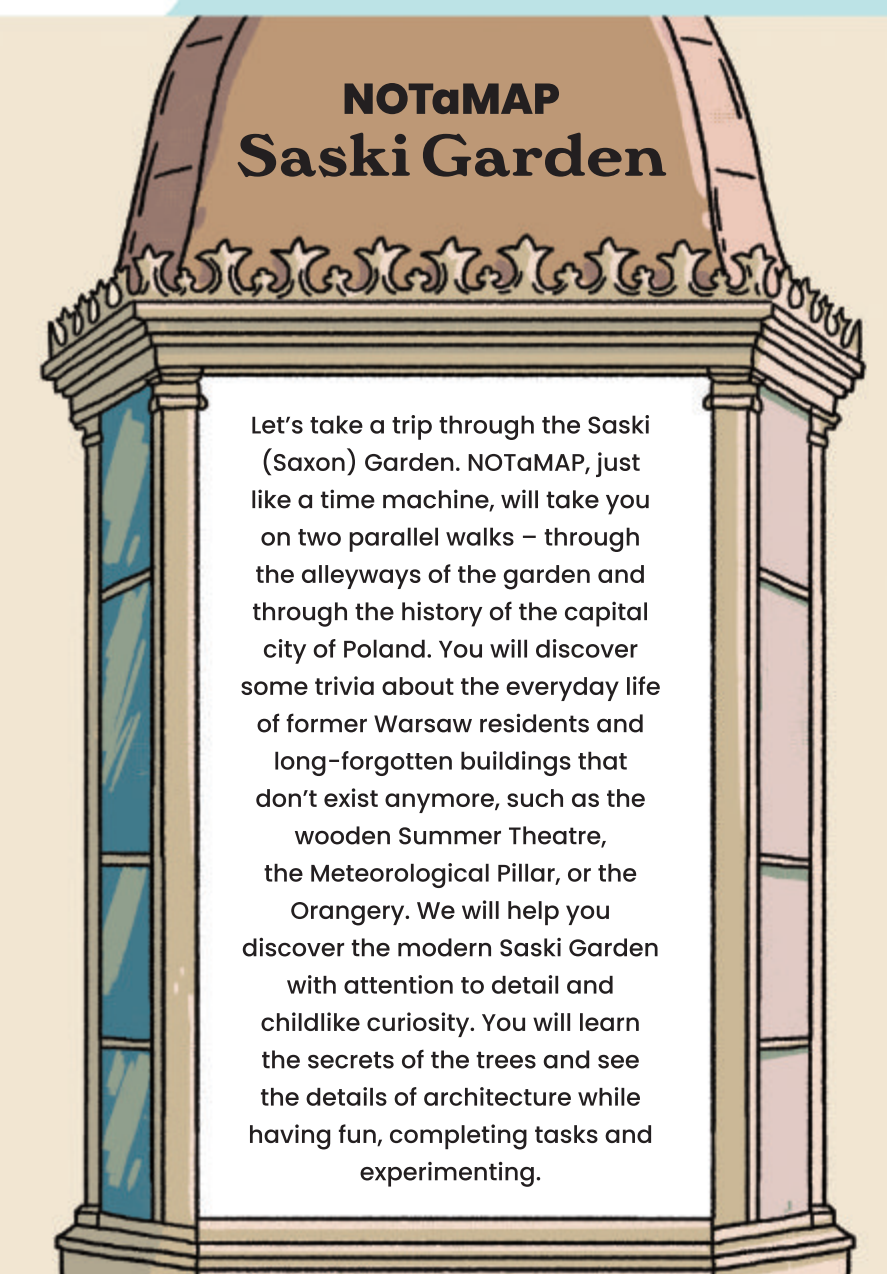
Illustrated Dictionary of Bygone Games

What games did children use to play in the Saski Garden? Match the texts to the pictures by writing the correct numbers in the circles.

- 1 **SERVO**
A game for 2-4 people. You play by throwing a small wicker ring and catching it with a stick.
- 2 **CROQUET**
A sports game where the goal is to quickly roll a croquet ball from one end of the pitch to the other and back with a wooden mallet while passing through several gates (you may recognise it from the book or movie "Alice in Wonderland").
- 3 **STILTS**
A stick with a footrest used to walk above the ground.
- 4 **ROLLING A HOOP**
A children's game where the goal is to roll a hoop with a stick for the longest time possible without the hoop falling over.
- 5 **BALL GAMES**
Small glass, ceramic or metal balls in various colours can be used for countless games, while the bigger metal ones are used to play pétanque.
- 6 **BEAR GAME**
Are you familiar with the game "What's the time, Mr Wolf"? There is a similar Polish game called "The Old Bear Is Sleeping Soundly". Be a detective and ask five different adults to explain the rules. You will find out how to play in no time!

A jungle in a glass house

There used to be a stunning Palm House, previously called the Orangery or the Conservatory, in the Saski Garden. Aside from palm trees, there were many exotic fruits grown there, such as pineapples, oranges and bananas. Take some crayons, markers or paints and draw luscious plants, colourful flowers and delicious fruits inside the building.



NOTaMAP is a series of unusual guides. With amusing illustrations and ready-to-use trip suggestions, we present interesting places, nature and culture. The series was created by Mamy Projekt and illustrated by Tomasz Kaczowski.

Pałac Saski AR



Download the app, stand at Piłsudski square and see the Saski Palace.

Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
Republic of Poland



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