

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Road Not Taken

By Robert Frost  
1916

*Robert Frost (1874-1963) was one of the most popular and critically respected American poets in recent history. His poems often discuss rural scenes from the New England countryside. "The Road Not Taken" is one of Frost's most frequently cited poems. As you read the poem, identify the imagery the speaker uses to describe the setting.*

- [1] Two roads diverged<sup>1</sup> in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
[5] To where it bent in the undergrowth;<sup>2</sup>
- Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted<sup>3</sup> wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
[10] Had worn them really about the same,
- And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden<sup>4</sup> black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
[15] I doubted if I should ever come back.
- I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
[20] And that has made all the difference.



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1. **Diverge (verb):** to separate from another route or go in a different direction
2. a dense growth of shrubs and other plants, especially under trees in woodland
3. lacked
4. **Tread (verb):** to walk or step

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Using evidence from the text, explain what the “roads” symbolize in this poem.  
  

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2. Which statement best describes how the speaker’s thoughts in lines 9-12 affect the meaning of the poem?
  - A. The speaker admits the roads are really the same, meaning he does not take the road less traveled but wants his choice to seem like it matters.
  - B. The speaker admits the two roads are really the same, indicating that he will grow confused with age and forget his past choices.
  - C. The speaker thinks both roads are actually heavily traveled, meaning that in the end both choices would have led to full lives.
  - D. The speaker thinks he took the road less traveled, but is not sure if it has made any difference in his life.
3. Which statement best describes the significance of lines 13-15 on the meaning of the poem?
  - A. The speaker is not worried he made the wrong choice because he can return to take the other road.
  - B. The speaker is worried he took the more traveled road and will not be able to return to take the less traveled one.
  - C. The speaker understands that taking one opportunity will likely prevent him from going back to take another.
  - D. The speaker believes that he will be able to take all of the opportunities presented to him at some point in life.
4. Which of the following best describes a theme of the text?
  - A. Sometimes one must make a choice without knowing if it will be best and live with the consequences.
  - B. There will always be decisions in life, but one can return and make the decision differently if one makes a mistake.
  - C. Following one’s heart is easier than following one’s head, but since decisions don’t really matter it is best to follow one’s heart.
  - D. Making the most common or popular decisions ensures that one will take the correct path through life.

5. Using evidence from the text, explain the impact of the speaker telling his story with a “sigh” in line 16.

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## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. In your opinion, is the speaker in the poem satisfied with his decision? Why or why not?
2. Do you think this is a poem about regret or appreciation? Explain.
3. What is an example of taking “the road less traveled”? Have you ever done this? Explain.
4. Do the decisions in your lifetime make you who you are? Can you change who you are by making different choices? Use evidence from this poem, your own experience, or other art and literature to answer this question.
5. In the context of this poem, can people control their own fate, or is it entirely up to destiny? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.