

## 11.1.1

## Unit Overview

## “Then all smiles stopped together.”

Text	“My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning
Number of Lessons in Unit	6

## Introduction

In the first unit of Module 11.1, students are introduced to the skills, practices, and routines of close reading, annotating text, and evidence-based discussion and writing, especially through text-dependent questioning and focused annotation. Students engage in critical analysis of texts to explore deep meanings.

In this unit, students analyze how an author develops characters and central ideas, and consider the role that point of view plays in a text. Students read and analyze Robert Browning’s dramatic monologue “My Last Duchess,” focusing on how the characters of the Duke and Duchess are developed through the Duke’s point of view and what role his point of view plays in the development of central ideas. This unit asks students to focus closely on one poem to consider authorial choices with regard to the development of character and central ideas. As students read, discuss, and write about the text, they examine how Browning uses point of view and careful word choice to create meaning in the text, and while leaving some matters uncertain. Students begin to consider the impact of developing one character through the words of another, in relation to issues of power and voice.

There is one formal assessment in this unit. The End-of-Unit Assessment asks students to analyze how the revelation at the end of the poem impacts the development of the Duke’s character throughout the text. A successful response will draw on an understanding of the role that point of view and specific word choice play in the character’s development, and will rely on students’ annotations from previous lessons (RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b).

**Note:** This unit introduces Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) for 11<sup>th</sup> grade. See Module 9.1 Prefatory Material for more information about AIR.

## Literacy Skills and Habits

- Read closely for textual details
- Annotate texts to support comprehension and analysis
- Engage in productive evidence-based discussions about text
- Collect and organize evidence from texts to support analysis in writing
- Make claims about texts using specific textual evidence

## Standards for This Unit

CCS Standards: Reading — Literature	
RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RL.11-12.2	<b>Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.</b>
RL.11-12.3	<b>Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).</b>
RL.11-12.4	<b>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)</b>
RL.11-12.6	<b>Analyze a case in which grasping the point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).</b>
CCS Standards: Writing	
W.11-12.2.b	<b>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</b> <b>b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts,</b>

	<b>extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.</b>
W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)
<b>CCS Standards: Speaking &amp; Listening</b>	
<b>SL.11-12.1.b</b>	<b>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</b> <b>b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.</b>
<b>CCS Standards: Language</b>	
L.11-12.4.a, c	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11–12 reading and content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

**Note:** Bold text indicates targeted standards that will be assessed in the unit.

## Unit Assessments

<b>Ongoing Assessment</b>	
Standards Assessed	RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.6, W.11-12.2.b, SL.11-12.1.b
Description of Assessment	Varies by lesson but may include responses to text-dependent questions focused on character development, central idea development, and word choice through discussion and informal writing prompts.

End-of-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b
Description of Assessment	Students individually write a single paragraph response addressing the following prompt: How does the revelation in lines 45–47 impact the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the poem?

## Unit-at-a-Glance Calendar

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
1	“My Last Duchess,” lines 1–8	In this first lesson of 11th grade, students are introduced to Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) and close reading for textual details. Students begin an exploration of Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess.” They listen to a masterful reading of the poem and begin to analyze the first eight lines of this text. In evidence-based discussion, students analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone in the introductory lines of the poem (RL.11-12.4). Students learn to cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support their analysis.
2	“My Last Duchess,” lines 5–21	Students continue their study of Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” building their close reading skills through an exploration of lines 5–21 of the poem. At the same time, they are introduced to the important skill of text annotation, which they then practice. They listen to a masterful reading of the relevant section of the poem before annotating the text in pairs and engaging in small group discussion. In doing so, they will also be introduced to the addressed standard of the lesson SL.11-12.1.b, which they will read in order to create a class checklist for the elements of a civil and democratic discussion.
3	“My Last Duchess,” lines 21–34	In this lesson, students read lines 21–34 of “My Last Duchess,” continuing to gather evidence of the Duke’s character and the emergence of the Duchess’s character as described by the Duke. Students are assessed on their ability to follow established criteria in small group discussions about the question: What is the impact of Browning’s choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess? Students also perform a Quick Write to address the same prompt

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
4	"My Last Duchess," lines 34–43	In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 34–43 from "My Last Duchess," in which the Duke states that he never "stooped" to blame his wife for her actions. Students engage in an evidence-based discussion about the meaning of these lines and how Browning develops the Duke's character in these lines. Students read and analyze a new writing standard, W.11-12.2.b, and assess their own understanding of the standard on the Common Core Learning Standards Tool.
5	"My Last Duchess," 43–end	In this lesson, students read the final 14 lines of "My Last Duchess." Students learn to identify central ideas in the poem. In the course of this lesson, students read and analyze a new standard, RL.11-12.2. Students also continue to work with some of the poem's challenging vocabulary and syntax. In small groups, students participate in evidence-based discussions to explain how the choice of Duke as speaker impacts the development of central ideas in the poem.
6	"My Last Duchess" entire text	In this lesson, the End-of-Unit Assessment, students engage in an evidence-based discussion of Browning's choices in introducing and developing the Duke in "My Last Duchess." Students use speaking, listening, and textual analysis skills to participate in a collaborative discussion. This discussion prepares students to draft a one-paragraph analysis of how the revelation at the end of the poem impacts the development of the Duke's character over the course of the poem. This assessment builds upon students' understanding of Browning's choices to develop the Duke's character over the course of the text, and requires them to put into practice the writing standards introduced in the earlier lessons of the module.

## Preparation, Materials, and Resources

### Preparation

- Read and annotate "My Last Duchess"
- Review the Text Analysis Rubric
- Review all unit standards and post in classroom

## Materials and Resources

- Copies of the text “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning
- Masterful recording of the text
- Self-stick notes for students
- Writing utensils including pencils, pens, markers, and highlighters
- Methods for collecting student work: student notebooks, folders, etc.
- Access to technology (if possible): interactive whiteboard, document camera, and LCD projector
- Copies of handouts and tools for each student: see materials list in individual lesson plans
- Copies of the Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool

**11.1.1****Lesson 1****Introduction**

This is the first English language arts lesson of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. It introduces students to important skills and practices that continue throughout the year: Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) and close reading for textual details. In this lesson, students begin an exploration of Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess." After listening to a masterful reading of the poem, which is written in the form of a dramatic monologue, students begin to analyze the first eight lines in which Browning introduces the speaker and main character, the Duke. Through discussion, students analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone in the introductory lines of the poem (RL.11-12.4) and learn to cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support their analysis of the text.

To assess their learning in this lesson, students compose a Quick Write using evidence from the text to explain how specific word choices impact the meaning and tone of the poem in the first eight lines. For homework, students read lines 5–21 of the poem, annotating for any unfamiliar words. Students also begin to look for an Accountable Independent Reading text.

**Standards**

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
Addressed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning will be assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify two specific word choices in the first eight lines of the poem and explain how they impact the meaning and tone.</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify specific word choices in the first eight lines of the poem, such as “my,” “last,” “painted on the wall,” “looking as if she were alive,” “depth and passion,” “earnest glance,” etc.</li> <li>Explain how these word choices impact meaning and tone.</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duchess (n.) – the wife or widow of a duke (the male ruler of a duchy; the sovereign of a small state)</li> <li>Frà (n.) – a title given to an Italian monk or friar (a Catholic man who has withdrawn from the world for religious reasons)</li> <li>countenance (n.) – face</li> <li>earnest (adj.) – serious in intention, purpose, or effort; showing depth and sincerity of feeling</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>read (v.) – looked at carefully so as to understand the meaning</li> </ul>



## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.1</li> <li>Text: “My Last Duchess,” by Robert Browning, lines 1–8</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Masterful Reading</li> <li>Lines 1–8 Reading and Discussion</li> <li>Quick Write</li> <li>Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>40%</li> <li>20%</li> <li>15%</li> </ol>

## Materials

- Copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool for each student
- Free Audio Resource of “My Last Duchess”: <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15701>  
or  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english\\_literature/poetrycharactervoice/mylastduchessrev2.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english_literature/poetrycharactervoice/mylastduchessrev2.shtml)
- Copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist for each student

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
ⓘ	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

## Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

15%

Share the focus of this unit and module: to build students' ability to read complex texts and use evidence to talk and write about poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction. In the first two units, students explore how authors and poets use dramatic monologues and soliloquies to reveal and develop characters and central ideas. Students analyze the impact of the choices that the authors make about language and the development of characters and central ideas. Students then examine how the three unit texts interact with each other through the development and treatment of common central ideas. Students begin this exploration with a poem written by Robert Browning.

- ▶ Students listen.

Review the agenda and share the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.4. In this lesson, students will experience the poem "My Last Duchess" through a masterful reading. Students work on initial comprehension and analyze the impact of specific word choices on the meaning and tone of lines 1–8.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Pass out copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool to each student. Explain that students will work on mastering the skills described in the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool throughout this new module and the rest of the year.

- ▶ Students listen and examine their 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool.

① Whenever a new standard is introduced, students will use their Common Core Learning Standards Tool to read, paraphrase, and assess their familiarity with and mastery of the new standard.

Inform students that they will begin working with two standards in this lesson: RL.11-12.1 and RL.11-12.4. Ask students to individually read these standards in the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool and assess their familiarity with and mastery of these standards.

- ▶ Students read and reflect on standards RL.11-12.1 and RL.11-12.4.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think each standard means. Lead a brief discussion about these standards.

- 💬 Student responses may include the following:

RL.11-12.1

- Cite evidence to support text analysis
- Analyze what the text is saying directly and indirectly
- Determine where text leaves things uncertain
- Make inferences ("reading between the lines")

- Figure out what words and phrases mean in context

**RL.11-12.4**

- Determine the meaning of figurative and connotative language
- Analyze how word choice affects meaning and tone
- Determine what makes language beautiful, fresh, and engaging

Inform students that their work with RL.11-12.1, citing evidence from the text to support analysis, continues throughout the unit, module, and year.

**Activity 2: Masterful Reading****10%**

Explain to students that they are first going to listen to a masterful reading of the entire poem, focusing on their initial reactions and questions.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

- ① At the beginning of each lesson, students listen to a masterful reading of all or part of the poem. Consider using a different recorded reading of “My Last Duchess” for each masterful reading. Several recordings are available online. See the Materials section above for suggestions.

Ask students to independently write down their initial reactions and questions on their text or in a notebook. Ask students to volunteer any questions they have about the poem.

