

Unit 1 Poem

The Road Not Taken

I. Think about the poem

1. Where does the traveller find himself? What problem does he face?

A. The traveller finds himself standing on a fork in the path. He is in a problem as he must choose one path and is unable to decide which one to choose.

2. Discuss what these phrases mean to you.

(i) a yellow wood

A. 'Yellow wood' refers to the forest which has withering leaves as in the season of autumn. It represents a world full of aging people.

(ii) it was grassy and wanted wear

A. It means that the path had a lot of grass on it. This means that it had not been walked over by many people. It had to be worn out by the steps of the people who walked on it.

(iii) the passing there

A. It means that when he walked over the path that he had chosen.

(iv) leaves no step had trodden black

A. It means that no one had walked over the leaves as they were still green. If they had been walked over, they would have turned black.

(v) how way leads on to way

A. It means that as we walk on a path, we come across more options and make choices further. We keep on walking ahead on that way.

3. Is there any difference between the two roads as the poet describes them?

(i) in stanzas two and three?

A. The two paths were similar. In the beginning, the poet felt that one of them was grassy and had not been walked over by many people, but when he walked on it for some distance, he realized that it was like the other road.

(ii) in the last two lines of the poem?

A. Here, again the poet talks of his initial decision when he thought that the roads were different and chose the one that had been walked over by a lesser number of people.

4. What do you think the last two lines of the poem mean? (Looking back, does the poet regret his choice or accept it?)

Answer:

The last two lines have the quintessence of the poem. The poet expresses his opinion that it becomes difficult for a normal human being to change his/her decision. The poet intends to walk on the first road but he couldn't do so because life does not offer multiple chances to choose. The decision taken may mar one's future or lead one to success. It makes all the difference. He now repents for not getting a chance to travel on the first road.

II.

Question 1.

Have you ever had to make a difficult choice (or do you think you will have difficult choices to make)? How will you make the choice (for what reasons)?

Answer:

Such situations occur in everyone's life. In today's world people have numerous alternatives. But the decision should be taken after considering all the ins and outs of the situation. We must ruminate over the disadvantages also.

Students can write their own experiences.

Question 2.

After you have made a choice do you always think about what might have been, or do you accept the reality?

Answer:

One should live in the present and not in the past. The philosophy of 'is' is the key to attaining success. Life is not a bed of roses. Its hurdles are to be crossed bravely. One must not feel nervous and get dejected in the trying circumstances. In some instances, one needs to be confident about the choice he/she makes.