**7th Grade Unit Two Common Assessment**
**Rubric II: Structure of Poetry**

**Clarification**

Teaching Aid: [http://learnzillion.com/lessons/1113-analyze-the-structure-of-a-poem](http://learnzillion.com/lessons/1113-analyze-the-structure-of-a-poem). This lesson, along with the coach’s commentary, really gives some nice clarification to the common core standard around this item.

Here are some additional thoughts on scoring:

**To get a 3.5 on the rubric:** what the common core is asking for, I believe, is for students to be able to identify the main idea and author’s purpose of each stanza. In the Learn Zillion lesson example—Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken”—the main idea of stanza one is that there is a choice as to what path the speaker will take. The author’s purpose is to set up a choice in the readers’ minds: What road will the speaker choose? Stanza one acts as a “hook” to the reader for the poem.

**To get a 4.0 on the rubric:** the next step the common core asks students to do is to identify how the stanzas fit together. In “The Road Not Taken” the stanzas fit together because stanza one sets up the choice, stanza two reveals the choice the speaker made, and stanzas 3 and 4 offer reflections on how the choice impacted the speaker’s future life. To score a 4.0, the student must also take a “stab” at why the author chose four stanzas. Why not 1 or 5 stanzas? Students are not required to get this part correct to score a 4.0, just to make a good faith guess as to why Frost might have chosen 4 stanzas.

**To get a 5.0 on the rubric:** the final step the common core asks students to do is to identify why Frost chose the number of stanzas that he did. Another way to think about this step is to think, “How would the poem be different with a different number of stanzas?” There could be several “correct” answers to this question. As long as students can back up their ideas with evidence from the text, the answer can be considered correct. One idea present in this poem about Frost’s stanza choice is that it helps us understand the poem better. In the first stanza, we are presented a choice. The second stanza tells us what the speaker chose. The third stanza offers a present reflection on that choice, and the fourth stanza switches to future tense to offer the readers’ a glimpse into the speaker’s feelings, mainly one of regret as evidenced by the “sigh” reference in the final stanza. If Frost would have used fewer stanzas, say three, the structure of the poem would have changed because it would not have been so easy for the reader of his poem to pick up on the fact that there is a choice and two pieces of reflection—one present and one future. The structure of the poem helps the reader understand the poem.