Close Reading: The Road Not Taken

Step 1	## Choose the right text [1]

Selected text? "The Road Not Taken" van Robert Forst

Age? 13/14

Source? Poemhunter.com

What kind of text is it?

O Fiction	O prescriptive
X Non Fiction	O informative
	O persuasive
	X narrative
	O opinionated
	O other:

("The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost is considered a poetic work of the non-fiction genre. Although the poem itself describes a fictional scenario (making a choice between two roads), the themes and emotions expressed in the poem are considered real and genuine. Frost reportedly based the poem on his own experiences and observations, giving it a non-fictional element. Moreover, the poem is often interpreted as a metaphor for making choices in life, connecting it to real human experiences and decision-making.)

Does the text match the level of your students?

While the text may present some challenges, it is generally appropriate for students aged 12-13, especially with guidance and support from a teacher or educator. It's a well-known piece of literature that many may have encountered before. Its language is generally accessible. Additionally, the poem offers opportunities for analytical thinking and interpretation, which can help students develop their critical thinking skills.

Does the text match the students' world of experience?

Its themes of decision-making and individuality are relevant to students of this age.

Step 2	## Goal [2]

What are your lesson objectives?
- Comprehension: Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the literal meaning of the poem by summarizing its main events and themes.

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[1] Chapter 4.1
[2] Chapter 4.2

	- Analysis: Students will be able to analyze the poem's figurative language, symbolism, and poetic devices (such as imagery, rhyme, and meter) to deepen their understanding of its deeper meanings. - Interpretation: Students will be able to interpret the poem's themes and messages, including its exploration of decision-making, individuality, and the consequences of choices. - Critical Thinking: Students will be able to critically evaluate the narrator's perspective and the poem's message, considering different possible interpretations and perspectives. - Creative Expression: Students will be able to express their own thoughts and feelings about the poem through writing, discussion, or creative projects, demonstrating personal connections to the themes and ideas presented in the text. **What learning outcomes do you want to link to your reading lesson?** The learning outcomes aim to cultivate a multifaceted engagement with the poem. Students will demonstrate comprehension by grasping its literal meaning, including events, themes, and the narrator's choices. Critical thinking skills will be honed through analysis of the poem's figurative language, symbolism, and poetic devices, fostering interpretation from various perspectives. Literary analysis will empower students to recognize and dissect elements such as imagery, rhyme, and tone, discerning their impact on the poem's overall effect. Through interpretation and evaluation, students will form opinions on themes and messages, critically assessing the narrator's viewpoint. Additionally, personal reflection and connection will be encouraged, prompting students to relate the poem's themes to their own lives and express their responses creatively. By intertwining these learning outcomes, students will engage deeply with the text, enriching their comprehension and appreciation of literature. **What end-terms do you want to cover during the lesson?** This text can serve as a tool to address various educational goals encompassing language skills, literature appreciation, critical thinking, and personal growth. Through it, students enhance their <u>reading competence</u> by comprehending and interpreting intricate texts, discerning both the text's meaning and the author's intentions. Additionally, students refine their <u>literary competence</u> by analyzing and interpreting literary works, grasping literary techniques, themes, and stylistic elements. The text fosters <u>critical thinking</u> as students learn to question, evaluate arguments, and consider diverse perspectives. Moreover, it promotes <u>creativity</u>, prompting students to express themselves through writing tasks, discussions, and creative projects inspired by the text. Furthermore, it facilitates <u>personal and social development</u> as students reflect on the text's themes and messages, connecting them to their own experiences and the broader societal context, thus nurturing personal growth and societal awarenes
Step 3	Pre-reading [3]