- ① Explain to students that it is okay to have questions as they engage with complex texts. Consider writing students’ questions on the board or on chart paper for the class to refer to throughout the unit. Remind students that they will answer and add to these questions as they read closely in this and upcoming lessons.

Explain to students that in this lesson they focus on specific word choices and how they impact the meaning and tone of the poem. Inform students that they will have opportunities throughout the discussion to take notes on the impact of word choice on meaning and tone.

- ▶ Students listen.

**Activity 3: Lines 1–8 Reading and Discussion****40%**

Reread the first eight lines of the poem aloud. Direct students to annotate the text by drawing a box around any unfamiliar words or words that are used in an unfamiliar way.

- ▶ Students follow along, boxing unfamiliar words.

- ① In this lesson, students practice a specific form of annotation (boxing unfamiliar words), but more detailed instruction regarding annotation will occur in Lesson 2. Annotating the text is an expectation of this curriculum, so it is important to introduce it in Lesson 1. This begins the process of making students more “word aware,” an important skill for success with the CCSS.

Ask students to form pairs to share any unfamiliar words they identified and work together to try to figure out those words. Explain to students that they will continue to work in these pairs throughout the lesson, rereading the lines and answering questions.

- ① Explain to students that if they were unable to make meaning of some words, they will have opportunities to do so by answering questions in this lesson.

---

Direct pairs to reread lines 1–2, “That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall, / Looking as if she were alive,” and answer the questions that follow, recording their responses as they do so.

- ① Throughout the curriculum, students take notes as they read and discuss texts. They can record these notes on their texts, on self-stick notes, or in a notebook. Consider choosing one method that works best for the class.
- ① Throughout the curriculum, students work individually, in pairs, and in small to large groups, to respond to questions that guide them in analyzing texts. Consider posting or projecting these questions for students to refer to throughout the lesson.

### What specific words and phrases does the speaker use to describe the Duchess?

🗨 Student responses should include:

- “my” (line 1)
- “last” (line 1)
- “painted (on the wall)” (line 1)
- “looking as if she were alive” (line 2)

- ① If necessary, explain to students that the speaker of a poem is like the narrator of a story.

### What do these words suggest about the Duchess?

🗨 Student responses may include:

- “my” suggests a relationship to the speaker (some students may understand that they are related by marriage)
- “last” suggests that she could be the final duchess or the most recent Duchess
- “painted on the wall” suggests that she is in a painting or portrait

- “looking as if she were alive” suggests that the Duchess may not be alive, or that the painting is very realistic

**Who is the speaker? How do you know?**

- The poem is in the first person: the speaker uses the words “I” and “my.” The speaker is married to a Duchess, which means that he must be a Duke.
- ① If necessary at this point explain that a Duchess is the wife or widow of a Duke, the male ruler of a duchy or the sovereign of a small state. From this point on, the speaker can be referred to as “the Duke” for ease of reference.

Lead a share out of responses. Instruct students to add to their notes as necessary.

- ① Consider modeling how to take notes on the previous discussion so students have guidance about what to write.

---

Direct pairs to reread lines 2–4, “I call / that piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf’s hands / Worked busily a day, and there she stands” and answer the questions that follow.

**What does the Duke mean by “that piece” (line 3)?**

- “That piece” is the painting or portrait of the Duchess.

**How does the Duke describe the piece?**

- It is “a wonder” (line 3).

**Who is Frà Pandolf? What words in the text tell you who he is?**

- He is the painter. The words that show this are his “hands worked busily a day” (line 4).
- ① If students were not able to define *Frà*, consider providing the definition for them at this time: a title given to an Italian monk or friar (a Catholic man who has withdrawn from the world for religious reasons).

**Why might the Duke mention Frà Pandolf in line 3?**

- To impress the listener or reader.
- ① If students have trouble determining why the Duke mentions Frà Pandolf at this point, explain that they will read more about this in the next lesson, when they read lines 5–21.

Lead a share out of responses. Instruct students to take notes during the share out.

---

Direct pairs to reread line 5, “Will ’t please you sit and look at her?” and answer the questions that follow.

**To whom is the Duke speaking?**

💬 He is speaking to someone in the room with him.

**Who else speaks in the first eight lines of the poem?**

💬 Nobody else speaks in the first eight lines of the poem.

Explain to students that the “My Last Duchess” takes the form of a dramatic monologue, a type of poem spoken by a single person in the company of another, who does not speak, and about whom the reader knows little. A dramatic monologue purposefully reveals the character of the speaker through his or her own words.

**Describe the Duke’s tone toward the listener in the last line. What words demonstrate this tone?**

💬 His tone is polite as evidenced by the courteous offering, “Will ’t please you.”

- ① If necessary, define “tone” for the students as the attitude a speaker has towards the subject about which he or she is speaking.
- ① Students have an opportunity to refine their understanding of the Duke’s tone and its contrast to his actions in later lessons. Students may eventually discern that the Duke’s actions are commanding and controlling however polite his tone.

Lead a share out of responses. Instruct students to add to their notes during the share out.

---

Direct pairs to reread lines 5–8 (from “I said / Frà Pandolf by design, for never read” to “The depth and passion of its earnest glance”) and answer the following questions.

Explain to students that *countenance* (line 7) means “face.”

**What is “that pictured countenance” in line 7?**

💬 The Duke is referring to the portrait of the Duchess.

**Explain what the stranger “read[s]” in lines 6–7, “for never read / Strangers like you that pictured countenance.” What might *read* mean here?**

- ☞ The stranger reads the “pictured countenance,” which means the face of the Duchess in the painting. *Read* means looked at carefully so as to understand the meaning.

**To what does “its” refer in line 8?**

- ☞ “Its” refers to the portrait’s face and expression, i.e., the Duchess.

① Consider giving students the definition of *earnest* before they answer the following question.

**What are some words that the Duke uses to describe the “glance”?**

- ☞ The Duke refers to the “depth and passion” (line 8) of her glance and calls it “earnest” (line 8).

**What does the reader learn about the Duchess from the description of her portrait in the first eight lines of the poem?**

- ☞ It would seem that the Duchess is or was very beautiful, or at least that her portrait is: the Duke calls the piece “a wonder” (line 3) and refers to “the depth and passion of that earnest glance” (line 8).
- ☞ The phrase “the depth and passion of that earnest glance” suggests that the Duchess was passionate and sincere.

## Activity 4: Quick Write

20%

Introduce the Short Response Rubric and Checklist. Briefly explain the purpose of the rubric and checklist: to help students improve their Quick Write and reflective writing responses. Inform students that they should use the rubric and checklist to guide their writing of both Quick Writes and reflective writing assignments. For longer writing assignments (like the Mid-Unit and End-of-Unit Assessments) students will use the Text Analysis Rubric.

Lead a brief discussion of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist categories: Inferences/Claims, Analysis, Evidence, and Conventions. Review the components of a High Performance Response.

- ① Quick Write activities engage students in thinking deeply about texts during or after reading. Inform students how long they will have to do the writing, typically between 2 and 10 minutes.
- ① Since this is the beginning of the school year, decide how best to collect, organize, and analyze assessments. This can be done through portfolios, journals, notebooks, etc., according to the needs of the classroom and students.

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**Identify two specific word choices in the first eight lines of the poem and explain how they impact the meaning and tone.**

Instruct students to look at their text and notes to find evidence. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition students to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.

🗨 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

① Students will reference the Quick Write from this lesson in the End-of-Unit Assessment in Lesson 6.

## Activity 6: Closing

15%

Explain to students that part of the daily homework expectation is to read outside of class. Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) expects that all students find, read, and respond to reading material written at their independent reading level. The purpose of AIR is to have students practice reading outside of the classroom and stimulate an interest and enjoyment of reading.

- ▶ Students listen.

① AIR is an expectation for all students at all grade levels. An AIR text should be of high interest but also a text that students can easily decode and comprehend. Give students several days to find the correct text.

Explain to students that they need to find an appropriate text (or “just the right book”). Suggest different places where students can look for texts, including but not limited to the local or school library, electronic books, classroom library, or home library. As the year progresses, students are held accountable for their reading in a variety of ways.

- ▶ Students continue to listen.

① In addition to class discussions about AIR texts, consider other methods of holding students accountable for AIR. Ideas for accountability include reading logs, reading journals, posting to a class wiki, peer/teacher conferencing, and blogging.

For homework, instruct students to begin to look for an appropriate text for their AIR.



Also for homework, instruct students to read lines 5–21 of the poem, from “I said / Frà Pandolf by design, for never read” through “For calling up that spot of joy.” Direct students to box any unfamiliar words and look up their definitions. Instruct them to choose the definition that makes the most sense in the context, and write a brief definition above or near the word in the poem.

Display and distribute the homework assignment.

## Homework

Begin to look for an appropriate text to read for AIR.

Read lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess,” from “I said / Frà Pandolf by design, for never read” through “For calling up that spot of joy.” Box any unfamiliar words, and look up their definitions. Choose the definition that makes the most sense in the context, and write a brief definition above or near the word in the poem.

## 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading		I know what this is asking and I can do this.	This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.	I am not familiar with this standard.
CCRA.R.9	Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.			
CCS Standards: Reading—Literature		I know what this is asking and I can do this.	This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.	I am not familiar with this standard.
RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.			
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.			

<b>RL.11-12.3</b>	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).			
<b>RL.11-12.4</b>	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)			
<b>CCS Standards: Reading—Informational Text</b>		<b>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</b>	<b>This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.</b>	<b>I am not familiar with this standard.</b>
<b>RI.11-12.1</b>	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.			
<b>RI.11-12.2</b>	Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.			

<b>RI.11-12.3</b>	Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.			
<b>RI.11-12.6</b>	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.			
<b>CCS Standards: Writing</b>		<b>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</b>	<b>This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.</b>	<b>I am not familiar with this standard.</b>
<b>W.11-12.2</b>	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.			
<b>W.11-12.2.a</b>	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.			

<b>W.11-12.2.b</b>	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.			
<b>W.11-12.2.c</b>	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.			
<b>W.11-12.2.d</b>	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.			
<b>W.11-12.2.e</b>	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.			
<b>W.11-12.2.f</b>	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).			
<b>W.11-12.5</b>	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12 on page 68.)			

<b>W.11-12.6</b>	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.			
<b>W.11-12.9</b>	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.			
<b>W.11-12.9.a</b>	a. Apply <i>grades 11–12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).			
<b>W.11-12.9.b</b>	Apply <i>grades 11-12 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g. “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses]”).			
<b>CCS Standards: Speaking &amp; Listening</b>		<b>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</b>	<b>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</b>	<b>I am not familiar with this standard.</b>

<b>SL.11-12.1</b>	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.			
<b>SL.11-12.1.a</b>	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.			
<b>SL.11-12.1.b</b>	Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.			
<b>SL.11-12.1.c</b>	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.			
<b>SL.11-12.1.d</b>	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.			

