

Artifact A

A Mini-unit Lesson Plan

Exploration of How to Appreciate Poetry



Rational

Throughout history, poems are used to express poets' feelings, emotions and ideas. Poetry best displays the art of language by using rhyme, meter, rhythm, alliteration and other devices with fewer words. Poets are also adept at using different figures of speech such as metaphor, simile and metonymy to create images and meanings. Due to the ambiguity of poetry, they normally are open to different interpretations depending on who is reading the poem. In light with the above features of poetry, there are three most important aspects that students must know when they read poetry –

- Analyze structure and language features of poetry;
- Learn what kinds of figures of speech are used and for what purpose
- Embrace different interpretations among different voices

Most of the time students find it boring or difficult to analyze language structures of poetry as they will impossibly talk in that way. Besides, poetry-appreciation courses are often set in history background and require students to think what the author tries to express at that time. However, it is important to have students understand that the analysis of language structures and features could help them learn the beauty of language, which has contemporary relevance as well. Their voices of interpreting poems based on their own connections are valued and even encouraged.

This mini-unit lesson plan is designed for a 7th grade class of 20 to 25 students, among whom less than 5 are English language learners from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The class will be taught entirely in English, but ELL students are allowed to use their native language in class and post-class tasks. They are more encouraged to share their interpretations with native speakers as in my belief, it results in a mutual learning experience in terms of

language and culture study. The number of ELLs might be best if less than 5. If more than five, the mini-unit lesson plan needs modification in certain places. With the number of less than five ELLs designed in mind, therefore, some tasks give each English language learner opportunity to show their work done in their individual native language. My purpose is to make their first languages and native culture as visible assets to ELLs themselves and the whole class.

I created three lessons in the mini-unit lesson plan. It mainly centers on Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*. I chose it in hope that my students could be inspired as the way I used to be when I first read this poem. By accessing technology and introducing multi-genre texts, I design activities and tasks responsive to the needs of diverse learners in my class. Assessments are either integrated in class or assigned as after-class work to ensure students are equipped with necessary skills and strategies to do more demanding reading for their next-level learning.

Standards

This set is designed to introduce poetry to students, so I use grade 7 English Language Arts Standards, in hope that students could master essential skills to read and appreciate poetry.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.5

Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.7

Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson 1 The Road Not Taken: Read the Theme

Grade: 7th

Estimated time: 65 minutes

Learning Objectives

- Students will predict a poem’s theme by reading its title.
- Students will learn the settings of this poem by visualizing images.
- Students will compare and contrast textual details and cite them to support their own inference.

Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1**
Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2**
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4**
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

Materials and Resources

- Printed copies of *The Road Not Taken*
- Mini biography of Robert Frost
<http://www.biography.com/people/robert-frost-20796091/videos/robert-frost-mini-biography-37552707559>
- Guide Notes: The Effective Detective
- Assessment sheet: “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” and Comic strip story

Instructional Strategies and Learning Tasks (Procedures & Timelines)

TIME	STUDENT ACTIONS	TEACHER ACTIONS
4 minutes	Pre-reading activities Watch video clip: mini biography of Robert Frost Write down on a sticky note three things about	Play video clip on projector

	Frost you remember most and one thing you don't understand in the video	
6 minutes	Pair-share Share what you wrote with a shoulder partner and if you could help your partner deal with his/her question	Observe students' engagement; Walk around; Answer students' questions
10 minutes	Listen to how teacher models her thinking; Write down your prediction on double-entry journals in "The Effective Detective" handout	Model how I predict a poem's theme by asking the question: "What does the title make me think of?"
10 minutes	Group-share Share their thinking with the whole class	Participate in students' discussion
15 minutes	Read the poem; Highlight the respective features of each road choice using different color pens; Finish <i>Find our clues</i> in Guide notes "The Effective Detective"	Give students printed copies; Explain what the purpose of diagram is; Answer students' questions
15 minutes	Class discussion Discuss your personal achievements with the whole class Summarize what the poem is about in the right column in double-entry journals	Facilitate discussion
5 minutes	Listen to teacher's sum-up; Ask questions	Wrap-up Summarize we have learned that day: reading strategies; the theme Give homework (assessments); Answer questions

Formative Assessment

- The Effective Detective: Completed in class
- Comic strip story: Read another poem by Robert Frost *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Predicate the theme of the poem by only studying its title. Draw a comic strip story by focusing on the images and using visualization.

