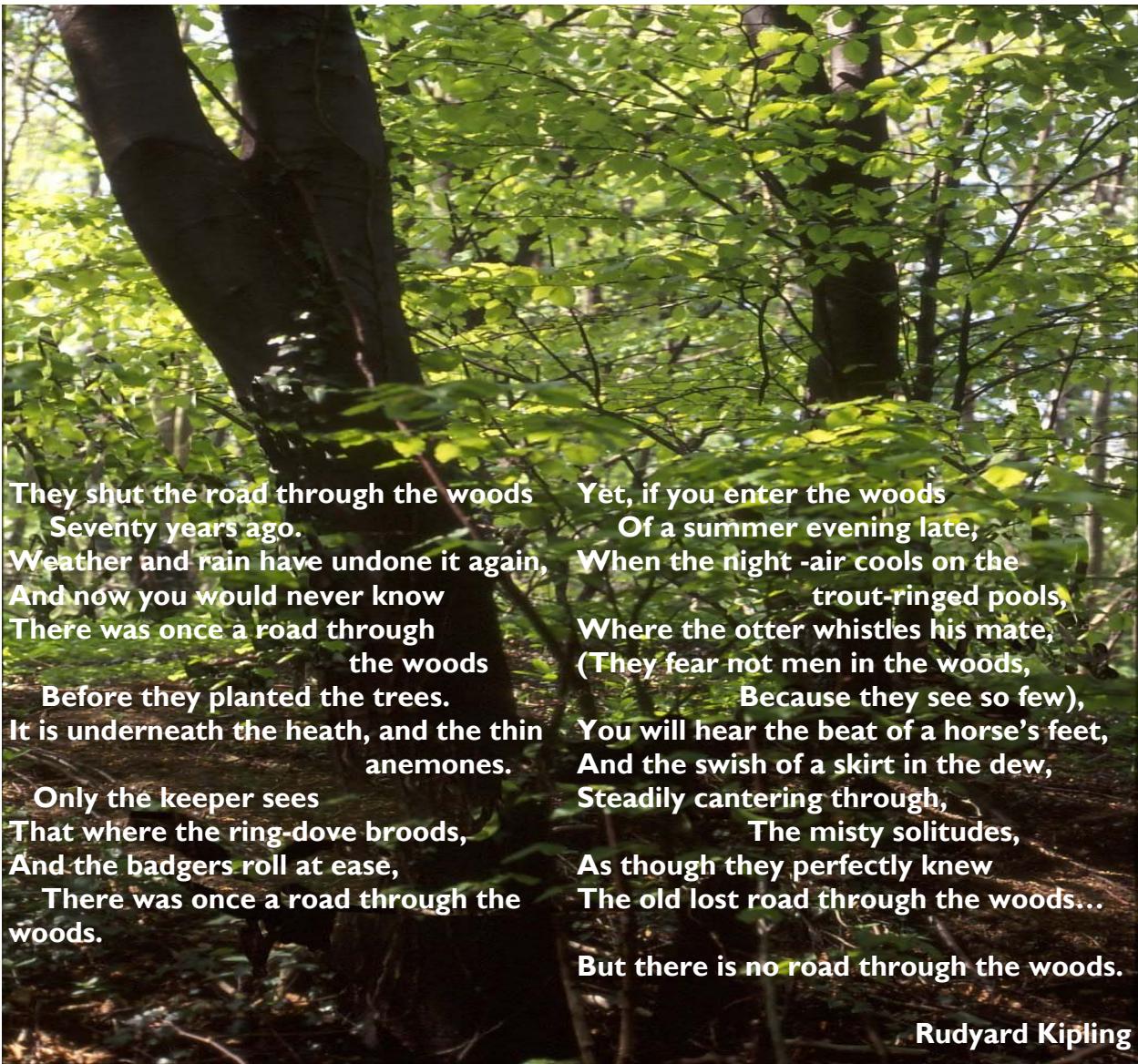




The Way Through the Woods

Name. _____

SOUTH YORKSHIRE
forest
A National *community forest* Partner



They shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
And now you would never know
There was once a road through
the woods
Before they planted the trees.
It is underneath the heath, and the thin
anemones.
Only the keeper sees
That where the ring-dove broods,
And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the
woods.

Yet, if you enter the woods
Of a summer evening late,
When the night -air cools on the
trout-ringed pools,
Where the otter whistles his mate,
(They fear not men in the woods,
Because they see so few),
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
Steadily cantering through,
The misty solitudes,
As though they perfectly knew
The old lost road through the woods...

But there is no road through the woods.

Rudyard Kipling

This poem is full of mystery. You might like to read it out loud and work out how Rudyard Kipling manages to create the air of mystery so well.

It leaves many questions unanswered;

- why did they close the road through the woods?
- why do people visit these woods so seldom?
- what sort of a wood is this now?
- what does the keeper do there?
- what happened seventy years ago?
- who is the lady on the horse and where is she going?
- can the horse really be heard?

**Write a story or a play about the road through the wood
and the story of the strange woman,
explaining why the old road was abandoned.**