<b>SL.11-12.1.e</b>	Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds.			
<b>CCS Standards: Language</b>		<b>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</b>	<b>This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.</b>	<b>I am not familiar with this standard.</b>
<b>L.11-12.1</b>	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.			
<b>L.11-12.2</b>	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.			
<b>L.11-12.4</b>	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11–12 reading and content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.			
<b>L.11-12.4.a</b>	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.			



<b>L.11-12.4.b</b>	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).			
<b>L.11-12.4.c</b>	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.			
<b>L.11-12.4.d</b>	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).			
<b>L.11-12.5</b>	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.			
<b>L.11-12.5.a</b>	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.			
<b>L.11-12.5.b</b>	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.			

## Short Response Rubric

Assessed Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
--------------	--	---------------	--	--------------	--

	<b>2-Point Response</b>	<b>1-Point response</b>	<b>0-Point Response</b>
<b>Inferences/Claims</b>	Includes valid inferences or claims from the text  Fully and directly responds to the prompt	Includes inferences or claims that are loosely based on the text  Responds partially to the prompt or does not address all elements of the prompt	Does not address any of the requirements of the prompt or is totally inaccurate
<b>Analysis</b>	Includes evidence of reflection and analysis of the text	A mostly literal recounting of events or details from the text(s)	The response is blank
<b>Evidence</b>	Includes the most relevant and sufficient textual evidence, facts, or details to develop response according to the requirements of the Quick Write	Includes some relevant facts, definitions, concrete details and/or other information from the text(s) to develop an analysis of the text according to the requirements of the Quick Write	The response includes no evidence from the text
<b>Conventions</b>	Uses complete sentences where errors do not impact readability	Includes incomplete sentences or bullets	The response is unintelligible or indecipherable

## Short Response Checklist

Assessed Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

Does my writing...	Did I...	✓
Include valid inferences and/or claims from the text(s)?	Closely read the prompt and address the whole prompt in my response?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clearly state a text-based claim I want the reader to consider?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Confirm that my claim is directly supported by what I read in the text?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop an analysis of the text(s)?	Did I consider the author's choices, impact of word choices, the text's central ideas, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include evidence from the text(s)?	Directly quote or paraphrase evidence from the text?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Arrange my evidence in an order that makes sense and supports my claim?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reflect on the text to ensure the evidence I used is the most relevant and sufficient evidence to support my claim?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use complete sentences, correct punctuation, and spelling?	Reread my writing to ensure it means exactly what I want it to mean?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Review my writing for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation?	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 11.1.1

## Lesson 2

## Introduction

In this lesson, students continue their study of Browning's "My Last Duchess," building their reading skills through a close exploration of lines 5–21 of the poem (from "I said / Frà Pandolf by design" to "For calling up that spot of joy"), in which Browning continues to introduce and develop the main character, the Duke, and his relationship to his last Duchess. Students also begin to practice the important skill of text annotation. They listen to a masterful reading of the poem before annotating the text in pairs and engaging in small group discussions centering around Browning's choices regarding the development of the Duke's character (RL.11-12.3). In so doing, students are also introduced to a standard addressed in the lesson, SL.11-12.1.b, before creating a class list of elements for a civil and democratic discussion.

Student learning in this lesson is assessed with a Quick Write about the development of the Duke's character. For homework, students reread lines 9 and 10 of the poem and consider the impact of the revelation that the portrait is kept behind a curtain that only the Duke may draw. They also continue to look for possible AIR texts.

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
Addressed Standard(s)	
SL.11-12.1.b	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts and issues</i> , building on other ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning will be assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does the reader learn about the Duke through his description of the Duchess in lines 1–21 of the poem?</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify at least one aspect of the Duke’s character such as his obsession with possessions, or his jealousy and possessiveness, etc.</li> <li>Demonstrate the emergence of this aspect of the Duke’s character in lines 1–21.</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>durst (v.) – dared</li> <li>mantle (n.) – a loose, sleeveless cloak or cape</li> <li>laps (v.) – lays partly over something underneath</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>design (v.) – plan or project</li> </ul>

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<p><b>Standards &amp; Text:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL.11-12.3, SL.11-12.1.b</li> <li>Text: “My Last Duchess,” lines 5–21</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Sequence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Homework Accountability</li> <li>Introduction to Annotation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>10%</li> </ol>

4. Masterful Reading	4. 10%
5. Lines 5–21 Reading and Discussion	5. 40%
6. Quick Write	6. 10%
7. Closing	7. 5%

## Materials

- Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Copies of the Annotation Codes Bookmark for each student
- Free audio resource of “My Last Duchess”: <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15701>
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
ⓘ	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

## Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

**15%**

Begin by reviewing the agenda and assessed standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.3. In this lesson, students explore Browning’s choices about how to introduce and develop the Duke in lines 1–21 of the poem. To support their analysis, students practice annotating the text as an important part of reading closely. Students engage in evidence-based discussion as well as complete a brief writing assignment to close the lesson.

- Students look at the agenda.

Inform students that they will begin working with two new standards in this lesson: RL.11-12.3 and SL.11-12.1.b. Ask students to individually read standards RL.11-12.3 and SL.11-12.1.b in the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool and assess their familiarity with and mastery of these standards.

- ▶ Students read and reflect on standards RL.11-12.3 and SL.11-12.1.b.

Instruct students to focus on RL.11-12.3. Ask students the following questions:

### What are the elements of a story or drama?

- 💬 Students may identify plot/story, character, structure, or setting.

### What does the standard ask students to do with the elements of a story or drama?

- 💬 The standard asks students to think about the author's choices regarding these elements and discuss the impact of these choices.

Instruct students to focus on SL.11-12.1.b and talk in pairs about what they think this standard means. Lead a brief discussion about the standard. Remind students to pay attention to the overarching standard SL.11-12.1 as well as SL.11-12.1.b.

- 💬 Student responses may include the following:

- Engaging in collaborative discussions
- Working together with diverse partners
- Being polite and fair in discussions
- Setting clear goals
- Adhering to time
- Remaining on task
- Establishing individual roles

- ① Make sure students are able to define what *civil* and *democratic* mean in the context of a discussion. Ask for volunteers to define these words.

Ask if there are any other additions that should be made to the list, and agree as a class upon a list of criteria for discussion that meets the standards and class/school norms.

Inform students that they will practice applying their understanding of SL.11-12.1.b in small group discussions later in the lesson.

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

**10%**

Remind students of the AIR requirement. Students should continue to find an appropriate text to read outside of class.

Ask several students to describe their search for an AIR text. Then, lead a brief class discussion about methods for choosing AIR texts and resources to help students.

---

Ask students to share in pairs the unfamiliar words they put in boxes for last night's homework, explaining that the class will address these words during the course of this lesson.

- ▶ Student pairs share the words that they put in boxes and their definitions.
- 💬 Student responses may include the following:
  - design (line 6) – plan or project
  - durst (line 11) – dared
  - mantle (line 16) – a loose, sleeveless cloak or cape
  - laps (line 16) – lays partly over something underneath

### Activity 3: Introduction to Annotation

**10%**

Discuss the importance of annotation by asking the following questions:

#### What are some purposes for marking the text?

- 💬 Student responses may include that marking the text helps you to remember what you are reading by writing your thinking about the text, keep track of important ideas, think about unfamiliar words, and question the text or make connections between ideas.
- ① Consider explaining to students that annotation is a skill for reading closely and noting the relationship of annotation to standard RL.11-12.1: annotation helps students look closely at text evidence to determine a text's explicit and implicit meanings.

#### How does annotation change the way you read?

- 💬 Student responses may include the following:
  - It connects the reader to the text more deeply by making a reader read more actively and pay close attention to details
  - It makes it difficult to just read because it slows down your reading

Explain that readers use shorthand ways of marking text so as not to take time away from their reading. Display and explain the following codes:

- Box unfamiliar words.
- Star (\*) important or repeating ideas.
- Put a question mark (?) next to a section you are questioning or confused about, and write your question down.



- Use an exclamation point (!) for connections between ideas or ideas that strike or surprise you in some way, and provide a brief note explaining the connection.

Share with students that, besides using the codes, marking the text with their thinking in relation to the codes is important. Explain that students will use these codes throughout the year, beginning with their reading of “My Last Duchess,” to think more deeply about the details in the text and keep track of their thinking about text.

- ▶ Students write the annotation codes in their notebooks or refer to the Annotation Codes Bookmark and their explanations.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** To help students remember annotation codes, post them somewhere in the classroom, and make sure students have made copies of the codes in their notebooks or agendas. The process of annotation can be complex for some students. Some students need the annotation symbol available to them on chart paper, on a handout/bookmark, and/or posted on their desk.

Distribute copies of the Annotation Markings Bookmark.

### Activity 4: Masterful Reading

**10%**

Transition students to a Masterful Reading of “My Last Duchess” in its entirety. Instruct students to pay attention to how the Duke describes the Duchess.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

### Activity 5: Lines 5–21 Reading and Discussion

**40%**

Divide students into pairs and instruct them to read and annotate lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess,” from “I said / Frà Pandolf by design” to “For calling up that spot of joy,” focusing on observations about the Duke.

- ▶ In pairs, students read and annotate lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess.”

① This is a syntactically complex and dense section of text and students may need some support for comprehension.

Instruct students to read lines 6–12 as a class, ignoring the parentheses in lines 9 and 10. Ask students to paraphrase these lines.

- 💬 Strangers like you always ask me, if they dare, how the Duchess came to look that way in the portrait.

① Students' homework for this lesson will be to consider the parenthetical text in lines 9 and 10.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If additional scaffolding is needed, ask students to identify who "they" are (strangers who look at the painting) and where "there" is (the Duchess's face, or countenance). Students should know *durst* from looking it up the previous evening.

Lead a brief full-class discussion asking students to further annotate where necessary.

---

Divide students into small groups to discuss questions on the text. Remind students to practice building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively in civil, democratic discussion with their peers (SL.11-12.1.b). Also, remind students to use their annotations to help them.

Instruct students to reread lines 5–12, from "I said / Frà Pandolf by design, for never read" to "if they durst / How such a glance came there." Ask students to answer the following questions in their groups before sharing out with the class.