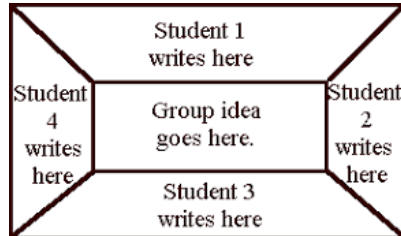[3] Chapter 6

	Get your students excited about the text. Do this through discussion, brainstorming, pictures, videos, etc. **Which working form do you use to arouse your students' interest?** Brainstorming session **How do you tackle this?** This pre-reading activity for "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost could be a brainstorming session or discussion about the theme of choices and decision-making. This activity aims to activate students' prior knowledge and get them thinking about the topic before diving into the poem. Here's how the activity will be structured: **Brainstorming**: Begin by asking students to brainstorm different situations in which they've had to make choices. Encourage them to think about both big decisions (like choosing a school or career path) and smaller, everyday choices (like what to eat for breakfast). **Group Discussion**: Divide the class into small groups and have them discuss some of the choices they brainstormed. Encourage them to share their thoughts on how they made their decisions, what factors influenced them, and whether they ever felt uncertain about which path to take. **Sharing**: After the group discussions, reconvene as a class and have each group share some of the choices they discussed. Facilitate a whole-class discussion about the commonalities and differences in the choices students shared. **Prediction**: Based on the theme of choices and decision-making, ask students to predict what they think the poem might be about. Encourage them to consider how the theme of choices could be explored in a poem. Examples of questions to help students (modelling): *What did you have for breakfast today? Why did you choose that?* *Have you ever had to decide what to wear for a special event or occasion? How did you make that decision?* *Why did you choose this education? Was it difficult to decide?*
Step 4	First Reading [4] **Students rad the text for the first time. It might be the choice of the teacher to read it or… Use a audio of the poem (listening exercise):** **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUaQgRiJukA** **What is the text about?** The poem is about a traveler who comes across a fork in the road and must choose between two paths.

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[4] Chapter 7

As a teacher, how will you get your students to formulate an answer to the above questions (oral review, written, placemat method ...)?

Placemat method

1. **Preparation**: Provide each student with a placemat (a large sheet of paper divided into four sections) and writing utensils.

2. **Individual Reflection**: Ask students to take a few minutes to reflect individually on the poem and jot down their thoughts about its main idea. Encourage them to consider key themes, messages, and symbols in the poem.

3. **Small Group Discussion**: Divide the class into small groups and have them share their individual reflections on the poem's main idea. Each group member should take turns discussing their thoughts while others listen attentively.

4. **Collaborative Formulation**: Instruct each group to collaboratively formulate a statement summarizing the main idea of the poem based on their individual reflections and group discussion. They should write this statement in the center of their placemat.

5. **Sharing and Comparison**: After each group has formulated their main idea statement, reconvene as a class. Invite one member from each group to share their group's statement with the class, writing it on the board or a shared document for all to see.

6. **Comparison and Consensus**: Facilitate a discussion comparing and contrasting the main idea statements generated by each group. Encourage students to identify common themes and points of agreement, as well as any differences in interpretation.

7. **Finalize the Main Idea**: Based on the discussion and comparison, work together as a class to finalize a consensus statement that encapsulates the main idea of the poem. Write this statement prominently on the board or a shared document for reference.

What reading strategies will be covered? [5]

Analyzing Literary Devices: Students can analyze the literary devices used in the poem, such as imagery, metaphor, symbolism, and rhyme scheme. Identifying and analyzing these devices helps deepen their understanding of the poem's meaning and enhances their appreciation of its craftsmanship.

