

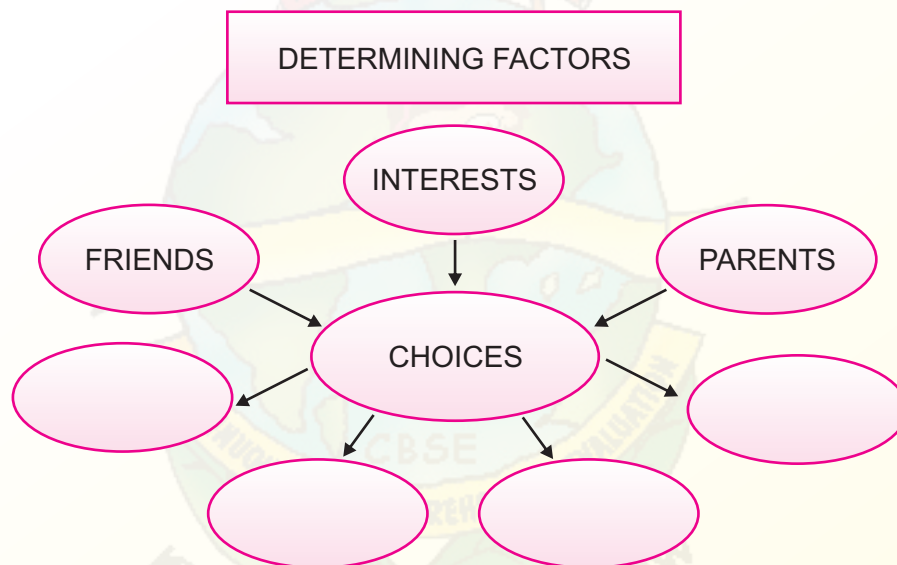
Poetry **7**

UNIT

P.2 The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

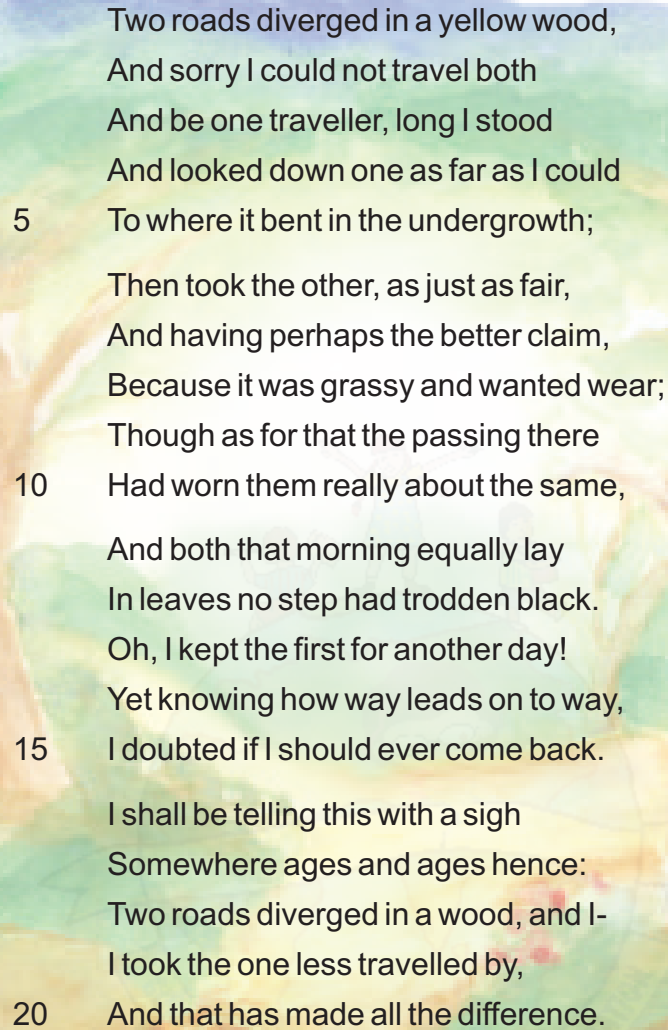
1. Sometimes the choices we make have far-reaching consequences. Think about choices you make on a daily basis, and the importance of these choices.
2. Complete the web chart showing choices and decisions you may have to make in the next few years and the factors that affect these choices.



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.
 - a. Listen to a recording of the poem.
 - b. What choice did the poet have to make?
 - c. Did he regret his choice? Why/why not?

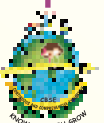


6. **Read the poem silently.**


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
 5 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
 10 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,
 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 travelled by,
 20 And that has made all the difference.

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, and as a young man with a growing family he attempted to write poetry while working on a farm or 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 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 decidedly thoughtful quality to his work.



7. **On the basis of your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions by ticking 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 the road of life.
- (ii) the time wasted on deciding what to do.
- (iii) life is like a forest.
- (v) one must travel a lot to realize his 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

8. **Answer the following questions briefly.**

- i) Describe the two roads that the author comes across.
- ii) Which road does the speaker choose? Why?
- iii) Which road would you choose? Why?
- 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?

9. **Write the rhyme scheme of the poem.**



10 **Fill in the blanks to complete the following paragraph that gives 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 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 song. 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. What other nouns 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**



- *the influence of others*
- *the decisions/actions taken*
- *the immediate and future consequences of the decision.*

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

- What "momentous decision" was made by Frost in 1912?
- How old was he when took this decision?
- Why was it so difficult to make this decision? Think and give more than one reason.
- Was the "road" Frost had taken easy "to travel"?
- 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?
- 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.](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 in this web site: "Illustrated Poetry of Robert Frost":

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

