



Notes

14

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

You must have had to make choices sometimes. Did you ever feel unsure of your choice? Was it because you didn't know what your choice would lead you to?

The poet in the poem 'The Road Not Taken' is at crossroads. There are two roads and he has to choose one.

Read the poem aloud and enjoy its rhythm .

Then read it silently.

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;
 Then took the other, as 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,
 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.

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.

- *Robert Frost*



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**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.1**

Q.1 Do you think it was easy for the poet to choose between the two roads?

Now, read the first stanza once again

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;

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.2**

Answer the following questions:

1. Why does the poet call the wood 'yellow wood'?
2. Who is the traveller? Why does he feel sorry?
3. Why does the poet look down the road as far as he can see?
4. Choose the correct option to explain the phrase 'bent in the undergrowth'.

The phrase means that

- (i) there were bushes
- (ii) one couldn't see beyond a point
- (iii) the road was grassy and full of leaves.

Let's read further.

Then took the other, as 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.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.3**

1. Does the poet take the road that he was looking at in the first stanza?
2. Why does the other road have better claim?

Now, read the next stanza.

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.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.4

1. Pick out the lines which say that both the roads looked similar that morning?
2. 'Way leads on to way' means –
 - (i) there are many roads ahead.
 - (ii) it is an uphill road.
 - (iii) one road joins another road ahead.

We will read the last stanza of the poem, now.

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.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.5

1. In the first stanza, the poet is talking of the present time when he has to choose one of the two roads. What time is he thinking of in the last stanza? Pick out the words in support of your answer.
2. What has made all the difference?
3. What does 'that' refer to?



OVERALL QUESTIONS

1. What do the two roads stand for in the poem?
2. Does the poem relate to some situations in your life when it was not easy for you to take a decision?



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3. You are about to complete school. You now have to decide on a career and accordingly the subjects you have to take in college. How would you take this decision? Here are a few suggestions you might like to consider.
- Subject of your interest
 - Your aptitude
 - Your financial position
 - Responsibilities at home
 - Advice of the teacher
 - Consulting career counsellor
 - Surfing the internet
 - Asking friends or seniors

Keeping these points in mind think of a vocation and the subjects you would choose. Justify your choice.

**CHECK YOUR ANSWERS****Intext Questions 14.1**

1. No

Intext Questions 14.2

1. It was autumn. The leaves were yellow.
2. The poet. He feels sorry because he can't travel both the roads.
3. To know what lies ahead
4. (ii) one couldn't see beyond a point.

Intext Questions 14.3

1. No, he takes the other road.
2. Because it was grassy and wanted wear.

Intext Questions 14.4

1. "Both that morning equally lay in leaves no step had trodden back."
2. (iii) one road joins another road ahead.

Intext Questions 14.5

1. Future. "Somewhere ages and ages hence".
2. His decision
3. His decision to take the other road.

OVERALL QUESTIONS

1. The two roads stand for the choices we have to make in life.
2. You can think of situations when you were in a state of indecision – when you found it difficult to make a choice.