**Whom does the Duke reference in line 6?**

☞ The Duke refers to Frà Pandolf, the painter from line 3.

**What does "by design" mean in this context?**

☞ In this context, "by design" means "on purpose or intentionally."

① **Differentiation Consideration:** To scaffold up to the definition of "by design," instruct students to look up and share different definitions of *design*. Ask students what "by design" might mean if *design* can mean "plan or project."

**Why does the Duke claim in lines 6–12 that he mentions Frà Pandolf "by design"?**

☞ The Duke claims that those who view the portrait are so stunned by the portrait that they ask him how it is possible to paint such a lifelike picture.

**For what other reasons might the Duke mention Frà Pandolf twice in the first six lines of the poem?**

- ☞ Student responses may include:
- Frà Pandolf may be a famous artist or a painter known for his skill.
  - The Duke may be trying to impress his visitor.

**In line 11, what do the words "if they durst" suggest about the Duke's view of himself?**

☞ The Duke views himself as an important person.

Lead a brief full-class discussion of these questions.

---

Instruct students to read lines 13–21, from “Sir, ‘twas not / Her husband’s presence only” to “For calling up that spot of joy.” Ask students to answer the following questions in their groups before sharing out with the class.

**What does the Duke imply when he uses the word “only” in line 14?**

- He implies that it should be “her husband’s presence only” that causes her such pleasure.

**What does the phrase “that spot of joy” suggest about the Duchess? What does the Duke imply in lines 15–19 might have caused such an expression?**

- He implies that the Duchess is blushing with pleasure. The Duchess was pleased by compliments from Frà Pandolf.
- ① It might be useful here to explain to students that a *mantle* means “a loose piece of clothing without sleeves that was worn over other clothes,” and that *laps* is used to mean “lays partly over something underneath.”

**What does the Duke mean by “such stuff” in line 19? What does the Duke’s use of the phrase “such stuff” suggest about his attitude towards Frà Pandolf?**

- Such stuff refers to Frà Pandolf’s compliments to the Duchess. The Duke is dismissive of Frà Pandolf’s compliments—he thinks them unworthy of attention.

**How did the Duchess respond to “such stuff” (line 19)? Cite evidence from the text that supports your response.**

- The Duchess was pleased by such things: “such stuff / Was courtesy, she thought” and she would blush with pleasure. Students should note the repetition of the phrase “that spot of joy.”

**What does the Duke imply when he remarks that, “such stuff / Was courtesy she thought, and cause enough / For calling up that spot of joy” (lines 19–21)?**

- The Duke implies that he disapproves of the Duchess’s pleasure in “such stuff.”

Lead a brief full-class discussion of these questions.

## Activity 6: Quick Write

10%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What does the reader learn about the Duke through his description of the Duchess in lines 1–21 of the poem?**

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Instruct students to look at their text and notes to find evidence. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written response.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.

☞ See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

① Students will use this Quick Write again in 11.1.1 Lesson 4.

## Activity 7: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread lines 9 and 10 of the poem and respond in writing to the following questions:

**What do you learn about the portrait? How does this develop your understanding of the Duke's character?**

Also, instruct students to continue to look for texts for their AIR reading.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Reread lines 9 and 10 of the poem and respond in writing to the following questions:

**What do you learn about the portrait? How does this develop your understanding of the Duke's character?**

In addition, continue to look for texts for AIR.

## Annotation Codes Bookmark

Annotation Markings Bookmark	Annotation Markings Bookmark	Annotation Markings Bookmark
Box unfamiliar words.	Box unfamiliar words.	Box unfamiliar words.
Star (*) important or repeating ideas.	Star (*) important or repeating ideas.	Star (*) important or repeating ideas.
Put a question mark (?) next to a section you're questioning or confused about.	Put a question mark (?) next to a section you're questioning or confused about.	Put a question mark (?) next to a section you're questioning or confused about.
Use an exclamation point (!) for connections between ideas or ideas that strike or surprise you in some way.	Use an exclamation point (!) for connections between ideas or ideas that strike or surprise you in some way.	Use an exclamation point (!) for connections between ideas or ideas that strike or surprise you in some way.
<i>Remember</i> to write notes in the margin as you read to record your ideas and thoughts.	<i>Remember</i> to write notes in the margin as you read to record your ideas and thoughts.	<i>Remember</i> to write notes in the margin as you read to record your ideas and thoughts.

## 11.1.1

## Lesson 3

## Introduction

In this lesson, students read lines 21–34 of “My Last Duchess,” from “She had a heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad” to “My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name / With anybody’s gift,” continuing to gather evidence of the Duke’s character and the emergence of the Duchess’s character as described by the Duke. Students are assessed on their ability to follow established criteria in small group discussions about the question: What is the impact of Browning’s choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess? Students also perform a Quick Write to address the same prompt, citing points made by their peers in the class discussion. For homework, students look more closely at lines 29–34 to determine what they learn about the Duke and Duchess, and what is left uncertain about both characters in these lines.

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
RL.11-12.6	Analyzing a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
SL.11-12.1.b	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
Addressed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is

	particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
L.11-12.4.a, c	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.</p>

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Students practice established criteria for discussion in small groups in response to the following prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the impact of Browning’s choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess?</li> </ul> <p>Students perform a Quick Write on the same prompt, citing claims made by their peers in discussion.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a disconnect between how the Duke is presenting information about the Duchess and what the information actually means.</li> <li>Convey the understanding that the true nature of the Duchess’s actions is unclear because she does not speak, and because she is presented through the unreliable lens of the Duke’s jealousy and pride.</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>favour (n.) – a gift bestowed as a token of goodwill, kind regard, love, etc., as formerly bestowed upon a knight by his lady</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- bough (n.) – a branch of a tree, especially one of the larger or main branches
- officious (adj.) – objectionably aggressive in offering one’s unrequested and unwanted services, help, or advice; meddlesome

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards: RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.6, SL.11-12.1.b, RL.11-12.4, L.11-12.4.a, c</li> <li>• Text: “My Last Duchess,” lines 21–34</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>2. Homework Accountability</li> <li>3. Masterful Reading</li> <li>4. Lines 21–34 Reading and Discussion</li> <li>5. Self-Assessed Discussion</li> <li>6. Quick Write</li> <li>7. Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 15%</li> <li>2. 10%</li> <li>3. 5%</li> <li>4. 40%</li> <li>5. 15%</li> <li>6. 10%</li> <li>7. 5%</li> </ol>

## Materials

- Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Copies of the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist for standard SL.11-12.1.b for each student
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>



▶	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

## Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

15%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and sharing the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3 and SL.11-12.1.b. Inform students they will be focusing on how Browning develops the characters of the Duke and the Duchess through the viewpoint of the Duke in lines 21–34. Students discuss the poem excerpt in small groups before completing a Quick Write in response to a related prompt.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Inform students that later in the lesson they will self-assess their participation in a small group discussion of the text. Introduce students to the Speaking and Listening Rubric for grade 11. Ask students to read the rubric and ask questions to ensure comprehension.

- ▶ Students read along and ask questions as necessary.

Inform students that they will begin working with two new standards in this lesson: RL.11-12.6 and L.11-12.4.a, c. Ask students to individually read standards RL.11-12.6 and L.11-12.4.a, c in the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool and assess their familiarity with and mastery of these standards.

- ▶ Students read and reflect on standards RL.11-12.6 and L.11-12.4.a, c.

### ❗ Display the standards.

Instruct students to focus on standard RL.11-12.6 and to talk in pairs about what they think this standard means. Lead a brief discussion about the standard.

💬 Student responses may include:

- The standard requires students to grasp point of view in complex texts.
- The standard requires students to distinguish between what is said and what is meant.

### ❗ To support students' work with RL.11-12.6, introduce the concept of an unreliable narrator, which will be important in the study of "My Last Duchess." Lead a discussion of narrator reliability in the text read so far, encouraging students to think about the relationship between what the Duke says and what he means.

Instruct students to focus on standard L.11-12.4.a, c and to talk in pairs about what they think this standard means. Lead a brief discussion on the similarities between L.11-12.4.a, c and RL.11-12.4.

Student responses may include:

- Both standards talk about determining the meaning of words as they are used in a text.
- Standards L.11-12.4.a, c focus on the strategies for determining word meaning, including using context and reference materials like dictionaries.
- RL.11-12.4 talks about how to find the meaning of the word but also asks for its impact on the text overall.

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

**10%**

Instruct students to volunteer their responses to the homework from Lesson 2: reread lines 9 and 10. What do you learn about the portrait? How does this develop your understanding of the Duke's character?

- ▶ Students volunteer their responses to the Lesson 2 homework.

Student responses may include:

- No one is allowed to move the curtains hiding the painting except for the Duke. This demonstrates that he guards his possessions carefully and, since he's telling his listener, we can assume he takes pride in that fact.
- The fact that the painting is kept behind a curtain that only the Duke can draw suggests the possibility that the Duke has a jealous and controlling character.

Instruct students to give a show of hands to indicate which students have already selected their AIR text. Remind those who haven't that their title selection is due in the next lesson.

## Activity 3: Masterful Reading

**5%**

Play or perform a masterful reading "My Last Duchess" in its entirety, instructing students to focus on how Browning develops the character of the Duchess.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

## Activity 4: Lines 21–34 Reading and Discussion

**40%**

Transition students into groups for reading and evidence-based discussion. Instruct students to select one member of the group to read aloud lines 21–25 and ask the others to annotate the text as that person reads. Instruct students to revise or add to their annotations as they discuss the following questions.

- ① Consider modifying reading technique if necessary, to whisper or group reads, to promote fluency.

Reread lines 21–22: “She had a heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad / Too easily impressed...”

**What is the effect of the repetition in these lines?**

- 💬 The effect of the repetition of “too” is to emphasize that, in the Duke’s opinion, the Duchess was too easily pleased or satisfied.

**What is the effect of “how shall I say?” in these lines?**

- 💬 The Duke appears to be pausing to think about the right words.
- ① In the next lesson, students consider a similar instance of a verbal interjection by the Duke (“Even had you skill in speech—(which I have not)...”), which suggests the Duke’s false modesty. Consider revisiting “how shall I say?” as another example of false modesty, after completing 11.1.1 Lesson 4, when students will have more context to understand the Duke’s character and mannered tone.
- 

Instruct groups to read lines 25–29, from “Sir, ‘twas all one! my favour at her breast” to “the approving speech / Or blush, at least,” answering the questions that follow.

- ① Consider offering students the following definitions of *favour*: a gift bestowed as a token of goodwill, kind regard, love, etc., as formerly bestowed upon a knight by his lady.

