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5 6 7 8 9 10 QG 18 17 16 15 14 13

Table of Contents

Section 1

Unit 1: Find Relevant Details			
	Lesson 1:	The Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping Narrative Nonfiction • L. L. Owens	6
	Lesson 2:	The Hilo and Aleutian Tsunami Narrative Nonfiction • Sarah Beth Cavanah	15
Unit 2: Summarize			
	Lesson 3:	The U.S. Olympic Hockey Team: 1980 Expository Nonfiction • Joanne and James Mattern	25
	Lesson 4:	The Old Rooster and Why He Scratches *African American Folktale • retold by David Haynes	36
Unit	<i>3:</i> Recogni	ze Persuasive Techniques	
	Lesson 5:	The Mighty Power Plus Game Email Advertisement • Jan Keese	45
	Lesson 6:	Letter to Attorney General Francis Biddle *Letter • Iwao Matsushita	52
		Review 1 All Together Now Speech • Barbara Jordan	59
		Listening Comprehension 1 The Fastest Runner Short Story • Edward Siegel	67

continued

Section 2

Unit 4: Make Inferences			
		This Way Nobody Gets the Blame Short Story • Lesley Grant-Adamson	
	Lesson 8:	I've Got Your Number **Editorial • Robe Imbriano 80	
Uni	t 5: Underst	tand Characterization	
	Lesson 9:	This Girl Gets Her Kicks **Article • Rick Reilly	
	Lesson 10:	Charles Short Story • Shirley Jackson	
Uni	t 6: Examin	e Theme	
	Lesson 11:	The Road Not Taken Poem • Robert Frost	
	Lesson 12:	* The Gift of the Magi *Short Story • O. Henry (retold by Peg Hall)	
		Review 2 The Lottery Ticket Short Story • Anton Chekhov (retold by Paula J. Reece)	
		Listening Comprehension 2 The Killer Short Story • Edward Siegel	

Unit 6: Examine Theme

Lesson 11

The Road Not Taken

Poem

Heads Up As you read, you focus on the plot of the story—what is happening. *Themes* are more than just what happens. Themes are the ideas, morals, or lessons that you find within a text. A theme is a message that the author wants you to find while reading. Poems often contain themes.

Poems can seem intimidating if you don't know how to approach them. It helps your understanding if you first do a quick "preview" of the poem. Quickly glance through the poem on page 109, taking note of the title first. Make sure to also look for any repeated words or phrases. Notice what the first and last lines say. Then fill in the chart below.

Title		
Repeated words or phrases		
First line		
Last line		

As you read "The Road Not Taken," begin to think about the deeper message the author wants you to discover. The Think-Along Questions will help you focus. Also, as you read, circle or highlight any words you don't know.

The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow woo	
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;	

What do you think the author is considering at this point? Predict what you think the author wants the two roads to represent.

2 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,

What might it mean that the road "wanted wear"?

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.

Why might the author think he would never again have the chance to try the road he didn't choose?

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.

