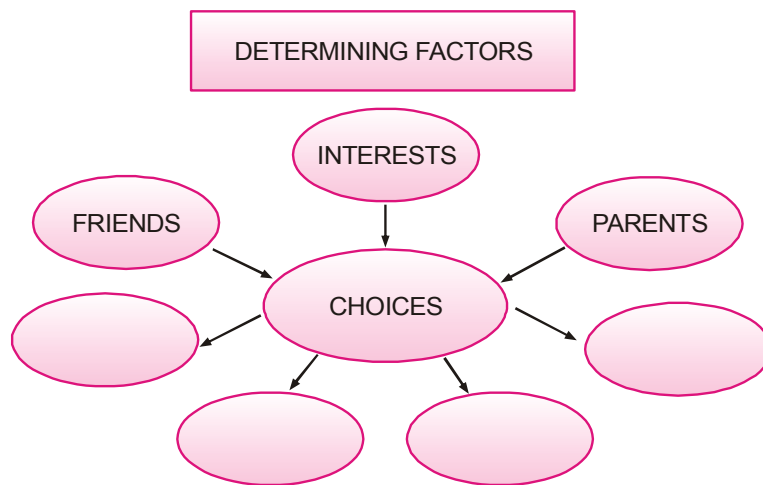


P.2 The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

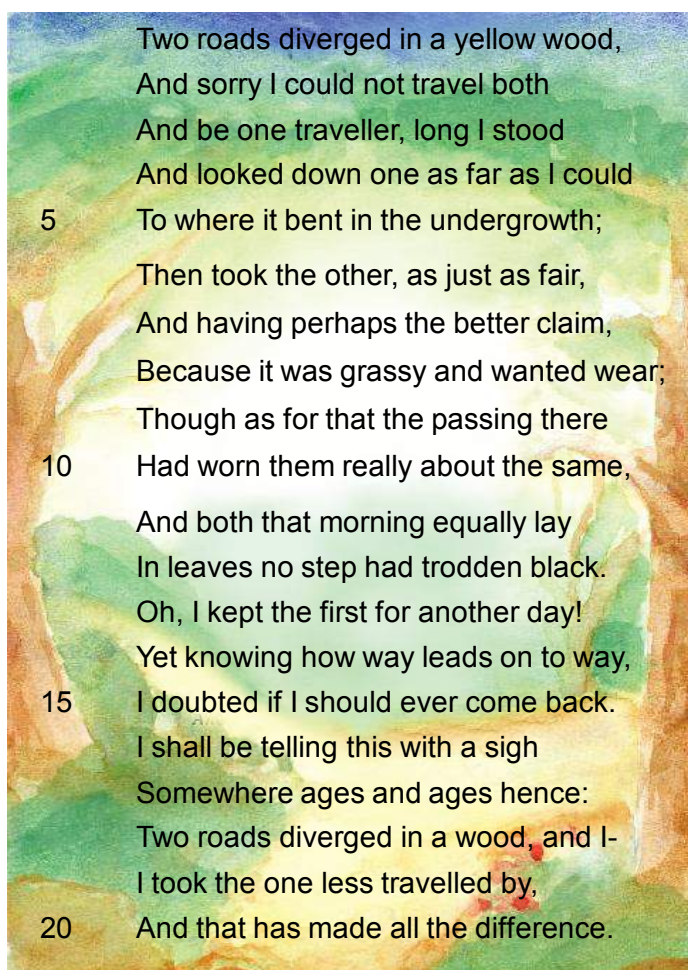
1. Sometimes the choices we make have far-reaching consequences. Think about choices you make on a daily basis, and the importance of these choices.
2. Complete the web chart showing choices and decisions you may have to make in the next few years and the factors that affect these choices. (Pay attention to the arrows.)



Share your choices and decisions with your partner.

3. Have you made choices that are acceptable and less 'risky' or have you followed the beaten track? Why?
4. List common dilemmas that teenagers face involving the choice of one or more "roads." Give examples of "roads" that you must travel (e.g. facing peer pressure, choosing friends, observing rules laid down by school and parents, acting on your own values).
5. Listen to a recording of the poem.
 - a. What choice did the poet have to make?
 - b. Did he regret his choice? Why/ why not?

6. Read the poem silently.

**About the Poet**

Robert Frost (1874-1963) was born in San Francisco, Frost spent most of his adult life in rural New England and his laconic language and emphasis on individualism in his poetry reflect this region. He attended Dartmouth and Harvard but never earned a degree. As a young man with a growing family he attempted to write poetry while working on a farm and teaching in a school. American editors rejected his submitted poems. With considerable pluck Frost moved his family to England in 1912 and the following year, a London publisher brought out his first book. After publishing a second book, Frost returned to America determined to win a reputation in his own country, which he gradually achieved. He became one of the country's best-loved poets. Unlike his contemporaries, Frost chose not to experiment with the new verse forms but to employ traditional patterns, or as he said, he chose "the old-fashioned way to be new." Despite the surface cheerfulness and descriptive accuracy of his poems, he often presents a dark, sober vision of life, and there is a defined thoughtful quality to his work which makes it unique.