**What does the Duke mean by “the dropping of daylight in the West” (line 26)?**

- 💬 The sunset.

**What does “bough” mean in the line “the *bough* of cherries some officious fool / Broke in the orchard for her” (line 27)? What words are associated with “bough” that can help to define it?**

- 💬 A *bough* is a branch or, in this case, a bunch of cherries. “Orchard” and “cherries.”

**What is happening in line 27?**

- 💬 Someone is giving the Duchess a gift of a branch of cherries.

**What is the connotation of the word “officious”? How do you know?**

- 💬 *Officious* is a negative word. The Duke combines it with “fool.”
- ① Remind students that for comprehension it may be enough to understand the connotation (or suggested or associated meaning) of a word, but that they should consult an outside source for definitions in order to build vocabulary.

**What does the Duke mean when he claims the Duchess’s “looks went everywhere”?**

☞ Student responses may include:

- The Duchess looked too often at other men.
- The Duke suspected the Duchess of cheating on him.
- The Duke could mean that the Duchess was interested in many different things, such as his “favour,” the sunset, or gifts such as cherries.

**What does the punctuation in “Sir, ‘twas all one!” (line 25) suggest about the Duke’s tone and message? What can you infer about how the Duke feels about what he is saying?**

☞ He is angry or agitated by the fact that the Duchess responds to other people and things the same way as she does to him.

**What inferences can you make about the Duchess based on lines 25–29?**

☞ She seemed friendly. She enjoyed everything.

① Although students will not be introduced formally until 11.1.1 Lesson 5 to standard RL.11-12.2 around the development and interaction of central ideas in a text, consider asking students to begin thinking about big ideas in the poem. Thus far, several central ideas have begun to develop, including: jealousy, possessiveness, power and status, voice, etc. Several of these ideas are also developed in other module texts. Students’ work with these and other central ideas will support their work in the module Performance Assessment.

Lead a brief class discussion about student responses.

---

Ask groups to read lines 31–34 (“She thanked men—good! but thanked / Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked / My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name / With anybody’s gift”) answering the questions that follow:

**What does the Duke mean by the “gift of a nine-hundred years old name” (line 32)?**

☞ The Duke’s family name is 900 years old. The Duke considers his last name to be a gift, because it is an important and prestigious one. The gift of his last name, in the Duke’s eyes, is a gift that gives the Duchess status and makes her an important person.

**From the Duke’s perspective, how does the Duchess value this gift?**

☞ She ranks it with “anybody’s gift” (line 34).

**How does this contrast with the Duke’s view of the gift of his name in lines 31–34? How do you know?**

🗨️ He seems to value his name above all other gifts. He says, “I know not how” the Duchess ranked his gift with “anybody’s gift.”

- ① Consider asking students how some of the central ideas they identified earlier in this lesson are developed through the Duke’s view of his name as a gift (e.g., power and status, control, possessiveness, etc.).

**Evaluate the Duke’s reliability as a narrator in these lines. Support your response with evidence from the text.**

🗨️ The Duke does not seem to be a reliable narrator. His view of the Duchess seems to be influenced by anger and jealousy, which are reflected in exclamations such as “Sir, ‘twas all one!” (line 25). His descriptions of the Duchess, such as his claim that “her looks went everywhere,” (line 24) should be treated with caution.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to answer the question above, consider posing the following question:

**Who does not speak in the poem?**

🗨️ The Duchess does not speak.

🗨️ The listener does not speak.

## Activity 5: Self-Assessed Discussion

15%

Instruct students to briefly review the SL.11-12.1.b Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist (included in this lesson).

- ▶ Students review the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist independently.

Instruct students to engage in a small group discussion about the prompt:

**What is the impact of Browning’s choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess?**

Remind students that at the end of the discussion, they will self-assess their participation using the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist.

Circulate to informally assess students’ engagement with SL.11-12.1.b.

Instruct students to use the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist to self-assess their participation in discussion.

- ① Consider collecting and reviewing students’ self-assessments for formative use.

## Activity 6: Quick Write

10%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What is the impact of Browning's choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess?**

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

Transition students to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.
- ☞ See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

## Activity 7: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**Explain whether you learn more about the Duke or the Duchess in lines 29–34. Cite evidence from the text to support your response.**

① Instruct students that because they have already focused on the meaning of the Duke's name in the questions for this lesson, they should focus on what else they learn from these lines.

Also, instruct students to continue to search for their AIR texts, which must be chosen by the next lesson.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What do you learn about the characters of the Duke and the Duchess in lines 29–34? What is left uncertain about the Duke and Duchess in these lines?**

Continue to look for an AIR text, which must be chosen by the next lesson.

## Speaking and Listening Rubric

**Assessed Standard: SL.11-12.1.b**

*Comprehension and Collaboration*

	2-Point Participation	1-Point Participation	0-Point Participation
<b>Collaboration</b> <b>SL.11-12.1.b</b>	Student collaborates well with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, often engaging in the following: setting clear goals and deadlines; establishing individual roles as needed.	Student collaborates with peers, occasionally engaging in the following: setting clear goals and deadlines; establishing individual roles as needed.	Student does not collaborate with peers, rarely engaging in the following: setting clear goals and deadlines; establishing individual roles as needed.

## Speaking and Listening Checklist

**Assessed Standard: SL.11-12.1.b**

*Comprehension and Collaboration*

	Did I...	✓
Collaboration	Collaborate with my peers in a civil, democratic way?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Discuss and make shared decisions with my peers?	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11.1.1****Lesson 4****Introduction**

In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 34–43 from “My Last Duchess” (from “Who’d stoop to blame / This sort of trifling?” to “E’en then there would be some stooping, and I choose / Never to stoop”), in which the Duke states that he never “stooped” to blame the Duchess for her actions. For the lesson assessment, students review their Quick Writes from Lesson 2 about how Browning begins to develop the Duke at the beginning of the poem before writing a new response about how Browning continues to develop the Duke. After the assessment, students discuss the significance and relevance of the evidence they cited in their responses, in relation to W.11-12.b and W.11-12.5, both new standards introduced in this lesson.

For homework, students begin reading their AIR text through the lens of focus standard RL.11-12.1.

**Standards**

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
W.11-12.2.b	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.  b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.



## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning will be assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reread your response to the Lesson 2 Quick Write before responding to the following prompt: How does Browning further develop the character of the Duke in lines 34–43?</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cite evidence from lines 34–43 to support analysis of the Duke’s character.</li> <li>Identify an insight about the Duke’s character beyond what was stated in the Lesson 2 Quick Write response.</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>trifling (n.) – idle or frivolous conduct, talk, etc.</li> <li>forsooth (adv.) – in truth; in fact; indeed</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lessoned (v.) – taught; instructed; given a lesson; admonished; reprovved</li> </ul>

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<p><b>Standards &amp; Text:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b, W.11-12.5</li> <li>Text: “My Last Duchess,” lines 34–43</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Sequence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Homework Accountability</li> <li>Masterful Reading</li> <li>Lines 34–43 Reading and Discussion</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>5%</li> <li>50%</li> </ol>

5. Quick Write	5. 10%
6. Significant and Relevant Evidence Discussion	6. 10%
7. Closing	7. 5%

## Materials

- Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- (Optional) free audio resource of “My Last Duchess”:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/robert-browning-my-last-ducess-audio/11434.html> or  
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/audioitem/138>
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Student Quick Write responses from Lesson 2 (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 2)

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
<b>10%</b>	<b>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</b>
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates text dependent questions.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
📘	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

**10%**

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3 and W.11-12.2.b. Inform students that they will be working in pairs or small groups as they read and discuss the text excerpt. Then they will independently respond to a writing prompt about how Browning is developing the Duke over the course of the poem.

- Students look at the agenda.

Explain to students that in this lesson they will begin working with two new standards: W.11-12.2.b and W.11-12.5. Ask students to individually reread standards W.11-12.2.b and W.11-12.5 and assess their

familiarity with and mastery of the standards on their Unit 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (10.1.1 Lesson 1).

- ▶ Students read and reflect on standards W.11-12.2.b and W.11-12.5.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think standard W.11-12.2.b means. Lead a brief discussion about this standard. Remind students to pay attention to the overarching standard W.11-12.2 as well as W.11-12.2.b.

💬 Student responses may include the following:

- Write texts that inform or clearly explain ideas
- Organize ideas
- Analyze the topic
- Use strong details, definitions, or quotes from the text to support ideas and analysis
- Make choices about what evidence most clearly or accurately supports ideas and analysis

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think standard W.11-12.5 means. Lead a brief discussion about this standard.

💬 Student responses may include the following:

- Revise writing to meet the needs of a specific purpose or audience
- Revise and editing writing to make it better
- Plan before beginning to write

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

**10%**

Instruct students to volunteer their responses to the homework from Lesson 3: What do you learn about the characters of the Duke and the Duchess in lines 29–34? What is left uncertain about the Duke and Duchess in these lines?

- ▶ Students volunteer their responses to the Lesson 3 homework.

💬 Student responses may include:

- We learn more about the Duchess than we do about the Duke. The Duke's description shows that the Duchess was friendly and courteous to all men—"all and each / Would draw from her the same approving speech" (lines 29–30)—and that she was easily pleased and impressed: "she liked whate'er / She looked upon" (lines 23–24). It is also hinted in these lines that she may have been unfaithful to the Duke, who comments that "her looks went everywhere" (line 24).

- Although the lines appear to describe the Duchess, we learn more about the Duke than we do about the Duchess. We learn about the Duke's pride: he is unable to bear the idea that "my favour at her breast" (line 25) and "a nine-hundred-years-old name" (line 33) are not ranked above all other gifts. We also see hints of his jealous nature in the line "her looks went everywhere" (line 24), where he suggests that she may have been unfaithful to him. These traits begin to suggest that the Duke may be an unreliable narrator as his pride and jealousy affect his description of the Duchess. The Duke also controls the story—he alone speaks, and the Duchess cannot, meaning that we are only offered one point of view.

Check to ensure all students have selected an AIR text.

### Activity 3: Masterful Reading

**5%**

Have students listen to a masterful reading of "My Last Duchess," lines 34–43, focusing on how Browning develops the Duke's character.

