

CHAPTER - 2

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN - POEM

Extract Based Questions (3 marks each)

Read the extract given below and answers the question that follow.

Q.1. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follows :

Two roads diverged in yellow wood.

And sorry I could not travel both And be one traveller, long I stood And looked down once as far as I could To where it bent in the undergrowth;

(i) At which point had the poet reached ?

(ii) Why was the traveller feeling sorry ?

(iii) Give the opposite to 'met at a point' from the passage ? (SA-1,2014-15)

Ans. (i) The poet is standing at a point where two roads diverged in the yellow wood.

(ii) The poet is feeling sorry because he could not travel both the roads.

(iii) 'Diverged'.

Q. 2. And both that morning equally lay In leaves no step had trodden back Oh, I kept the first for another day!

Yet knowing how way leads on to way,

I doubted it if I should ever come back

(i) Which road does the poet choose ?

(ii) Why was the poet doubtful about the first road ?

(iii) Find a word from the extract that means 'crushed'. (Board Term 1,2012, ELI-013)

Ans. (i) The poet took the second road.

(ii) The poet chose the second road over the first thinking that he would come to it some other day. Yet, he was very doubtful that he would ever be able to come back to it someday.

(iii) Trodden.

Q.3. Then took the other, 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.

(i) Why did the poet take the other road ?

(ii) What did the poet discover while travelling on the other road ?

(iii) What do the given lines suggest about the speaker ? (Board Term 1,2012, ELI-017)

Ans. (i) The poet took the other road because he thought that it was more challenging to travel on it as only a few had used (trodden on) it.

(ii) The poet discovered, while travelling on the other road, that the second was almost equally used as the first one.

(iii) The given lines suggest that the speaker loved challenges and difficulties.

Q.4. I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence;

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less travelled by,

And that has made all the difference.

(i) How did the poet make his choice about the roads ?

(ii) What had made a lot of difference in the poet's life ?

(iii) What does the term "road" stand for ? (Board Term 1, 2012, ELI-018)

Ans. (i) The poet took the road which was less travelled as it was grassy and less worn.

(ii) The poet regretted his decision as he thought that he would have been successful if he would have taken the other road and so his life would have been different.

(iii) The term "road" stands for opportunities and choices.

Q.5. Then took the other, just as fair,"

And having perhaps the better chance,

Because it was grassy and wanted wear,

Though as for that the passing there Had worn them really about the same.

(i) What made the poet choose such a road ?

(ii) What does the poet mean by "just as fair" ?

(iii) Find the phrase from the extract that mean "had not been used".

(Board Term 1, 2012, ELI-019)

Ans. (i) The poet chose such a road because grass has grown there and none had travelled so far on it.

(ii) "Just as fair" means that the other road was as beautiful as the one seen earlier.

(iii) Wanted wear

Q.6. I shall be telling this with a sigh Somewhere ages and ages hence;

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less travelled by,

And that has made all the difference.

(i) Write the name of the poem and the poet.

(ii) Why did the poet take the road which was less travelled by ?

(iii) Why was the poet in dilemma ? (Board Term 1, 2012, ELI-021)

Ans. (i) The Road Not Taken – Robert Frost

(ii) The poet took the road which was less travelled by because he wanted to be different from others in his life.

(iii) The poet was in a dilemma while choosing one of the two roads.

Q.7. Two roads diverged in a yellow wood And sorry I could not travel both An be one traveller,

long I stood And looked down one as far as I could To where it bent in the undergrowth.

(i) Where did the roads diverge ?

(ii) Where did the one road lead to ?

(iii) What does "yellow wood" stand for ?

Ans. (i) The roads diverged in the yellow wood.

(ii) The one road led to dense growth of plants and animals.

(iii) "Yellow wood" stands for the autumn season.

Q.8. 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) Who has composed these lines ?

(ii) What does "both" refer to ?

(iii) Trace a word from the extract which means "suspected".

Ans. (i) These lines were composed by Robert Frost.

(ii) "Both" refers to two roads which lead to different directions.

(iii) Doubted.

Q.9. And both that morning equally lay In leaves no step had trodden back.

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) What does "both" refer to in the stanza ?

(ii) Explain "in leaves no step had trodden back".

(iii) Write the rhyming scheme of the extract. (Board Term 1, 2012, ELI-025)

Ans. (i) "Both" in the above stanza refers to two roads which diverged in different directions.

(ii) "In leaves no step had trodden back" means that both the roads were covered with yellow leaves and nobody had walked on them.

(iii) abaab

Q.10. 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.

(i) What problem does the poet face ?

(ii) Where is the poet standing ?

(iii) Find a word from the extract that means "separated". (Board Term 1, 2012, ELI-026)

Ans. (i) The poet wasn't able to decide which road or path he should tread upon.

(ii) The poet is standing at a point where two roads diverge in a yellow wood.

(iii) Diverged.

Q.11. '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'

(i) Why is the poet feeling sorry ?

(ii) What is the mood of the poet ?

(iii) Find the word from the extract which means the same as "branched out".

(Board Term 1, 2012, ELI-060) (1×3=3)

Ans. (i) The poet is feeling sorry because he could not travel both the roads.

(ii) The mood of the poet is regretful and thoughtful.

(iii) Diverge.

Short Answer Type Questions (About 30-40 words each)

Q.1. Why will the choice between two roads that seem very much alike make such a big difference many years later in the life of the poet ?

Ans. A choice between two roads that seem very much alike will make such a big difference many years later in the poet's life since this particular decision, this path opened up many different opportunities for him in future. The decision that he now makes will influence him and his life and his rest of the decisions since the two roads are same they still have varied options in them.

