

A watercolor illustration of a desk with various items. At the top left, there are several books stacked. A wooden ruler is placed diagonally. A small red bell sits on a piece of paper. A blue paperclip is attached to a book on the right. In the bottom left, a pink and blue paper airplane is shown. A large pencil lies horizontally across the bottom. To the right, a cup of coffee sits on a saucer next to an open book. The background is a textured, light brown surface with faint, cursive text.

Understanding Extended Metaphor through "The Road Not Taken"

Discover how poets use powerful literary tools to talk about life and choices.

Extended Metaphor

An extended metaphor is a comparison between two things that continues across multiple lines or even an entire poem or story.

Examples:

- Simple metaphor: "Life is a journey."
- Extended metaphor: "Life is a journey filled with winding roads, detours, and dead ends, but every step teaches us something new."



Extended Metaphor in the Poem

The Road = Life

- In Frost's poem, the road is a metaphor for life's choices.
- The poem explores how we make decisions and how those decisions can shape our lives.
- It is an extended metaphor because the comparison runs through the whole poem.



Symbol – Diverging Roads

- The two roads symbolize choices in life.
- Just like in real life, we can't see the future.
- Once we choose a path, we often can't go back.



Symbol – The Road Less Traveled

- This road symbolizes nonconformity – doing things your own way.
- The speaker thinks it made a big difference—but both roads looked pretty similar!
- Suggests that we sometimes create meaning in our past choices, even if the path wasn't really so different.

