

Reading reflections: the road not taken by robert frost essay sample



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In a person's life many decisions have to be made; the decisions that we make will impact the rest of our lives. Robert Frost brings such a decision to us in his poem, "The Road Not Taken". In this response, I will explain why this poem captured my interest, using terms and concepts from the text, describing one of the analytical approaches, using details from the text to support my interpretations, and evaluate the meaning of the poem, using the analytical approach I selected. I believe everyone has found themselves at this point in their lives, which is why I was able to connect to the poem and why it interested me as I usually do not read classic literature. I enjoy modern fiction, bestsellers, and biographies. I would not consider myself a literary reader, but interestingly enough, according to Bauerlein, "Reading a single poem in a magazine put one in the reader category" (as cited in Iannone, 2005). I believe this was a good poem for me to complete my first response on, since it has many concepts from our readings.

The speaker uses a persona, metaphor, ambiguity, and imagination to tell the reader that the road he chose may have been the right or wrong one, but it will affect the rest of his life. He realizes that he will be telling this story for years and he finds some sense of satisfaction with the decision that was made. The persona of the speaker is as a person who is approaching decision-making carefully and reflectively. According to Bassett (1981), "the persona is an individual as opposed to a loner, courageous and self-reliant, searching for his destiny" (para. 11). The writer also uses metaphor at the very beginning of the poem, in the line "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood" (line 1). This line compares a decision to two roads. When a person travels they see two roads as a time to make a decision to choose one or the

other. Travelers who face two roads are just like people who face a choice in life, which also means decision making time. Ambiguity also has a part in this poem. An example of this is in the final paragraph, " I shall be telling this with a sigh, somewhere ages and ages hence" the word " sigh" changes everything (Clugston, 2010). You realize the speaker is talking about something greater than just a physical road.

He is speaking about life and the choices one makes in life. Our imaginations also become engaged by the different images the speaker invokes in us. One such image is of the speaker standing at a fork in the woods in autumn trying to make up his mind about which direction to take. I feel very connected to this poem so I am choosing to use the Reader-Response Approach for my analysis. According to Clugston (2010), this approach requires that I find a personal link or imaginative entry into the poem (p. 414). With this approach, I will be exploring why I liked the reading, identifying the reading's purpose, and critiquing the text, accounting for my feelings by finding specific parts of the poem that make me feel as I do. The speaker begins the poem with the words " Two roads diverged in a yellow wood" (line 1), making it obvious that the forest surrounding the two roads symbolizes two mysterious paths, or even the choices the speaker must decide between.

When the speaker writes, " And looked down one as far as I could/ To where it bent in the undergrowth"(lines 4 - 5), the image that comes to mind is that of a person trying to see where the roads will take him before he makes the decision. To me, this indicates that the person would like to see where his choice will take him in life before he decides. After the speaker decides to <https://assignbuster.com/reading-reflections-the-road-not-taken-by-robert-frost-essay-sample/>

take a road “ Then took the other, as just as fair,”(line 6) he later, in stanza three, expresses his excitement for saving the other road for an adventure for a later day, “ Oh, I kept the first for another day!” (line 13). The eager tone that the speaker takes shows his excitement at the opportunity to be able to see both results at another point in his life, but then he faces reality that he will ever have that opportunity because one road will lead to another road, “ Yet knowing how way lead on to way/ I doubted if I shall ever come back.” (lines 14 -15).

This shows how the decisions we make impact our lives. The significance of choosing the other road is highlighted in the last two lines of the poem, “ I took the one less traveled by/ And that has made all the difference.” (lines 19 - 20) Although the “ difference” made is never told, it is clear that it was significant due to the speaker’s change in tone. The tone of the poem shifts from a hesitantly-eager tone to a remorseful between the third and fourth stanza. “ I shall be telling this with a sigh/Somewhere ages and ages hence”(lines 16 - 17) in my opinion this is a “ sigh” of satisfaction with the decision that he made and he will be telling this story for years and years after. This will be one of my favorite poems from now on. It captured my interest, and in my evaluation and analysis, I was able to read into this poem quite thoroughly gaining new insight. This specific insight allowed me to understand that everyone is affected by decisions that are made, whether they are made rashly or are give a lot of thought.

References

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