Q.2. Does the speaker feel that he has made the wrong choice in taking the road "less

travelled by”? If not, why does he “sigh”? What does he regret ?

Ans. No, the speaker does not feel that he has made a wrong decision by taking the road less travelled. The poet wanted to explore both the roads. He tells himself that he will explore one and then come back and explore the other, but he knows that he will probably be unable to do so.

Q.3. And that has made all the difference. What is your opinion of the difference- was it for the better or the worse? Substantiate your answer.

Ans. The poem does not clearly state whether the choice made by the poet made him happy or sad. However, if examined the way of the world, we find that the individuals who have achieved recognition and fame have always eschewed the beaten track. Hence, we can reason that the poet-poet-traveller was made happy by choosing the less travelled path, not the beaten track. The concluding line of the poem “And that has made all the difference” connotes the poet’s joy.

Q.4. After reading the poem can you detail the tone entire poem.

Ans. The overall tone of the poem is one of regret. He believes that at some time far in the future, he will still be thinking of his two possible paths “with a sigh”. He does not anticipate being any less conflicted then or any more satisfied with his choice. He realizes that his choice will have made “all the difference” in his life, but he is presently uncertain about what the difference will turn out to be.

Q. 5. Was the poet doubtful or clear that he would return to take the other path which he could not do earlier ?

Ans. Throughout the poem and the poet’s journey he faces an archetypal dilemma. He doubts if he would ever be able to come back to take that other road which might have given him some other more lucrative options in life. The poet believes and we all know that one road leads to another so going back to the original path is not easy.

Long Answer Type Questions (4 marks each) (About 80-100 words each)

Q. 1. Does the poem, ‘The Road Not Taken’, symbolizes or reveals a meaning or aspect of freedom or responsibility ?

Ans. The poem reveals the complex nature of a seemingly simple decision. The narrator is conflicted as he thinks about which road to take. Even after some deliberation and the fact that usage “Had worn them really about the same,” he cannot help wondering, but then doubting “if I should ever come back”. He is even trying to convince himself that he has made the best choice as, when he looks back “Somewhere ages and ages hence”, he is sure that he will be able to say that he made the best choice and that it “has made all the difference”. This poem highlights the fact that freedom (of choice in this instance) brings with it its own set of responsibilities. Hie poem also, perhaps, indicates the futility of over-thinking some situations. If, even trivial decisions require so much thought, how can anyone ever make life-changing decisions. Apparently for the narrator, this is life-changing. At least the choice is his to make.

Q.2. What do the two roads symbolize in the passage 1? What is the significance of choosing a road?

Ans. The two roads that the poet-traveller faces in his walk or journey are symbolic of the choices that we have to encounter in our life. The journey or a simple walk itself is a metaphor for the great journey of life. In the poem the poet, after prolonged thought, decides to take the road less travelled, accepting its challenges and uncertainties. The decision is final and

irreversible and it has its own consequences, may be positive or negative. In real life also we confront such critical situations where we face life-altering options. The decision we make is crucial. We should contemplate over the choices before and then decide our priorities. Once we make the decision and proceed accordingly, we can never reverse it. The life takes its own course, and it does not give a second chance to alter our decision and change our course of life. Hence, decide wisely.

Q. 3. What is the theme of the poem “The Road Not Taken” ?

Ans. The poem ‘The Road Not Taken’ offers a profound perception into the process of decision making. The traveller at the crossroads of the diverging roads is symbolic of an individual at a decisive moment in his life’s journey. His decision or choice of future action is of utmost significance since the decision decides his destiny. The poet, Robert Frost, through this poem asserts the importance of the right decision at the right time. In life we have to make our choices; sometimes we have to make these choices without the full understanding of the state of affairs. Even then, we should arrive at decision only after carefully considering all the available options. We may regret our choice or we may be excited about our choice, but the choice at the crucial moment will determine and change the path of our life. Hence, the poem stresses the need for deep and critical analysis of the situation before we arrive at a life-transforming decision.

Q.4. Discuss the anticipation or remorse in The Road Not Taken’.

Ans. There is a fair amount of irony to be found here in the poem but this is also a poem infused with the anticipation of remorse. Its title is not ‘The Road Less Travelled’ but “The Road Not Taken”. Even as he makes a choice (a choice he is forced to make if he does not want to stand forever in the woods, one for which he has no real guide or definitive basis for decision-making), the speaker knows that he will second-guess himself somewhere down the line— or at the very least he will wonder at what is irrevocably lost: the impossible, unknowable Other Path. But the nature of the decision is such that there is no Right Path— just the chosen path and the other path. The Road Less Travelled is a fiction the speaker will later invent, an attempt to polarize his past and give himself, retroactively, more agency than he really had. What are sighed for ages and ages hence are not so much the wrong decisions as the moments of decision themselves— moments that, one atop the other, mark the passing of a life. This is the more primal strain of remorse.

Q.5. What appeals to you in the poem ?

Ans. The poem, “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost is extremely appealing as it, in simple words and style, presents the importance of making judicious decision at critical moments in our life. In life we have to choose our options; sometimes we have to make these choices without a full awareness of the circumstances. Even then, we should come to a decision only after vigilantly considering all the offered alternatives. We may regret our choice or we may be thrilled of our choice, but the choice at the vital moment will determine and transform the path of our life. Hence, the poem emphasizes the necessity for deep and serious reasoning of the circumstances before we arrive at a life-transforming decision.