Robert Frost, “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 marked 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.

Text Dependent Question Types: Literature

**“Right There” Questions**
Ask for explicit information drawn from the text itself: “What is the question facing the narrator at the beginning of the poem?” “What about both roads makes them about the same?”

**Text Structure Questions**
Look at how the text and its component parts are arranged: “What is the rhyme scheme of Frost’s poem?” “Do the words of the title appear in the poem itself, or are they modified?”

**Academic Vocabulary & Key Phrases Questions**
Focus on how specific word choices contribute to the meaning of the text: “What words and phrases from the poem help the reader understand the meaning of diverged?” “Based on the context of the sentence, what is the meaning of passing?” “How does the phrase long I stood characterize the narrator’s deliberations when choosing which road to take?”

**Clarification Questions**
Ask for further explanation of particular portions of the text: “Why did the narrator believe that the second road had the better claim? Use details from the text to support your response.” “How does Frost signal a shift in time in the fourth stanza?”

**Paraphrasing Questions**
Request condensed summaries of particular passages: “Sum up the first ten lines (e.g. the first sentence) of the poem.” “Is the title an accurate paraphrase of the last stanza?” “Restate in your own words the last two lines of the third stanza.”

**Inferential Questions**
Solicit conclusions that stem from evidence within the text but not explicitly stated: “What can be inferred about the road not taken? Select phrases from the poem to support your claim.” “What was the narrator’s attitude regarding the road she chose? What lines from the poem best show her feelings?”

**Organizing Questions**
Examine the text and sort information based on relevant criteria: “Name the factor(s) the narrator considers in the selection of which road to follow?” “Which stanza shows the narrator explicitly comparing the two roads?”

**Sequence Questions**
Identify and analyze the steps in an explanation or argument: “Clearly state the process the narrator employs to decide which road to take.” “Examine how Frost’s use of the word yet changes the reader’s understanding of the sentence that precedes it.”

**Purpose Questions**
Investigate the text’s function and deeper meaning: “What conclusion does the narrator draw from her experience in the yellow wood?” “Cite evidence from Frost’s poem to back up your analysis of its message.”

**Performance Task:** Ask students to utilize the evidence they have collected answering Text Dependent Questions to fashion a longer written response aligned to Writing Standard 1: “Use what you have learned from your close reading of Frost’s poem to write a formal essay that defends a claim about the narrator’s attitude towards her decision by contrasting your point against another interpretation of her choice. In your essay consider what evidence the narrator emphasizes and what information is not provided within the poem. Your essay should employ correct English usage and mechanics and include clearly organized reasons, transitional language between sections, and a concluding statement.”

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