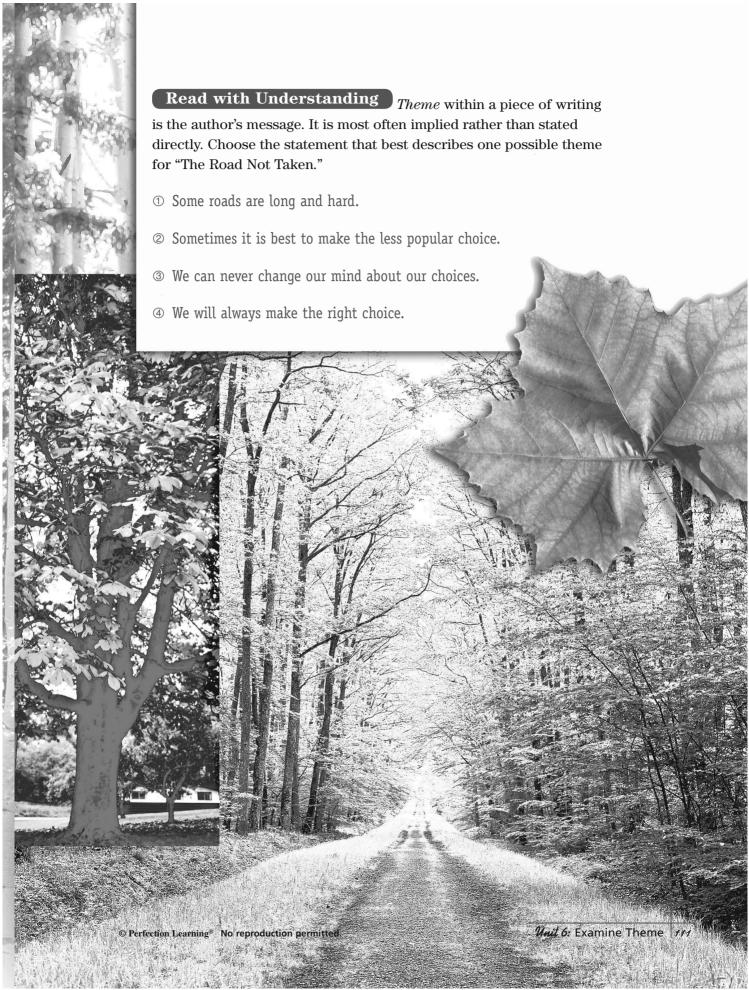
What questions might you ask the author about why he chose the road he did? Think of a time when you had a choice to make. How did you make your decision?

Unit 6:	Examine	Theme	109

Make Sense of Words

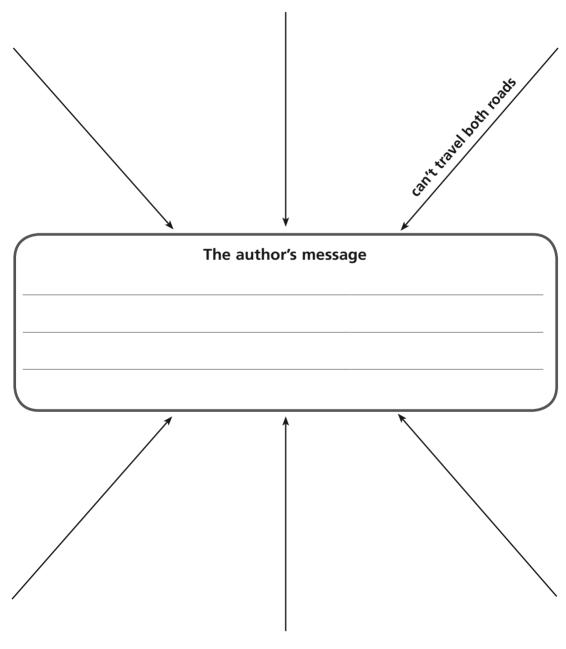
Poems, especially those that are not very long, rely on their words to accomplish the purpose of the poem—to entertain, to make readers think a certain way, or to make readers feel an emotion. Obviously, words are then chosen deliberately and with much thought. The word diverged shows up twice in this fairly short poem, once at the beginning and once at the end. Below, define diverged. Then list three synonyms that Frost could have used instead. Finally, write why you think he chose diverged.

100	
	Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and I— I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.
16.0	Definition of diverged
	Synonyms Frost could have used instead
	Why do you think Frost chose diverged ?



Understand by Seeing It

Think about what you have learned about theme. Remember, the theme is the author's implied message. State the theme of "The Road Not Taken" in your own words in "The author's message" box below. Then think about the information provided in the poem that pointed you to the author's message. Complete the graphic organizer below. An example has been provided for you.



Write to Learn	
Write to Learn Think of an experience theme of "The Road Not Taken." Then "interview	you've had that relates to the v" yourself. Ask yourself two or
three interview questions to share that experience	ce and how it fits in with the
theme of the poem. Write the interview question	s and your answers below.
© Perfection Learning® No reproduction permitted.	<i>Unit 6:</i> Examine Theme 113