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[5] Chapter 4.5

Step 5	**Second reading** [6]
	How does the text say it? [7]
	Dig deeper into the text. What do you want to focus on? Choose at least one of the following suggestions: *language and style, sentence structure, literal and figurative language, imagery, patterns, others…*
	Use the space below to describe your focus and how you will handle this.
	Activity: Literal vs. Figurative Language Exploration
	Objective: To identify and analyze examples of literal and figurative language in preparation for reading "The Road Not Taken."
	Materials Needed:
	- Excerpts from the poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost - Chart paper or whiteboard - Writing utensils
	Instructions:
	1. Introduce the concepts of literal and figurative language to students, explaining that literal language conveys straightforward, factual information, while figurative language uses words and phrases in a non-literal way to create imagery, symbolism, or deeper meaning.
	2. Divide the class into small groups and provide each group with an excerpt from "The Road Not Taken" that contains both literal and figurative language. For example:
	o Literal language excerpt: "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood"
	o Figurative language excerpt: "I took the one less traveled by"
	3. Instruct each group to identify and label examples of literal language and figurative language in their excerpt. They should underline or highlight the specific words and phrases that exemplify each type of language.
	4. Have each group share their findings with the class, writing the examples of literal and figurative language on the chart paper or whiteboard. Encourage students to explain why they classified each example as either literal or figurative.
	5. Facilitate a class discussion about the differences between literal and figurative language and how each type contributes to the overall meaning and impact of the poem. Guide students to consider how the literal descriptions of the setting and actions provide concrete details, while the figurative language conveys deeper themes and emotions.
	6. Conclude the activity by summarizing the main points discussed and emphasizing the importance of understanding both literal and figurative language for interpreting poetry effectively.
	Solutions:

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[6] Chapter 8
[7] Chapter 8.1

	1. **Literal Language**:
	   o In the phrase "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood," the literal language describes a physical setting where the narrator encounters two paths that split off in a forest.
	2. **Figurative Language**:
	   o In the phrase "I took the one less traveled by," the figurative language conveys a deeper meaning beyond the literal action of choosing a path. The phrase symbolizes making unconventional choices in life, taking a path that is less popular or conventional.

Step 6	Third reading [8]
	
	Find the deeper meaning of the text. Focus on one of the following suggestions:
	Theme, characters, symbolism, language and style, emotive value of words, structure, context, author's purpose, unanswered questions, critical view, ...
	Which focus do you put?
	
	How will you discuss the above? (guided discussion, group activity, creative assignment, written questions, comparative analysis, comparing literary sources ...) [9]
	
	Use the space below to make up questions.
	
	1. **Introduction**: Begin by discussing the concept of an author's purpose with students, explaining that authors often write with specific intentions or goals in mind, such as conveying a message, exploring themes, or evoking emotions.
	2. **Close Reading**: Instruct them to read the poem closely, paying attention to key themes, literary devices, and recurring motifs. Advice them to use markers.
	3. **Theme Identification**: Ask students to identify and discuss the central themes present in the poem. Encourage them to consider questions such as:
	   ● **What choices does the narrator face in the poem?**
	   The narrator faces the choice of which path to take at a fork in the road. This choice symbolizes the broader concept of decision-making and the uncertainty of choosing between different life paths.
	   ● **How does the narrator feel about the choices presented?**
	   The narrator feels conflicted and uncertain about the choices presented. While they initially observe that both paths appear equally worn and attractive, they ultimately express doubt and regret about not being able to travel both paths simultaneously.
	   ● **What broader ideas or messages might the poem be exploring?**
	   The poem explores themes of choice, individuality, and the consequences of decisions. It suggests that life is full of choices, and the paths we choose shape our experiences and determine our destinies. The poem also emphasizes the importance of embracing individuality and making decisions based on personal conviction rather than following the crowd.

[8] Chapter 9
[9] Chapter 9.1

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<td colspan="2">Additionally, it reflects on the inevitability of regret and the uncertainty of the future.

4. Author's Purpose Inference: Based on their analysis of the poem's themes, literary devices, and historical context (if applicable), ask students to infer the author's purpose in writing "The Road Not Taken." Prompt them to consider what message or idea Robert Frost may have intended to convey through the poem.