- ① Students have listened to a Masterful Reading of the entire poem at the beginning of Lessons 1–3. If students need another Masterful Reading of the entire poem, consider varying the delivery by using an audio source.
  - ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

### Activity 4: Lines 34–43 Reading and Discussion

**50%**

Transition students to individually rereading lines 34–43 of "My Last Duchess," from "Who'd stoop to blame / This sort of trifling?" to "E'en then there would be some stooping, and I choose / Never to stoop." Direct students to three unfamiliar words: "*trifling*" (line 35), "*lessoned*" (line 40), and "*forsooth*" (line 41). Provide the definitions of *trifling* and *forsooth* and ask students to annotate their copy of the poem with these meanings. Explain that students will use context to define "*lessoned*" later in their reading.

- ▶ Students annotate their texts with the meanings of "trifling" and "forsooth."

Direct students to form pairs or groups to reread lines 31–35 (from "She thanked men – good! but thanked / Somehow" to "Who'd stoop to blame / This sort of trifling?") and answer the questions that follow:

**Consider the definition of trifling. To what "trifling" (line 35) is the Duke referring?**

- The Duke is referring to the Duchess's interactions with other men and to the fact that she thanked them all equally for favours, as though the Duke's gift of name and status were no more important than they were.

**How does the Duke describe his response to the Duchess's "trifling" (lines 34–35)?**

- The Duke says that he does not "stoop" to blame the Duchess's trifling.

**What does it mean to *stoop*? What does the word mean in this context?**

- *Stooping* means to lower oneself. To *stoop* would mean the Duke would have to go down to the Duchess's level to blame her.

① Encourage students to understand that both literal and figurative interpretations of the word *stoop* apply.

**What does the word "stoop" suggest about how the Duke views the Duchess?**

- This word choice suggests the Duke views himself as higher than, or superior to, the Duchess in this situation.

---

Instruct pairs or groups to reread lines 35–39, from "Even had you skill / In speech—(which I have not)" to "here you miss, / Or there exceed the mark," and answer the questions that follow:

**What does the Duke say about his own speaking ability?**

- The Duke says he does not have "skill / In speech" (lines 35–36).

**What does the language of the poem suggest about the Duke's speaking ability? What specific details and examples illustrate this?**

- Student responses may include:
  - The language of the poem suggests the Duke is an eloquent speaker. For example, he says, "never read / Strangers like you that pictured countenance" (lines 6–7) and "My favour at her breast, / The dropping of the daylight in the West" (lines 25–26).
  - The language of the poem suggests the Duke has skill in speech. For example, he says, "Paint / Must never hope to reproduce the faint / Half-flush that dies along her throat" and "they would ask me, if they durst, / How such a glance came there" (lines 17–19).

**What inference can you make about the Duke based on what he says about his speaking ability?**

- Student responses may include:

- The Duke says he is not a good speaker to draw attention to the fact that he really is a good speaker.
- The Duke presents himself as a simple man with little skill for human interactions, but he really is manipulative.

**To whom does the Duke refer as “such an one” on line 37?**

💬 “Such an one” refers to the Duchess.

**Paraphrase lines 35–39, from “Even if you had skill / In speech” to “here you miss / Or there exceed the mark.”**

💬 Even if I could tell the Duchess, “This thing upsets me” or “Here’s what you do right, and here’s what you do wrong...”

**What is the meaning of the word “will” on line 36?**

💬 “Will” in this context means wishes or desires.

**To whose will is the Duke referring? How do you know?**

💬 The Duke is referring to his own will. When the Duke says “your will,” he is describing a hypothetical situation.

**What is the Duke’s will? How does this contribute to the Duke’s development as a character?**

💬 The Duke’s will is to tell the Duchess what disgusts him about her and what she does that pleases or disappoints him. This further develops the idea that the Duke wants to control the Duchess.

---

Instruct pairs or groups to reread lines 39–43, from “—and if she let / Herself be lessoned so” to “and I choose / Never to stoop,” and answer the questions that follow. Share with students that “nor plainly set / Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse” means “stopped arguing and making excuses.”

**What is the meaning of “lessoned” as Browning uses it on line 40?**

💬 Lessoned contains the word “lesson.” The Duke is describing his will to correct the Duchess, so he wants to teach her a lesson. In this case, lessoned means corrected or reprimanded.

① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.a, b through the process of using context and word parts to make meaning of a word.

**What is the impact of specific words or phrases in the Duke’s statement, “I choose / Never to stoop” in lines 42–43?**

🗨 Student responses may include:

- “Never” is a strong word that shows how committed the Duke is not to stoop to blame the Duchess.
- Through the use of the word “stoop,” the Duke emphasizes that he is higher than, or superior to, the Duchess.
- The Duke’s use of “I choose” shows that he is in control of the situation; he is the one making decisions.

**How does the Duke’s repeated use of the word “stoop” contribute to his development as a character?**

🗨 Student responses may include:

- The Duke’s choice to repeat the word “stoop” signifies that he believes he would have to lower himself to address the Duchess and her actions. By repeating the word stoop, the Duke reinforces that he views himself as different from, and superior to, the Duchess.

## Activity 5: Quick Write

10%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**Reread your response to the 11.1.1 Lesson 2 Quick Write before responding to this prompt: How does Browning further develop the character of the Duke in lines 34–43?**

Remind students to focus on finding the most significant and relevant details (W.11-12.b) and to support their analysis with new evidence from lines 34–43. Encourage students to use the Short Response Checklist and Rubric to guide their writing.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy. Ensure all students have access to their Quick Writes from Lesson 2.

Transition students to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.

🗨 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

## Activity 6: Significant and Relevant Evidence Discussion

**10%**

Instruct students to share their Quick Write responses in small groups and discuss which evidence most effectively demonstrates the development of the Duke's character.

- ▶ Students discuss the evidence each group member used in the Quick Write, considering which evidence is most effective.

Ask each group to share out the evidence they identified as the most significant and relevant, based on how effectively the evidence demonstrated the development of the Duke's character.

- ▶ Each group shares out the evidence they identified as being the most significant and relevant.

## Activity 7: Closing

**5%**

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, students read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text through the lens of a focus standard. Introduce standard RL.11-12.1 as the focus standard and model what applying a focus standard looks like.

For example, RL.11-12.1 asks students to "Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain." Students who read "My Last Duchess" might say, "In lines 21–22, the Duke describes the Duchess by saying, 'She had / A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad.' This contributes to Browning's development of the Duke as a character who wants to assert his control over the Duchess."

Instruct students that they should prepare for a brief 3–5 minute discussion that will ask them to apply the language of the standards to their reading.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Begin reading your AIR text through the lens of the assigned focus standard (RL.11-12.1) and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.



**11.1.1****Lesson 5****Introduction**

In this lesson, students read the final 14 lines of “My Last Duchess” (from “Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt / Whene’er I passed her” to “Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me”). Students read and analyze a new standard, RL.11-12.2, before examining how Browning develops central ideas such as power and status, control, jealousy, and voice in these lines. After listening to a Masterful Reading of the poem, students review the literal and figurative meanings of the lines and then participate in small-group discussions to explore central ideas. Students demonstrate their learning in a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. For homework, students consider how Browning uses one of the Duke’s art pieces to develop the Duke’s character. The study of central ideas in the poem broadens students’ engagement with the Duke’s character, in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment in Lesson 6.

**Standards**

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in the text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
Addressed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

**Assessment**

Assessment(s)
Student learning will be assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- What is the impact of Browning's choice of speaker on the development of central ideas in the poem?

### High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify that the Duke is the speaker of the poem.
- Explain how the Duke's point of view (including his unreliability) develops central ideas in the poem (e.g., power and status, voice, materialism, jealousy, madness).

## Vocabulary

### Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- munificence (n.) – the quality of being munificent or showing unusual generosity
- ample (adj.) – fully sufficient or more than adequate for the purpose or needs; plentiful; enough
- warrant (n.) – something that serves to give reliable or formal assurance of something; guarantee, pledge, or security
- just (adj.) – guided by truth, reason, justice, and fairness
- pretence (n.) – a claim made or implied
- dowry (n.) – the money, goods, or estate that a wife brings to her husband at marriage

### Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- object (n.) – the end to which effort or action is directed; goal; purpose

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards: RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.6, RL.11-12.3</li> <li>• Text: "My Last Duchess," lines 43–56</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>2. Homework Accountability</li> <li>3. Masterful Reading</li> <li>4. Lines 43–56 Reading and Discussion</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 10%</li> <li>2. 10%</li> <li>3. 5%</li> <li>4. 55%</li> </ol>

5. Quick Write	5. 15%
6. Closing	6. 5%

## Materials

- Student Copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- (Optional) free audio resource of “My Last Duchess”:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/robert-browning-my-last-ducess-audio/11434.html> or  
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/audioitem/138>
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

**10%**

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.2 and RL.11-12.6. Explain to students that in this lesson they will consider how Browning introduces and develops a central idea in the poem.

- Students look at the agenda.

Explain that students will begin working on a new standard: RL.11-12.2. Instruct students to reread standard RL.11-12.2 individually and assess their familiarity with and mastery of the standard on their 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool.

- Students read and reflect on standard RL.11-12.2.

Instruct students to talk with a partner about their understanding of the new standard, RL.11-12.2.

- ▶ Students work in pairs to explain the standard.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- This standard means that students must determine and analyze more than one central idea in a text.
- This standard means that authors develop central ideas in several places in a text.
- One central idea can affect other central ideas in a text.
- Students must be able to summarize a text objectively.

Lead a brief class discussion about the meaning of the standard to check for understanding.

Ask students to clarify the meaning of the term “central idea” to check for understanding.

🗨 Student responses might include:

- An idea that is important to the text
- A big idea in a text
- A theme
- An idea that is repeated several times

Remind students that, as they read in this lesson, they will be working with this standard so they should be looking for central ideas, paying attention to words or passages that require them to define or clarify language in the poem, and annotating the text to prepare for textual analysis.

① In Lesson 3, students may have begun to informally identify emerging central ideas, including jealousy, possessiveness, power and status, voice, etc. If so, remind students to note the continued development of these ideas, and the emergence of new ideas in the text.

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

**10%**

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied their focus standard, RL.11-12.1, to their AIR text. Then, lead a brief share out by selecting several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

- ▶ Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied their focus standard (RL.11-12.1) to their AIR text from the previous lesson’s homework.

### Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Have students listen to a Masterful Reading of Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” lines 43–56, and remind students that they will be working with standard RL.11-12.2. Instruct students to pay attention to how the Duke reports what happened to the Duchess.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

### Activity 4: Lines 43–56 Reading and Discussion

55%

Instruct students to reread lines 43–47 (from “Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt, / Whene’er I passed her” to “Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands / As if alive”) before working in pairs to respond to the following questions. Instruct students to write central ideas they notice in the margin of the text. Direct students to mark those places related to a central idea in the poem with the code “CI” (Central Idea).

