

# ENGLISH

## CHAPTER 1: THE ROAD NOT TAKEN



## THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

~Summary~

**-by Robert Frost**

## Stanza- 1

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveller, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

**Explanation:** The poet has come into the deep autumnal wood where two roads have diverged into two ways like a fork. Immediately the poet understands that as a traveller, travelling both the roads is impossible. Here the two roads symbolise two ways to go in life. The poet first thought of travelling both the roads and then discarded the idea. Then he finds himself in dilemma into able to decide about the choice of roads. He found that the first road has bent in the undergrowth bush). The undergrowth here represents the unknown world.

## Stanza- 2

Then took the other, just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same.

**Explanation:** The poet selects the road that appears at first glance to be less travelled. This stanza suggests that he has an independent spirit and does not wish to follow the crowd. After a moment, he changes his mind, concluding that both roads are equally worn out.

## Stanza- 3

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

**Explanation:** Leaves cover both roads equally. No one this morning has yet taken either path, for the leaves lie undisturbed. This symbolises that the choices in life open to the poet are both unknown to him. The poet remains committed to his decision to take the road he had previously selected, saying that he will save the other road for another day. This symbolises that he will make the other choice in life only if he is not satisfied with the results of the first choice. He observes, that he will probably never pass this way again, as one path leads to another, and thus will never have an opportunity to take the other road. This symbolises that he will not be able to take the second choice in life at all.

## Stanza- 4

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 travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

**Explanation:** In years to come, the poet says, he will be telling others about the choice he made, meaning that he will talk about what decision in life he took. While doing so, he will sigh, either with relief that he made the right choice, or with regret that he made the wrong choice. Whether right or wrong, the choice will have had a significant impact on his life.

### Conclusion of The Road Not Taken

The poem's concludes with ".....and that has made all the difference.". The concluding lines conveys that the decision taken make all the differences. Meaning, right or wrong decisions at life's stage have huge bearing in shaping the individual's life.

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**NCERT SOLUTIONS**  
**Questions (Page No. 16)**  
**(Thinking about the Poem)**

I.

Question 1. Where does the traveler find himself? What problem does he face?

Answer: The traveler finds himself at a point in the woods where two roads diverge.

The problem is that he cannot travel both the roads and thus he has to choose one between them.

Question 2. Discuss what these phrases mean to you.

- i. a yellow wood
- ii. it was grassy and wanted wear
- iii. the passing there
- iv. leaves no step had trodden black
- v. how way leads on to way

Answer:

- i. The phrase "a yellow wood" indicates a forest during the autumn season.
- ii. The phrase "it was grassy and wanted wear" means that the road was full of grass as it has been less travelled. It wanted people to walk on it so that it can wear out.
- iii. The phrase "the passing there" refers to walking on that road.
- iv. "Leaves no step had trodden black" indicates that the fallen leaves had not been crushed under the feet of the travelers.
- v. The phrase "how way leads on to way" means that one road leads to another. So once the poet has made a choice between the two roads, he wonders if he will ever be able to come on the same divergence and choose the other one.

Question 3. Is there any difference between the two roads as the poet describes them:

- i. in stanzas two and three?

- ii. in the last two lines of the poem?

Answer:

- i. No, there is no difference between the two roads as the poet describes them in stanzas two and three as he says “the passing there had worn them really about the same” and that “equally lay in leaves no step had trodden black...”
- ii. In the last two lines of the poem, the poet indicates a difference between the two roads as he says that he took the road that was less travelled by and that has made a huge difference in his journey.

Question 4. What do you think the last two lines of the poem mean? (Looking back, does the poet regret his choice or accept it?)

Answer: The last two lines of the poem talk about taking a decision and accepting its consequences- good or bad. The poet chose the road that was less travelled by, which indicates he took a decision that people would not take generally.

He says in the last line of the poem that his choice of taking the road less travelled by has made all the difference. He does not seem to regret his choice.

II.

Question 1. Have you ever had to make a difficult choice (or do you think you will have difficult choices to make)? How will you make the choice (for what reasons)?

Answer: We all make choices on a daily basis. But I have not had to make a difficult choice till date.

I will have to face challenges in the years to come as I grow up. Then, I will have to make difficult choices. I will have to choose my profession, my area of interest, etc.

I think when such a situation will come, I will not just follow the herd. I will think it through and just like the poet, if required, I will take up the unexplored paths.

Question 2. After you have made a choice do you always think about what might have been, or do you accept the reality?

Answer: There is no point in regretting or thinking about what might have been. Such thoughts will always keep us in the hold of past and never let us see the benefits of the choices we made. Accepting reality is the best way to overcome any situation.

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