



Ten Tall Oak Trees

Name. _____

SOUTH-YORKSHIRE
forest
A National community forest Partner

Ten tall oak trees
Standing in a line
'Warships', cried King Henry,
Then there were nine.

Four tall oak trees
Sighing like the sea,
'Floorboards,' beamed the builder,
Then there were three.

Nine tall oak trees
Growing strong and straight,
'Charcoal,' breathed the furnace,
Then there were eight.

Three tall oak trees
Groaning as trees do,
'Unsafe,' claimed the council,
Then there were two.

Eight tall oak trees
Reaching towards heaven,
'Sizzle,' hissed the lightning,
Then there were seven.

Two tall oak trees
Spreading in the sun,
'Progress,' snarled the by-pass,
Then there was one.

Seven tall oak trees,
Branches, leaves and sticks,
'Firewood,' smiled the merchant,
Then there were six.

One tall oak tree
Wishing it could run,
'Nuisance,' grumbled the farmer,
Then there were none.

Six tall oak trees
Glad to be alive,
'Barrels,' boomed the brewery,
Then there were five.

No tall oak trees,
Search the fields in vain;
Only empty skylines
And the cold, grey rain.

Five tall oak trees
Suddenly a roar,
'Gangway,' screamed the westwind,
Then there were four.

Richard Edwards.

Ideas for activities

1. Act out the poem with ten children to be the oak trees.
2. Write your own poem based on the life cycle of one oak tree. You could start with
'One tiny acorn growing on a stem,'
3. Write your own poem about planting a new forest with oak trees.