Remind students this will help them keep track of evidence they will be using later in the lesson assessment as well as the 11.1 Performance Assessment, which will focus on the development of central ideas in several texts.

**What does the Duke mean by the question, “who passed without / Much the same smile?” in lines 44–45?**

- 💬 The Duchess smiled at other people just as she smiled at the Duke.

**What does the Duke mean by “This grew” in line 45?**

- 💬 The Duchess kept smiling at everyone.

**What might the Duke mean when he states, “I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together” in lines 45–46?**

- 💬 The Duke might have had the Duchess killed, silenced in some way, or sent away.
- ① Student responses will vary because Browning does not specify what the orders were. Draw students’ attention to their application of RL.11-12.1 as they consider where the text leaves matters uncertain.

**How does the repetition of the phrase “as if alive” in lines 2 and 47 impact the poem?**

- 💬 Student responses might include:
  - It reminds readers that the Duchess is no longer there and that the Duke might have killed her.

- It makes it seem as though the Duke is more pleased with the picture of the Duchess. The portrait “as if alive” is better than the living Duchess.
- 

Instruct students to form new pairs before rereading lines 47–53 (from “Will’t please you rise? We’ll meet / The company below, then” to “as I avowed / At starting, is my object”) and answering the following question. Remind students to continue to annotate for central ideas, using the code CI.

**What action happens in lines 47–48, right after the Duke finishes talking about the Duchess and her picture?**

- The Duke and the listener go downstairs.
- 

Instruct students to record the meanings of the following words from lines 49–51: *munificence* (the quality of being munificent or showing unusual generosity), *warrant* (something that serves to give reliable or formal assurance of something; guarantee, pledge or security), *just* (guided by truth, reason, justice and fairness), *pretence* (a claim made or implied), *dowry* (the money, goods or estate that a wife brings to her husband at marriage).

Instruct students to reread lines 49–56 (from “The Count your master’s known munificence / Is ample warrant” to “Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me”) and then Turn-and-Talk in pairs to answer the following questions.

- ▶ Students read silently and then talk in pairs to answer the following questions.

**What are the Duke and the listener discussing in lines 49–53?**

- The Duke’s plans to marry the Count’s daughter.

**What is the connection between the Count’s “known munificence” and a dowry in lines 49–51 (“The Count your master’s known munificence” to “no just pretence / Of mine for dowry will be disallowed”)?**

- Because the Count is known for his generosity, the Duke is sure that he can get a big dowry.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider posing the following question as a scaffold:

**To whose munificence does the Duke refer in line 49?**

- The Duke refers to the Count’s munificence.

- ① If necessary, provide a short definition of *ample* (enough).

- ① Some students may notice the British spelling, *pretence*. Explain that, in British spelling, *c* is sometimes used instead of the *s* used in American spelling.

**What does the word *object* mean in line 53?**

- 💬 *Object* here means *goal* or *desire*.

**What other meaning does the word *object* have?**

- 💬 It can mean *thing*.

**What is the impact of Browning's choice to use the word *object* in this line?**

- 💬 It reminds readers that the Duke seems to care more about things than people.
- 💬 It suggests that his next wife will be another object (thing) for him.

**What does the Duke ask the listener to “notice” as they go downstairs?**

- 💬 The Duke wants the listener to notice a bronze sculpture of Neptune taming a sea horse.

- ① Students will consider the significance of this imagery later in the homework assignment.

---

Instruct students to review their annotations for lines 43–56, and share in pairs the central ideas and supporting evidence they identified in these lines.

- ▶ Student pairs share about the development of central ideas in lines 43–56.

- 💬 Student responses may include the following:

- Jealousy: The Duke is jealous because the Duchess gave the “same smile” to everyone (line 45).
- Control/Power: The Duke “gave commands” that caused the Duchess’ smiles to stop (lines 45–46). The Duke directs the listener when it is time to go downstairs (lines 47–48).
- Objectification/Control: The Duke seems happier with the picture of the Duchess where “she stands / as if alive” than with the living Duchess (lines 46–47). The Duke refers to the Count’s daughter as his “object” (line 53).
- Madness: The Duke might have had the Duchess killed because of his obsessive jealousy.
- Materialism/Power and Status: The Duke is negotiating for a dowry and says the Count’s generosity means that “no just pretence” of the Duke for dowry will be “disallowed” (lines 49–51). The Duke refers to the Count’s daughter as his “object,” and the Duke ends the conversation by showing off the bronze statue, another of his objects (lines 49–51, 53, 54–56).

Lead a share out of responses. Instruct students to note central ideas identified by their classmates, for possible use in the Quick Write.

- ① To build upon these and other central ideas they may have identified in Lesson 3, if time permits, consider a Masterful Reading of the entire poem to give students the opportunity to reflect on the development of central ideas over the course of the text.
- ① The ideas of voice and power, and the relationship between them, will be important in students' study of *Hamlet* and the excerpt from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. If students raise the issue of the Duchess's silence and powerlessness in relation to the Duke's power and "skill in speech," consider offering students the term "voice" as a tool for discussing the relationship between self-expression and power.

### Activity 5: Quick Write

**15%**

Instruct students to prepare for the Quick Write assessment by reviewing annotations and notes from today's lesson and earlier lessons in order to gather text evidence to support their responses. Remind students to review the criteria on the Short Response Rubric and Checklist.

Instruct students to respond in writing to the following prompt:

**What is the impact of Browning's choice of speaker on the development of central ideas in the poem?**

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- ① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.
- ① Depending upon students' level of engagement with central ideas prior to this lesson, consider explaining to students that they may focus their analysis on lines 4–56 or on the poem as a whole.

Transition students to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.
- 🗨 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

### Activity 6: Closing

**5%**

Display and distribute the homework assignment. Instruct students to write a brief response explaining why the bronze statue described in lines 54–56 is important to the Duke.

In addition, instruct students to prepare for the End-of-Unit Assessment by reviewing the poem and any notes or annotations related to the Duke's character.



Also, students should continue their AIR through the lens of their focus standard (RL.11-12.1) and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Write a brief response to the following prompt:

### **Why is the bronze statue described in lines 54–56 important to the Duke?**

Review and expand your annotations about how Browning introduces and develops the poem’s narrator (and main character), the Duke.

Continue AIR through the lens of the focus standard (RL.11-12.1) and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.

## 11.1.1

## Lesson 6

## Introduction

In this lesson, the End-of-Unit Assessment, students engage in an evidence-based discussion of Browning's choices in introducing and developing the Duke over the course of "My Last Duchess." This discussion will prepare students to draft a one-paragraph analysis of how the revelation at the end of the poem impacts the development of the Duke's character over the course of the poem. This assessment builds upon students' previous work with standard RL.11-12.3 and requires students to put into practice the writing standards introduced in the earlier lessons of the module. As such, it scaffolds them towards the written assessments they will encounter in later assessments of the module. At the same time, the focus on character development in this assessment will support students' work in later Mid-Unit and lesson assessments, particularly in relation to their reading of *Hamlet*. For homework, students will continue with their AIR.

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
W.11-12.2.b	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
Addressed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

SL.11-12.1.b	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts and issues</i> , building on other ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
--------------	---

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>The learning in this lesson is captured through the End-of-Unit Assessment. Students write a one-paragraph response to the following prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the revelation in lines 45–47 impact the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the poem?</li> </ul> <p>① Student responses are evaluated using the Text Analysis Rubric.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the revelation at the end of the poem that the Duke has disposed of his wife, possibly by murder, and is now seeking to marry again.</li> <li>Determine several aspects of the Duke’s character that emerge over the course of the poem, such as jealousy, a controlling nature, power, pride, arrogance, an obsession with possessions; etc.</li> <li>Discuss how Browning develops these aspects through the revelation at the end of the poem.</li> </ul> <p>Student responses may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The revelation at the end of the poem confirms the suspicions, which Browning planted that the Duke is a jealous and controlling character whose desire to possess the Duchess completely may have driven him to murder. His actions in silencing his Duchess and suppressing her smiles show him to be ruthless in his desire for control.</li> <li>The ending of the poem confirms the Duke’s presentation of himself as a powerful man, at whose commands “All smiles stopped,” and who feels confident enough in his status that he is comfortable revealing his actions to the representative of the father of a woman whom he hopes to marry. He shows himself to be both powerful and arrogant.</li> <li>The power of his commands to stop all smiles also contradicts his statement that he is a man with little skill in speech: clearly, when he speaks, others listen and act.</li> <li>The revelation and the ending of the text shed new light on the Duke as a man who appreciates fine art: his casual reference to Neptune in the closing lines of the poem confirm our suspicions</li> </ul>

that he viewed his last Duchess not as a person, but as a piece of artwork to be admired.

- The revelation undermines the Duke’s reliability as a narrator: the extreme lengths to which he takes his jealousy and possessiveness make the reader doubt his description of the Duchess as a slightly flirtatious woman who places too much emphasis on “triflings.”
- The ending of the poem creates a great deal of uncertainty and raises many questions. For example, what was the fate of the last Duchess, what was her real character and the nature of her relationship with the Duke, and to what extent can the Duke be considered sane?

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.*</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.*</li> </ul>

\*Because this is not a close reading lesson, there is no specified vocabulary. However, in the process of returning to the text, students may uncover unfamiliar words. Teachers can guide students to make meaning of these words by following the protocols described in 1E of this document

[http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/9-12\\_ela\\_prefatory\\_material.pdf](http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/9-12_ela_prefatory_material.pdf).

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.6, SL.11-12.1.b</li> <li>• Text: Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” full text</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>2. Homework Accountability</li> <li>3. Small Group Discussion and Evidence Gathering</li> <li>4. End-of-Unit Assessment</li> <li>5. Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5%</li> <li>2. 10%</li> <li>3. 30%</li> <li>4. 50%</li> <li>5. 5%</li> </ol>

## Materials

- Copies of the “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool for each student
- Copies of the End-of-Unit Assessment for each student
- Copies of the Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist for each student

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
◀	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
ⓘ	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and sharing the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3 and W.11-12.2.b. In this lesson, students participate in small-group discussions in which they gather and organize ideas and evidence in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment. They will then complete the End-of-Unit Assessment where they use textual details from “My Last Duchess” to craft a one-paragraph response about how the revelation at the end of the poem impacts development of the Duke’s character over the course of the text.

- Students listen.

### Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied their focus standard, RL.11-12.1, to their AIR text. Lead a brief share out by selecting several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

- Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied their focus standard (RL.11-12.1) to their AIR text from the previous lesson’s homework.

---

Instruct students to share in pairs their response to the question of why the bronze statue described in lines 54–56 is important to the Duke.

- ▶ Students discuss and share their response to the homework question. Student responses may include:
- 🗨 Student responses may include:
  - The Duke thinks it is important because it shows Neptune taming (controlling) a sea-horse.
  - The Duke thinks it is important because it is “thought a rarity” (an object he values as part of his art collection).
  - The Duke thinks it is important because it was cast in bronze especially for the Duke.
  - The statue is of Neptune taming a sea-horse, which shows the Duke’s need for power and control.

### Activity 3: Small Group Discussion and Evidence Gathering

**30%**

Direct students to form small groups, and distribute the “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool. Instruct students to use the tool to discuss the following prompt:

**Reread the poem to determine what the text says explicitly and what is left uncertain about the Duke’s character.**

Remind students to practice building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively in a civil, democratic discussion with their peers (SL.11-12.1.b).

- ▶ In collaborative discussion, students add descriptions and evidence of the Duke’s character into the Discussion Tool. Each student should record ideas on his or her own tool for use in the written assessment.

### Activity 4: End-of-Unit Assessment

**50%**

Display the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt:

**How does the revelation in lines 45–47 impact the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the poem?**

Ask students if they have any remaining questions.

- ▶ Students examine the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt and ask remaining questions.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Explain to students that because it is a formal writing task, the End-of-Unit Assessment should include the most significant and relevant textual evidence.

Distribute and review the Text Analysis Rubric. Remind students to revisit the rubric once they are finished with the assessment to ensure they have fulfilled all the criteria.

- ▶ Students review the Text Analysis Rubric.

Remind students as they write to refer to the notes, tools, and annotated text from the previous lessons.

- ▶ Students listen.

① Consider instructing students to reference independently their responses to the Lesson 1 Quick Write. Reviewing their initial impressions of meaning and tone in the first eight lines of the poem may support an understanding of the Duke's development as an unreliable narrator over the course of the poem, as the reader learns more about his relationship with the Duchess and her eventual disappearance or demise.

Transition students to independent writing time. Give students the remaining class period to write.

- ▶ Students write the End-of-Unit Assessment.

① Circulate around the room and offer non-content support as needed. When circulating the room to provide support, remind students that this is an assessment of independent textual analysis so the teacher cannot provide direction on specific content from the text.

① Students who finish early can read their AIR text.

Collect responses before the end of the lesson.

- ▶ Students submit their End-of-Unit Assessment.

## Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to continue their AIR through the lens of their focus standard (RL.11-12.1) and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Continue AIR through the lens of the focus standard (RL.11-12.1) and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.



## “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
--------------	--	---------------	--	--------------	--

  

Elements of the Duke’s Character Made Explicit in the Poem	Elements of the Duke’s Character Left Uncertain

## Model “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool

Elements of the Duke’s Character Made Explicit in the Poem	Elements of the Duke’s Character Left Uncertain
<b>JEALOUSY/CONTROLLING NATURE:</b> He keeps the portrait behind a curtain that only he is allowed to draw (lines 9–10). He is enraged by the fact that she was pleased by all she looked upon, exclaiming that “her looks went everywhere” (line 24) and he accuses her of having “a heart... too soon made glad” (line 22).	<b>MURDERER?</b> It is left uncertain whether or not the Duke killed his wife or got rid of her by other means such as sending her to a convent: he merely notes that “I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together” (lines 45–46).
<b>PRIDE:</b> He refers to compliments and trifles given to his Duchess as “such stuff” (line 19), indicating that he feels such things are beneath him. He dismisses a man who broke a cherry bough for the Duchess as “an officious fool” (line 27). He is proud of his “nine-hundred-years-old name” and thinks that the Duchess should rate this above all gifts: “She thanked men,—good! But thanked / Somehow, I know not how—as if she ranked / My gift of a nine-hundred-year-old name / With anybody’s gift” (lines 31–34). He views the idea of correcting his Duchess as “stooping” (line 42).	<b>MADMAN?</b> We are left uncertain as to the sanity of the Duke: is he a murderous madman who is calmly recounting the killing of his wife, or is he merely a snobbish eccentric lover of art.
<b>POWER:</b> The Duke is clearly a powerful man—“I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together” (lines 45–46).	<b>RELATIONSHIP WITH WIFE?</b> The Duke’s relationship to his wife is left ambiguous: it is not clear whether he ever “stooped” to correct her or whether they quarreled about her friendliness (lines 34–43).
<b>ARROGANCE:</b> The Duke remarks that people would ask him about the portrait “if they durst,” implying that he sees himself as an intimidating and powerful figure. He is also arrogant enough to imply in lines 45–46 (“I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together”) that he may have murdered his wife.	
<b>LOVE OF ART:</b> The Duke clearly takes pride in his art collection. He shows pride in the “wonder” that is Frà Pandolf’s painting (line 3). He also takes pains to point out the “rarity” of the bronze statue of Neptune taming a sea-horse in the final lines (lines 54–56).	

## End-of-Unit Assessment (11.1.1 Lesson 6)

### Text-Based Response

**Your Task:** Rely on your reading and analysis of “My Last Duchess” to write a well-developed response to the following prompt:

*How does the revelation in lines 45–47 impact the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the poem?*

Your writing will be assessed using the Text Analysis Rubric.

#### Guidelines:

##### Be sure to:

- Closely read the prompt
- Address all elements of the prompt in your response
- Paraphrase, quote, and reference relevant evidence to support your claim
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

**CCLS:** RL.11-12.3; W.11-12.2.b

#### Commentary on the Task:

This task measures RL.11-12.3 because it demands that students:

- Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

This task measures W.11-12.2.b because it demands that students:

- Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.

## Text Analysis Rubric

\_\_\_\_/16

Criteria	4 – Responses at this Level:	3 – Responses at this Level:	2 – Responses at this Level:	1 – Responses at this Level:
<b>Content and Analysis:</b> The extent to which the response conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to respond to the task and support an analysis of the text.  (11-12.W.2, 11-12.W.9, 11-12.R.2, 11-12.R.5)	Introduce a well-reasoned claim regarding the development and interaction of two or more central ideas.   Demonstrate a complex analysis of how the central ideas interact and build on one another.  and/or Demonstrate a thoughtful analysis of how the structure of text(s) contributes to overall meaning, aesthetic impact, clarity, or persuasiveness.	Introduce a clear and focused claim regarding the development or interaction of two or more central ideas.   Demonstrate an appropriate analysis of how the central ideas interact and build on one another.  and/or Demonstrate an appropriate analysis of how the structure of text(s) contributes to overall meaning, aesthetic impact, clarity, or persuasiveness.	Introduce a claim regarding the development of a single central idea; or Introduce a simple or unsupported claim regarding the development or interaction of two or more central ideas.  Demonstrate a superficial and/or mostly literal analysis of how the central ideas interact and build on one another.  and/or Demonstrate a superficial and/or mostly literal analysis of how the structure of text(s) contributes to overall meaning, aesthetic impact, clarity, or persuasiveness.	Introduce a confused or incomplete claim. and/or Demonstrate a minimal analysis of how central ideas interact or build on one another and/or Demonstrate a minimal analysis of how the structure of text(s) contributes to overall meaning, aesthetic impact, clarity, or persuasiveness.
<b>Command of Evidence:</b> The extent to which the response presents evidence from the provided text to support analysis.  (11-12.W.2.b, 11-12.W.9)	Present ideas clearly and consistently, making effective use of the most relevant and sufficient evidence to support analysis.	Present ideas sufficiently, making adequate use of relevant evidence to support analysis, but ignores evidence the better supports the analysis.	Present ideas inconsistently, inadequately, and/or inaccurately in an attempt to support analysis, making use of some evidence that may be irrelevant.	Present little or no evidence from the text.
<b>Coherence, Organization, and Style:</b> The extent to which the response logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language.  (11-12.W.2.a, e)	Exhibit logical organization of ideas, so each new element builds on that which precedes it and creates a unified whole.  Establish and maintain a formal style, using precise language and sound structure.	Exhibit acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent response.  Establish and maintain a formal style, using appropriate language and structure.	Exhibit inconsistent organization of ideas and information, failing to create a coherent response.  Lack a formal style, using language that is basic, inappropriate, or imprecise.	Exhibit little organization of ideas and information.  Use language that is predominantly incoherent, inappropriate, or copied directly from the task or text.  Are minimal, making assessment unreliable.
<b>Control of Conventions:</b> The extent to which the response demonstrates command of conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.  (11-12.L.1, 11-12.L.2)	Demonstrate control of the conventions with infrequent errors.	Demonstrate partial control of conventions with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension.	Demonstrate emerging control of conventions with some errors that hinder comprehension.	Demonstrate a lack of control of conventions with frequent errors that make comprehension difficult.  Are minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable.

- A response that is a personal response and makes little or no reference to the task or text can be scored no higher than a 1.
- A response that is totally copied from the text with no original writing must be given a 0.
- A response that is totally unrelated to the task, illegible, incoherent, blank, or unrecognizable as English must be scored as a 0.

## Text Analysis Checklist

Assessed Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

	Does my writing...	✓
<b>Content and Analysis</b>	Introduce a well-reasoned claim regarding the development and interaction of two or more central ideas?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Demonstrate a complex analysis of how central ideas interact and build on one another?  and/or  Demonstrate a thoughtful analysis of how the structure of text(s) contributes to overall meaning, aesthetic impact, clarity, or persuasiveness?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Command and Evidence</b>	Present ideas clearly and consistently, making effective use of the most relevant and sufficient evidence to support analysis?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Coherence, Organization, and Style</b>	Exhibit logical organization of ideas, so each new element builds on that which precedes it and creates a unified whole?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Establish and maintain a formal style, using precise language and sound structure?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Control of Conventions</b>	Demonstrate control of the conventions with infrequent errors?	<input type="checkbox"/>

## MY LAST DUCHESS

by Robert Browning

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands  
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said 5  
'Frà Pandolf' by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps 15  
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, 'Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much,' or 'Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat:' such stuff  
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough 20  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,  
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast, 25  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving speech, 30  
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked  
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame

This sort of trifling? Even had you skill 35  
In speech— (which I have not)—to make your will  
Quite clear to such an one, and say, 'Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark'—and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands; 45  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet  
The company below then. I repeat,  
The Count your master's known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretence 50  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, 55  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!