

SUBJECT:-English Language & Literature

Class-9

Poem-The Road not Taken

INTRODUCTION

About the poet:-

- Robert Frost (March 26, 1874- January 29, 1963) was an American poet.
- He was born in San Francisco, California, to journalist William Prescott Frost, Jr. and Isabelle Moodie.
- His work was initially published in England. Later on, it was published in America.
- In 1894, he wrote his first poem, 'My Butterfly, An Elegy'.
- 'The Gift Outright, Birches, Mending Walls, etc., are few of his important poems.
- Frost was honoured frequently during his lifetime. He received four Pulitzer Prizes for poetry.
- He became one of America's rare 'public literary figures, almost an artistic institution'.
- He was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 1960 for his poetic work.
- On July 22, 1961, Frost was named Poet Laureate of Vermont.
- Frost received over 40 honorary degrees, including ones from Princeton, Oxford and Cambridge universities.
- Frost died in Boston on January 29, 1963, of complications from prostate surgery.



About the poem:-

Robert Frost writes simply, but insightfully, about common, ordinary experiences. 'The Road Not Taken' is a lyric poem. This poem is not meant to tell a story but it works to show the emotions and feelings that the poet is experiencing. The poem is definitely about choices and opportunities in life but it highlights the feeling of regret which is associated with all the roads a person is unable to take.

THEME:-

The theme of Robert Frost's poem centres on the narrator being faced with the two choices and deciding upon the better one. He depicts it figuratively through the two diverging roads in a forest. Whether the roads are literal or the choices which one has to make in life, the decision making process is the same. It conveys that one should not be afraid of accepting challenges in life. Walking on the untrodden path can have far reaching consequences and can make a difference in a person's life.

Central Idea of the Poem

The poet, Robert Frost tells us about the dilemma faced by an individual while taking decisions in life. The person in the poem has to decide whether to follow the crowd or opt for the road less travelled by. He chooses the road which many people had not taken before. At the same time he also wonders about the road that he had not taken. He thinks about the option that he left and also what would have happened if he had made a different choice.

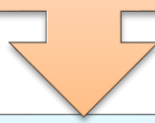
SUMMARY:-

'The Road Not Taken' is considered to be one of the best poems of Robert Frost. In this poem the poet has very beautifully depicted the predicament of life that mankind faces. There are so many alternatives in the life of mankind. But, before the poet there are two choices.

The speaker, walking through a forest whose leaves have turned yellow in autumn, comes to a fork in the road. The speaker, regretting that he or she is unable to travel by both the roads (due to human limitations), stands at the fork in the road for a long time and tries to see where one of the paths lead to. However, the speaker can't see very far because the forest is dense and the road is not straight.

The speaker takes the other path, judging it to be just as good a choice as the first, one and supposing that it may even be the better option of the two, since it is grassy and looks less worn out than the other path. Though, now that the speaker has actually walked on the second road, he or she thinks that in reality the two roads must have been more or less equally worn out.

Reinforcing this statement, the speaker recalls that both the roads were covered in leaves, which had not yet been turned black by foot traffic. The speaker exclaims that he or she is in fact just saving the first road, and will travel by it sometime later in life, but then immediately contradicts himself /herself with the acknowledgement that, in life, one road tends to lead on to another. Therefore it is unlikely that he or she will ever get a chance to return to that first road.



The speaker imagines himself /herself in the distant future, recounting, with a sigh, the story of making the choice of which road to take. Speaking as though looking back on his or her life from the future, the speaker states that he or she was faced with a choice between two roads and chose the road that was less travelled by, and the consequences of that decision have made all the difference in his or her life.

POETIC DEVICES

1. **Metaphor**: There are many metaphors in the poem like road, fork in the road and yellowwoods. The road in the poem is the metaphor of life, while the fork on the road metaphorically represents the choices we make to determine the course of our lives. Similarly, yellow woods are the metaphor of making decisions during the hard times of a person's life. These metaphors used in this poem emphasize the importance of different decisions we make in different situations and their impacts on our lives.
2. **Imagery**: Imagery is used to make the readers feel things through their five senses. The poet has used images of the sense of sights such as leaves and yellow woods. These images help readers to actually perceive things they are reading. The image of the road helps readers to visualize the road providing a navigation route to the traveller.
3. **Simile**: There is one simile used in the second stanza "as just as fair". It shows how the poet has linked the road less taken to the easy way through life.
4. **Repetition**: The word 'ages' has been repeated "Somewhere ages and ages hence" and "I" also has been repeated to emphasis upon the fact that I poet had taken a difficult path to carve a niche for himself.
5. **Personification**: Robert Frost has personified road in the third line of the second stanza. Here, it is stated "Because it was grassy and wanted wear" as if the road is human, and that it wants to wear and tear.

ASSIGNMENT

Q1. Read the following lines and attempt the questions that follow:

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

- a) Why did the poet decide to take the other road?
- b) What was the condition of the road?
- c) The poet was _____ in nature.

Q2. Read the following lines and attempt the questions that follow:

Two roads diverged 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
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

- a) Where did the two roads diverge in?
- b) Where did the poet look for the road?
- c) Identify the rhyme scheme of the above stanza.
- d) Give the synonym of the word 'vegetation' from the stanza.

Q3. What predicament does the poet face in the poem 'The Road not taken'?

Q4. How does the poet feel about his decision?

FURTHER REFERENCE

https://diksha.gov.in/play/collection/do_312796455235125248120134?contentType=TextBook