7. On the basis of your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions by selecting the correct choice.

- (a) In the poem, a traveller comes to a fork in the road and needs to decide which way to go to continue his journey. Figuratively the choice of the road denotes
- (i) the tough choices people make on the road of life.
 - (ii) the time wasted on deciding what to do.
 - (iii) life is like a forest.
 - (iv) one must travel a lot to realize one's dreams.
- (b) The poet writes, 'Two roads diverged in a yellow wood.' The word diverged means
- (i) appeared
 - (ii) curved
 - (iii) branched off
 - (iv) continued on
- (c) The tone of the speaker in the first stanza is that of
- (i) excitement
 - (ii) anger
 - (iii) hesitation and thoughtfulness
 - (iv) sorrow
- (d) Select the quote that captures the central idea of the poem most appropriately.
- (i) We often confuse what we wish for with what is.
 - (ii) I have always been much better at asking questions than knowing what the answers were.
 - (iii) You are free to make whatever choice you want, but you are not free from the consequences of the choice.
 - (iv) To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong.

8. Answer the following questions briefly.

- i) Describe the two roads that the poet comes across.
- ii) Which road does the speaker choose? Why did he choose that?
- iii) Which road would you choose? Why? Give reasons for your choice.
- iv) Does the speaker seem happy about his decision?
- v) The poet says "I took the one less travelled by, And that has made all the difference." What is 'the difference' that the poet mentions?

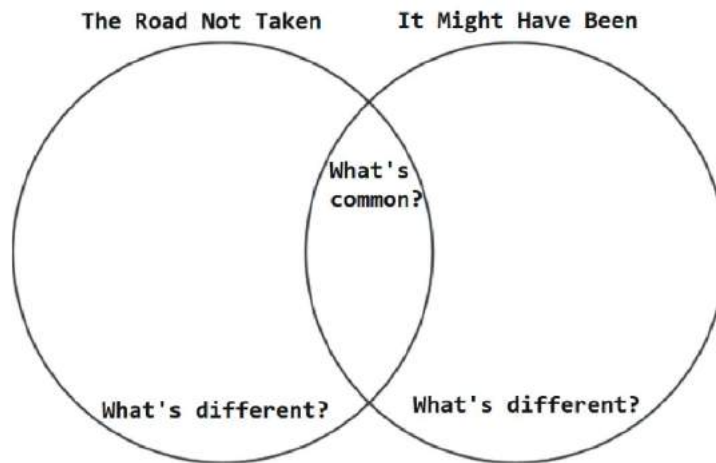
- vi) Comment on Frost's use of nature to establish a connect with a human situation.
- vii) The poem carries a tinge of regret. Do you agree? Explain with a reason.
- viii) Establish a connection between the given quote and the poem.

If you want to achieve something you've never had, you have to move out of your comfort zone to travel towards it.

8. Read Ella Wheeler Wilcox's 'It Might Have Been'.

[Link to the poem: <http://www.ellawheelerwilcox.org/poems/pitmight.htm>]

Compare the poem to 'The Road Not Taken' and complete the following, based on your insights.



Through a discussion, share your insight with others in class.

- 9. Identify the rhyme scheme of the poem, 'The Road Not Taken'.**
- 10 Fill in the blanks to complete the following paragraph that highlights the theme of the poem. Use the words given in the box below**

decision	sorry	foresee	choices	pleasant	direction
fork	trail	rewarding	chance	wonder	both

The poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost is about the _____ that one makes in life. It tells about a man who comes to a _____ in the road he is travelling upon. He feels _____ that he can not travel _____ paths as he must choose one. Frost uses this fork in the road to represent a point in the man's life where he has to choose the _____ he wishes to take in life. As he thinks about his _____ he looks down one path, as far as he can see trying to what life will be like if he walks that path. He then gazes at the other and decides that the outcome of going down that path would be just as _____. At this point

he concludes that the _____ that has been less travelled on would be more _____ when he reaches the end of it. The man then decides that he will save the other path for another day, even though he knows that one path leads to another and that he won't get a _____ to go back. The man then says that he will be telling this story with a sigh, someday in the future suggesting that he will what life would have been like if he had chosen the more walked path even though the path he chose has made all the difference.

11. ***Roads are fascinating as metaphors for life, change, journeys, partings, adventure, etc. or simply as roads. This is probably why they, and all their attendant images, have permeated art, literature and songs. In the poem, Frost uses the fork in the road as a metaphor for the choices we make in life. Thus the roads are, in fact, two alternative ways of life. According to you, what are the other objects that could be used to represent life?***

- River
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

12. ***In groups of six, select, write the script of and present a skit that demonstrates decision making and conflict resolution. Follow the steps given below :***

- choices to be made,
- options to be considered
- influence of others
- decisions/actions taken
- immediate and future consequences of the decision.

13. ***'The Road Not Taken' is a biographical poem. Therefore, some personal biographical information is relevant for the deeper understanding of the poem we have read. Go to www.encarta.com and complete the following worksheet about Robert Frost.***

- a) What "momentous decision" was made by Frost in 1912?
- b) How old was he when took that decision?
- c) Why was it so difficult to take that decision? Think and give more than one reason.
- d) Was the "road" taken by Frost an easy one "to travel"?

- e) Do you think he wrote “The Road Not Taken” before sailing from the USA to England or after? Can you quote a line or two from the poem that can support your answer?
- f) Do you think Frost finally became popular in America as a poet?

14. You can find more information about Robert Frost at the following websites

<http://www.poets.org/poets/poets.cfm?prmlID=1961>

Hear the poet (who died almost forty years ago!) reading the poem at

<http://www.poets.org/poems/poems.cfm?prmlID=1645>

To view a beautiful New England scene with each poem on this web site: “Illustrated Poetry of Robert Frost”:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/1487/index.html>