Student Supports

Reading strategies and scaffolding:

- **Predict** – In this lesson, students will learn how to make predictions by studying the title of a poem. By modeling teachers' own thinking, teachers are aimed to develop students' awareness of thinking aloud.
- **Compare and Contrast** – In this lesson, students will find similarities and differences of road choices in the text to facilitate their understandings by using diagrams.
- **Visualize** – Reading poems requires a highly developed skill of visualizing as poets often use images to describe settings and express emotions. In this lesson, students will learn to develop images in their minds to help them understand the setting of the poem.
- **Infer** – Inferring is an important complex reading strategy that students need to know. In this lesson, students will find clues and add those clues to what they already know to support their inferences.

The Road Not Taken*Robert Frost*

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 kept 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.

Define words

trodden: _____

Name:

Date:

The Effective Detective

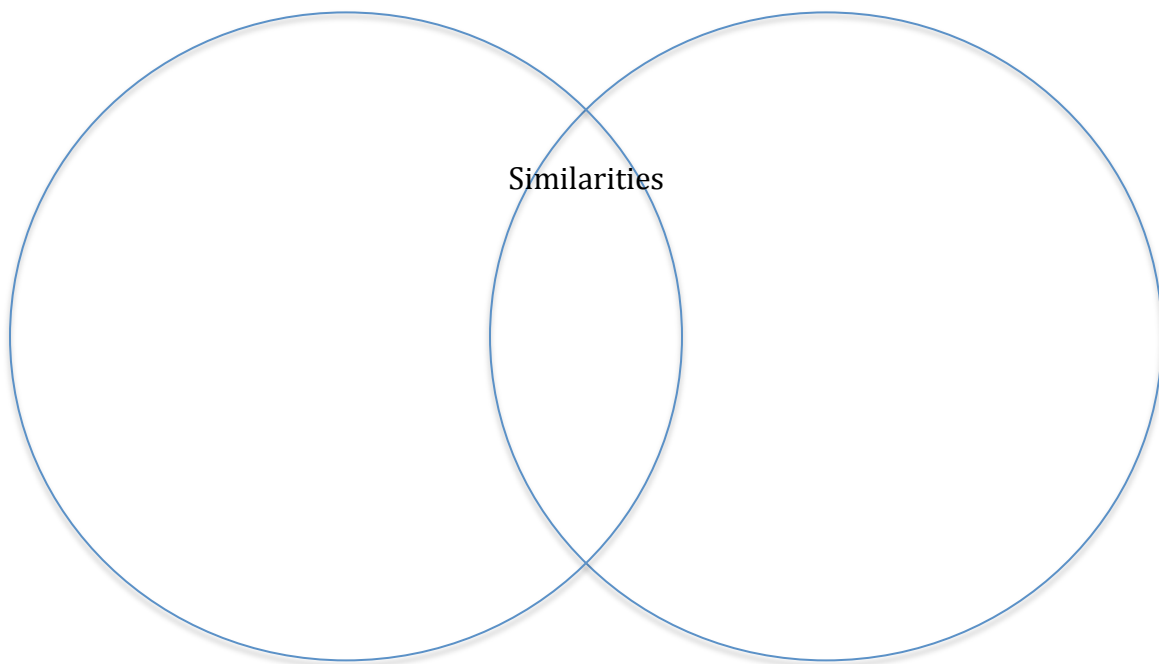
1. Make a **Prediction**

Read the title " <i>The Road Not Taken</i> "	
I predict the poem is going to talk about	I discover the poem is actually talking about

2. Find Out Clues

#1 Road

#2 Road



3. Make an **Inference**

What will happen next?

I infer _____

as the author says _____ in the poem from

my experience I _____.

Something we have to remember:

- Prediction is about guesses, not facts.
- Inference is based on what the author talks in the text and your understanding of the situation.

Name:

Date:

Stopping by Woods on a Snow Evening
Robert Frost

From the title, I predict the poem is going to talk about

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Define words you learn

_____ : _____
_____ : _____
_____ : _____

Name:

Date:

Comic Strip Story

After reading *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, draw a comic strip story based on your visualization.

Lesson 2 The Road Not Taken: The Beauty of Rhymes and Metaphor

Grade: 7th

Estimated time: 65 minutes

Learning Objectives

- Students will have the basic understanding of important constituents of a poem – stanza, line, beat, rhyme and form.
- Students will create their own poem using rhymes based on a setting self-created.
- Students will be able to find metaphorically-used images in the poem and monitor their comprehension.

Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4**
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.5**
Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

Materials and Resources

- Song: The road not taken – Bruce Hornsby (0:17 – 3:00)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhI9f36EGb4&feature=kp>
- Lyrics : Retrieve from <http://www.metrolyrics.com/the-road-not-taken-lyrics-bruce-hornsby.html>
- Printed copies of *The Road Not Taken*
- “The Five Word Picture Poem” (a website that teaches people how to create poems by themselves)
<http://othervoicespoetry.org/vol11/zervos/5wpclear.html>
- Worksheet: Finding the Metaphor

Instructional Strategies and Learning Tasks (Procedures & Timelines)

Time	STUDENT ACTIONS	TEACHER ACTIONS
3 minutes	Pre-reading activities Listen to the song by Bruce Hornsby	Set purpose for listening: Ask students to think- “Why are the lines in this song so catchy?” Project the lyrics on the screen
7 minutes	Pre-reading activities and Class discussion Read the lines quietly; Participate in class discussion	Discuss with students their discovery
10 minutes	Listen to teacher’s explanation; Ask questions	Introduce the concept <i>line, stanza, rhyme, beat</i> by making analogies with the song Answer questions
5 minutes	Listen to teacher’s explanation Ask questions	Explain <i>rhyme scheme</i> using the first stanza
15 minutes	Access a website <i>The Five Word Picture Poem</i> , (Note: ELLs use their native language to finish this task) (Go with the following steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose an event from your past and make a mental picture about it; 2. Write down 5 words to describe that pictures, using rhymes, eg. “the first time I went to zoo” and 5 words are, flowers, cousins, cages, animals, elephants; 3. Add an adjective before each of the five words; 4. Add another adjective; 5. One more adjective 6. Give the poem a title Create your own poem, trying to using rhymes in your creation; Ask questions	Explain how to access the website and teacher’s expectation; Model an example; Answer possible questions;

5 minutes	Class-share Share your poem among the whole class	Share with students the teacher’s poem; Listen to students’ creation work and choose ELL students to explain their work Give feedback
5 minutes	Write down an example of metaphor on a sticky note; Pair-share Share with your shoulder partner	Lead students back looking at the song and ask students to find one metaphor in the song
12 minutes	Highlight what you think indicates a metaphor Class discussion Express your opinions and discuss with your classmates	Review the concept of <i>metaphor</i> Read <i>The Road Not Taken</i> Participate in class discussion; Explain how the metaphor in line 1, 4-5, 6, 13-15 and 18-20 contributes to meaning
3 minutes	Ask questions	Wrap-up Sum up what we learn, give assignment worksheets; Ask students to record their students’ own reading of the poem and bring it to next class Answer questions

Formative Assessment

- The Five Picture Words Poem : Completed in class
- Finding the Metaphor: Reread *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Find metaphors used in this metaphor and be able to explain why they think that’s a metaphor. (Rationale: *The Road Not Taken* and *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* are similar in metaphor use. This assessment expects students to use what they learned from today’s class to a new poem sharing a similar theme.)

Student Supports

Reading strategies and scaffolding:

- **Making analogies** --This is a good way to explain abstract or unfamiliar ideas and concepts by showing something that shares similar characteristics with the abstract or unfamiliar.
- **Metacognition** -- Students using metacognition skills to think about the way they understand ideas and monitor progress. Thinking about thinking could help students be a better learner with highly developed self-awareness.

Names:

Date:

Finding the Metaphor

Requirements: Reread *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* and finish the following worksheet. In the first column, please draw images in the poem and write it down in the second column. Think if A has a metaphorical meaning and write it down in B column. Notice how you arrive at the conclusion and document it in the fourth column.

Draw IMAGES	A	B	What makes you think B is a metaphor for A?

Lesson 3 The Road Not Taken: Embrace All Reasonable Interpretations

Grade: 7th

Estimated time: 65 minutes

Learning Objectives

- Students will compare and contrast different versions of interpretations of the poem.
- Students will discover the ambiguity of the poem is open to different interpretations.
- Students will learn important elements of how to appreciate a poem.

Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.7**
Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.10**
Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.9**
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Materials and Resources

- Printed copies of *The Road Not Taken*
- Audio: *The Road Not Taken* read by Robert Frost and students' own record
- Video: An analysis of *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQDkG7_QHq4
- Worksheet: WHO IS RIGHT?
- Extensive Reading Text: In a Yellow Wood
Retrieved from Parini, J. (2000). *Robert Frost: a life*. Macmillan. 153-155

Instructional Strategies and Learning Tasks (Procedures & Timelines)

Time	STUDENT ACTIONS	TEACHER ACTIONS
15 minutes	Pre-reading activity Pair-share Share your achievement with your partner Class discussion Discuss with the whole class	Ask students what we've learned so far about the poem; Discuss with students; Refine students' answers
5 minutes	Summarize your interpretation of the poem on your worksheet	Give students the worksheets
10 minutes	Write down your feelings on worksheets; Pair-share Share your feelings with your partner	Play audio : <i>The Road Not Taken</i> read by Robert Frost
10 minutes	Listen to your own recording; Compare it with Frost's	Walk around; Monitor students' engagement
10 minutes	Walk around; See what their classmates wrote down	Walk around; See what students wrote down
10 minutes	Talk about what they discovered; Ask questions	Participate in class discussion Facilitate students' understanding of a reasonable interpretation of poetry
5 minutes	Write down what you've learned in how to read a poem on a sticky note	Wrap-up Sum up three important aspects of reading a poem

Formative Assessment

Worksheet -- WHO IS RIGHT : Completed in class

Summative Assessment

Final Writing – In light with what students have learned in this mini-unit lesson, and use whatever resource they could find, write their final interpretation of this poem. Draw evidence from texts, resources, personal experiences to support their understanding. Remember to cite the resource in writing.

Student Supports

Reading strategies and scaffolding:

- **Compare and Contrast** – In this lesson, students will find similarities and differences between their recording and Robert Frost’s audio. Try to feel the emotions and meanings from different versions.
- **Text-to-yourself connections** – In this lesson, students will be encouraged to make connections to their own life, in order to enrich and differentiate what this poem means to each individual.
- **Summarize** – In this lesson, students are required to summarize what we have learned so far. This strategy helps students focus on big ideas of reading a poem

In a Yellow Wood

Jay Parini

Adapted by Qing Zhang

Edward Thomas, whom Frost had by now met several times, showed up with her son that spring. He was a frequent visitor at The Gallows that fall, and he and Frost went on walks. One quirk of Thomas was that he often regretted the particular path he had taken. Frost once said to him, “No matter which road you take, you’ll always sigh, and wish you’d taken another.” The image of Thomas stuck at a crossroads, uncertain about which branch to follow, inspired “The Road Not Taken,” although Frost had been contemplating the image for a while. On February 10, 1912, for instance, he had written to Susan Hayes Ward: “Two lonely cross-roads that themselves cross each other I have walked several times this winter without meeting or overtaking so much as a single person on foot or on runners. The practically unbroken condition of both for several days after a snow or a blow proves that neither is much traveled.”

That poem, which opens Frost’s third book of poetry, *Mountain Interval*, is one of the high crests of American poetry:

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 kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,

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.

The overpowering simplicity of the images is typical in its appeal: every reader stood at

some fork and wondered which might be the better path. Most will have wanted to take “the one less traveled by,” and thus be thought a maverick or “lone striker.” Yet the poem throws this desire into raw, ironic light: “I shall be telling this with a sigh,” the narrator says, and the sigh reveals a certain sadness combined with a light feeling of insincerity. One imagines the speaker looking back from old age, his grandchildren at his feet. He says, “I took the road less traveled by,” while knowing – in his heart of hearts – that an element of posing is involved.

There may well be no road less traveled by, as the poet has suggested in the three preceding stanzas. The road taken is “as just as fair,” he notes: “Though as for that the passing there/ Had worn them really about the same”. In case the reader did not understand, the next line is more explicit: “And both that morning equally lay / In leaves no step had trodden black.” Both paths, it would seem, are pristine, untrodden. This certainly puts a twist on the last, “I took the one less traveled by, / And that has made all the difference.” As frequently happens in Frost, the poet builds into his poem a fierce contradiction: the speaker of the poem gestures toward a simple, even simplistic reading. The play between these incompatible readings becomes an important of the poem’s dynamic.

Name:

Date:

WHO IS RIGHT?

By far, my interpretation of *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost is :

Listen to the audio: *The Road Not Taken* read by Robert Frost and then listen to your own recording.

What do you hear from Robert Frost's audio his own work?

Compare Robert Frost with your version. What do these two different versions of interpretation make you feel?