Robert Frost's purpose in writing "The Road Not Taken" appears to be to explore the complexities of decision-making and the consequences of choices in life. Through the metaphor of choosing between two paths in a forest, Frost invites readers to reflect on the various paths and choices they encounter in their own lives. The poem suggests that individuals are faced with decisions that may seem insignificant at the time but ultimately shape their futures. Frost seems to convey the idea that embracing one's individuality and making choices based on personal conviction, even if they go against the norm, can lead to meaningful experiences and personal growth. Additionally, the poem highlights the inevitability of regret and the uncertainty of the future, encouraging readers to consider the long-term implications of their decisions. Overall, Frost's purpose appears to be to provoke contemplation and reflection on the nature of choice and its impact on one's life journey.</td>
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Post reading [10]

Come up with a playful assignment that has a clear link to the text (write a letter, find a song, write a poem, re-enact a scene ...)

Which assignment will you choose and how will you tackle it? [11]

<u>Activity</u>: Rewrite "The Road Not Taken" in a Funny Way

<u>Objective</u>: To creatively reinterpret "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost in a humorous or unconventional manner.

<u>Instructions</u>:

1. **Introduction**: Begin by revisiting the main themes and messages of "The Road Not Taken" with the class, reminding students of the serious tone and contemplative nature of the poem.
2. **Brainstorming**: Encourage students to brainstorm ideas for rewriting the poem in a funny or unconventional way. They can consider different perspectives, settings, and scenarios that would lend themselves to humor. Make sure they keep the link with the original poem.
3. **Writing**: Give students time to rewrite the poem in a funny or unconventional manner. They can use the structure and rhythm of the original poem as a framework but should feel free to modify the content and language to create humor.

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[10] Chapter 10
[11] Chapter 10.1

4. **Sharing and Performance**: Once students have completed their rewritten poems, invite volunteers to share their creations with the class. Encourage them to perform their poems with enthusiasm and comedic flair.
5. **Reflection**: Conclude the activity with a reflection session where students discuss what they learned from rewriting the poem in a funny way. They can also share any challenges they encountered and how they overcame them.

This activity not only provides a lighthearted and enjoyable way to engage with the text but also encourages students to think creatively and experiment with language and literary techniques. It reinforces key themes and messages from "The Road Not Taken" while allowing students to showcase their sense of humor and creativity.

Example:

"The Path Less Trodden"

Two paths diverged in a wacky wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one quirky traveler, 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 bizarre,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was really quite peculiar;
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 goofy sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two paths diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less trodden by,
And that has made all the difference.

In this rewrite, the narrator approaches the decision of which path to take with a sense of humor and whimsy. The language and imagery are exaggerated and playful, adding a comedic twist to the original poem's serious tone. The narrator's choice is based on the path's peculiarity rather than its deeper significance, reflecting a light-hearted approach to decision-making. Overall, the poem retains the structure and rhythm of the original while offering a humorous reinterpretation of its themes.
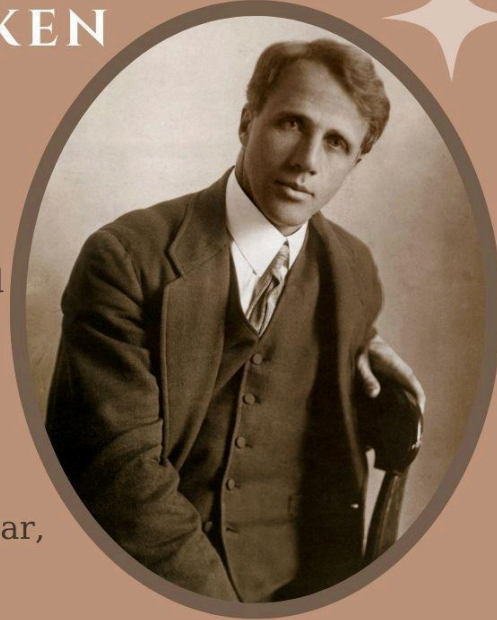
Extra:

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

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;

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 traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

WRITTEN BY
ROBERT FROST