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### The Road Less Traveled by

Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken" is a narrative poem. This simply means that it is a type of poem that tells a story. The poem was written in the year 1915, it originally started out as a joke between the poet, Robert Frost, and his friend, Edward Thomas. Frost and Thomas were enjoyed venturing on long hikes together, and Thomas often had trouble making up his mind on which trail they should choose. The poem tells the story of a speaker who comes to a fork in the road and must choose which path they should take. After reading the poem multiple times, one can dig deeper to find its true meaning. Throughout the poem, one can see that Frost uses literary devices to emphasize his main points. In looking at "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost, it is clear that Frost uses literary devices to help convey a deeper meaning that lies within the poem.

The poem starts with a speaker who is describing a fork in the road, as well as two paths sat in front of him. The speaker notices that both paths look equally used but he is not able to see where each path leads to. The speaker ends up deciding which path he is going to take but says he may come back at some other time and try the other path. According to Orr, Frost's use of imagery in "The Road Not Taken" helps to convey the speaker's feelings of uncertainty and hesitation (Orr 86). Frost then talks about how the "yellow wood" and the "undergrowth" to create a sense of natural beauty, while the "sigh" in the final line suggests a sense of uncertainty

or regret that the speaker is feeling. Also, throughout the poem he uses descriptive language, which is a form of imagery, to help whoever is reading the poem to be able to picture the scenery in their heads.

The speaker continues down the path that he chose, and he realized that this path is less traveled by than the other path. Orr says in his article that the poem "is rich in repetition of various kinds, particularly repeated vowel sounds and repeated words and phrases" (Orr 85). The speaker says that he will "be telling this with a sigh" in the future, this could show that he didn't in fact regret his decision. The use of the word "sigh" here is implying that the speaker may have missed an opportunity. In this case, Frost uses repetition in the final stanza to emphasize the theme of choice and its consequences that follow after it. The speaker says that taking the road "less traveled by" has made "all the difference." This shows that the speaker believes his decision was significant and that it had an impact on his life. He also uses the literary device repetition when he uses the phrase "two roads diverged in a wood." This is repeated twice in the poem to emphasize the traveler's problem and the importance of the choice he must make.

In "The Road Not Taken," Robert Frost uses symbolism to convey the theme of the importance of choices in one's life. Orr talks about how Frost uses various literary devices in "The Road Not Taken," including symbolism, which is evident in the depiction of the two roads as a metaphor for life choices (85). The two roads in the poem represent the different paths we can take in life, with each path leading to different outcomes. The road less traveled symbolizes the road that is not taken by many, and it represents the idea of choosing a unique path in life that is different from what others have chosen. According to Rodríguez-Vivaldi, "the diverging roads

are symbols of the choices we make in life" (88). The poem's setting, which is a forest, could potentially symbolize the unknown that comes with making choices. The yellow leaves, which represent the autumn season, symbolize the fleeting nature of time. Through the use of these symbols, Frost encourages readers to reflect on their life choices and the impact they can have on their future.

Another literary device Frost uses quite frequently in his poems is a metaphor. Frost uses a metaphor in this case to illustrate the choices and decisions us humans make in our daily lives. He uses the metaphor of a forest, with its many windy paths, to represent the opportunities and challenges that we encounter in life. He also uses the metaphor of a traveler, to show the way we navigate our own life paths. For example, "two roads diverged in a wood" represents the choices we make in life, and "sorry I could not travel both" shows the regret that sometimes comes with making those choices. Orr talks about how Frost's use of the metaphor of "a yellow wood" in "The Road Not Taken" "represents the aging and fading of life's possibilities" (86). These metaphors emphasize the importance of making decisions in life and accepting the consequences of those decisions.

The last literary device Frost uses is personification. He uses personification to infer that the two paths have a sense of character within them. For example, he describes one path as "just as fair" as the other, implying that the paths hold a certain level of moral character or attractiveness to it. According to Orr, Frost uses personification in the poem when the speaker describes the leaves as "sigh[ing]" and the roads as having a "wanted wear" (Orr 86). Also, Frost personifies the "yellow wood" in which the two paths split, suggesting that it holds a power to affect the speaker's decision-making process. This personification is meant to reveal the idea that

the speaker is not simply deciding between two physical paths, but rather between two symbolic paths that represent different life choices and values.

Robert Frost employs several literary devices to reveal the speaker's sense of decision making as he stands at a crossroads in his life. According to Rodríguez-Vivaldi, Frost's poem "is a journey of self-discovery in which the speaker contemplates the choices he has made and the paths he has taken in life" (86). She argues that Frost employs various literary devices such as imagery and metaphor to convey the speaker's experience of making a choice and reflecting on the consequences of that choice. Also, through the use of symbolism and personification, Frost creates a poem that is meant to target the human experience of decision-making and the unknown future. By describing the paths as unknown, Frost reminds us that life is full of choices that can lead us down different paths, and that sometimes the road less traveled can make all the difference. In conclusion, Frost's use of literary devices shows that the poem, "The Road Not Taken" seems like a simple story about a walk in the woods, but in reality, it has a much deeper meaning that relates to the human life.

### Works Cited

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