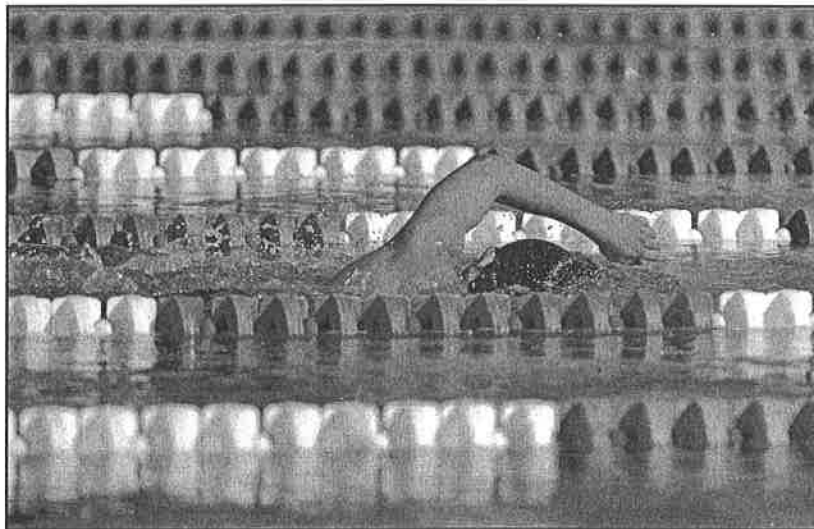




Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

Swimming in a Pool of Doubt

- 1 Cameron was an eighth-grade student at Bayside Middle School, captain of the competitive swim team in his community, and the fastest swimmer in the league. All the younger swimmers looked up to him because he continually gave one hundred percent, even at practice. Cameron constantly challenged himself to improve. But all that work was beginning to weigh on him; he was not sure if he wanted to swim anymore.
- 2 Five days a week, Cameron attended practice before and after school; every Saturday, he competed in swim meets or practiced with his coach. Cameron had become accustomed to homework and time with friends taking a backseat to swimming. The muscles in his body were constantly sore, and he was physically and emotionally exhausted. People told Cameron how much they admired his commitment to swimming, but the words had become meaningless. He just wanted to be a normal teenager when he started high school in the fall.



- 3 When Cameron joined the swim team at the age of seven, it was mostly because he liked swimming more than any other sport he had tried. His parents had encouraged him to participate in some kind of physical activity, but he had never really been good at team sports, such as soccer or basketball. Swimming seemed like the perfect fit for him.



- 4 Since that time, swimming had become his life. This transformation happened gradually at first, but now it seemed to be spinning rapidly out of control. Throughout his elementary school years, Cameron steadily grew stronger and faster. His parents were proud of his improvement and his dedication to the sport and were especially hopeful about the possibility of Cameron earning a college scholarship. At first, Cameron shared that goal, but now he had a difficult time imagining a future filled with early morning practices, screaming muscles, and zero time for friends.
- 5 Everyone expected Cameron to be the dedicated swim team captain, so he felt obligated to keep his feelings silent. Lately, however, he thought about confiding in a friend or his parents, but he was uncertain if anyone would understand. Cameron wasn't even sure if he understood his own feelings. Part of him wanted to keep going, yet there was a voice inside of him that was growing louder, telling him that something had to change.
- 6 One day at lunch, Cameron was sitting at a table with his friend Jake. Unable to quiet his thoughts, he blurted, "I'm thinking about quitting."
- 7 "Quitting what?" Jake looked confused.
- 8 "Quitting the team, Jake. Quitting swimming."
- 9 "Are you serious? Why?"
- 10 "I don't know," said Cameron. "I just don't think I want to do it anymore."
- 11 "That's crazy, Cam. You're the swim team captain!" Jake said.
- 12 "I know. But it just doesn't feel right. It's not fun for me like it used to be," Cameron tried to explain as they were interrupted by the bell. Jake wanted to hear more, but Cameron quickly rushed off to class.
- 13 For the rest of the day, Cameron regretted telling Jake because it confirmed what he already knew. No one would understand his quandary. He avoided Jake for the next few days and changed the subject the one time Jake tried to bring it up. Meanwhile, Cameron kept going to practice and pushing himself through the water. But with each passing day and each labored lap, his heart was less and less in it.



- 14 Then, one afternoon in English class, his teacher read a poem by Robert Frost. The poem struck a chord with Cameron because the speaker was in a position to choose between two paths. Cameron realized that he had to make a choice as well. He didn't want to swim anymore, he didn't want to be team captain, he didn't want people to admire his commitment, and he didn't want a college scholarship if it meant continuing an obligation that made him miserable.
- 15 It was going to be difficult telling his parents. Cameron was not sure how his coach or his teammates would react, but he had reached a decision. Even though he continued to have questions and was apprehensive, Cameron was relieved. He had listened to his own heart and now trusted that everything would work out for the best.



The Road Not Taken

by 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
5 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
10 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,
15 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,
20 And that has made all the difference.





Use "Swimming in a Pool of Doubt" (pp. 183–185) to answer questions 1–6. Then fill in the circle for each answer.

- 1 The point of view from which the story is told gives the reader insight into —
- Ⓐ Cameron's thoughts about failure
 - Ⓑ the complexity of Cameron's decision
 - Ⓒ the support of Cameron's parents
 - Ⓓ Cameron's plans for sharing his decision
- 2 Which sentence from the story provides the best evidence that Cameron feels conflicted?
- Ⓔ *Cameron was an eighth-grade student at Bayside Middle School; captain of the competitive swim team in his community, and the fastest swimmer in the league.*
 - Ⓕ *All the younger swimmers looked up to him because he continually gave one hundred percent, even at practice.*
 - Ⓖ *Cameron constantly challenged himself to improve.*
 - Ⓗ *But all that work was beginning to weigh on him; he was not sure if he wanted to swim anymore.*

- 3 Read the following sentence.

Cameron wasn't even sure if he understood his own feelings.

This sentence illustrates the —

- Ⓐ turmoil Cameron experiences
 - Ⓑ commitment Cameron displays
 - Ⓒ dejection Cameron faces
 - Ⓓ determination Cameron exhibits
- 4 Which sentence demonstrates how the setting influences the plot of the story?
- Ⓔ *Five days a week, Cameron attended practice before and after school; every Saturday, he competed in swim meets or practiced with his coach.*
 - Ⓕ *When Cameron joined the swim team at the age of seven, it was mostly because he liked swimming more than any other sport he had tried.*
 - Ⓖ *This transformation happened gradually at first, but now it seemed to be spinning rapidly out of control.*
 - Ⓗ *Lately, however, he thought about confiding in a friend or his parents, but he was uncertain if anyone would understand.*



5 The author uses repetition in paragraph 14 to help create a feeling of —

- Ⓐ dysfunction
- Ⓑ doubt
- Ⓒ tranquility
- Ⓓ certainty

6 The figurative language used in paragraph 14 helps the reader infer that —

- Ⓕ Cameron wants to play a musical composition
- Ⓖ Cameron understands the meaning of the poem
- Ⓗ Cameron relates to the speaker and theme of the poem
- Ⓙ Cameron decides to follow the example of the speaker



Use "The Road Not Taken" (p. 186) to answer questions 7–11.
Then fill in the circle for each answer.

- 7 Which of these is the best summary of the poem?
- Ⓐ While walking in the woods, the speaker notices a divided path. He studies each possibility to determine which road will be easier to travel. After making his decision, he completes his journey.
 - Ⓑ The speaker embarks on a journey to discover a fork in the road. When he arrives at the fork, he concludes that both paths are very similar. Unable to make a choice between the two, he turns around, realizing that he will later regret his decision.
 - Ⓒ The speaker comes to a fork in the road and must decide between similar paths. The speaker makes a choice, thinking that he might return one day to take the other path. He determines that in the future his choice will be validated.
 - Ⓓ While walking along a path, the speaker comes to a division in the road. He wonders why there is a split in the road and whether or not the direction he decides to take will affect his future.
- 8 Which lines from the poem best suggest that the speaker is realistic?
- Ⓕ Lines 3 and 4
 - Ⓖ Lines 9 and 10
 - Ⓗ Lines 14 and 15
 - Ⓙ Lines 16 and 17
- 9 What is the most likely reason the poet uses a line break and repetition in lines 18 and 19?
- Ⓐ To stress the importance of the speaker's dilemma
 - Ⓑ To indicate the significance of the speaker's power
 - Ⓒ To highlight the speaker's inability to make a choice
 - Ⓓ To show the speaker's disappointment with the outcome
- 10 The imagery in the first two stanzas helps the reader understand —
- Ⓕ the similarity of the paths
 - Ⓖ the beauty of the forest
 - Ⓗ the condition of the undergrowth
 - Ⓙ the danger of the roads
- 11 In stanzas 1 and 4, the word diverged means —
- Ⓐ to bend across a path or road
 - Ⓑ to extend in different directions from a common point
 - Ⓒ to reach a common conclusion
 - Ⓓ to be completely separated from the main source



Use "Swimming in a Pool of Doubt" and "The Road Not Taken" to answer questions 12–15. Then fill in the circle for each answer.

12 Which message could be supported by both the story and the poem?

- Ⓕ People who make choices are unaware of the consequences.
- Ⓖ Regardless of the reason, every journey must come to an end.
- Ⓗ People influenced by others often make poor choices.
- Ⓙ Despite unknown outcomes, choices in life must be made.

13 One difference between the story and the poem is that the story suggests that —

- Ⓐ consequences impede a person's ability to make a choice
- Ⓑ people unconsciously make decisions throughout their lives
- Ⓒ family and friends are often impacted by a person's decision
- Ⓓ decisions made over long periods of time are more sensible

14 Both the story and the poem end with a feeling of —

- Ⓕ appreciation
- Ⓖ acceptance
- Ⓗ discouragement
- Ⓙ regret

15 Which line from the poem best expresses Cameron's feelings in paragraph 5?

- Ⓐ And sorry I could not travel both
- Ⓑ And be one traveler, long I stood
- Ⓒ Oh, I kept the first for another day!
- Ⓓ I took the one less traveled by,