11.1.1

Lesson 1

Introduction

This is the first English language arts lesson of 11th 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 Sta	ndard(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 St	andard(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)

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.

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

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- 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.
- Explain how these word choices impact meaning and tone.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- Duchess (n.) the wife or widow of a duke (the male ruler of a duchy; the sovereign of a small state)
- Frà (n.) a title given to an Italian monk or friar (a Catholic man who has withdrawn from the world for religious reasons)
- countenance (n.) face
- earnest (adj.) serious in intention, purpose, or effort; showing depth and sincerity of feeling

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

• read (v.) – looked at carefully so as to understand the meaning





Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text:	
• Standards: RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.1	
Text: "My Last Duchess," by Robert Browning, lines 1–8	
Learning Sequence:	
1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda	1. 15%
2. Masterful Reading	2. 10%
3. Lines 1–8 Reading and Discussion	3. 40%
4. Quick Write	4. 20%
5. Closing	5. 15%

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/mylastduchess rev2.shtml
- Copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist for each student

Learning Sequence

How to U	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.		
	Plain text indicates teacher action.		
no symbol	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.		
	Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.		
•	Indicates student action(s).		
•	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.		
i	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.
- (i) 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")





o Figure out what words and phrases mean in context

RL.11-12.4

- o Determine the meaning of figurative and connotative language
- Analyze how word choice affects meaning and tone
- o 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.

- (i) 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:
 - o "my" (line 1)
 - o "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)
 - o "last" suggests that she could be the final duchess or the most recent Duchess
 - o "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.
- (i) 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.
- (i) 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."
- (i) 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.
- ③ 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 Car	College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading		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.			



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.11-12.4	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.)			
CCS Standards	s: Reading—Informational Text	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.
RI.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.			
RI.11-12.2	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.			

RI.11-12.3	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.			
RI.11-12.6	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.			
CCS Standards:	Writing	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.
W.11-12.2	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.			
W.11-12.2.a	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.			



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.		
W.11-12.2.c	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.		
W.11-12.2.d	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.		
W.11-12.2.e	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.		
W.11-12.2.f	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).		
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 on page 68.)		

W.11-12.6 W.11-12.9	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. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support			
	analysis, reflection, and research.			
W.11-12.9.a	a. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards 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").			
W.11-12.9.b	Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards 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]").			
CCS Standards:	Speaking & Listening	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.

SL.11-12.1	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.		
SL.11-12.1.a	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.		
SL.11-12.1.b	Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.		
SL.11-12.1.c	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.		
SL.11-12.1.d	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.		

SL.11-12.1.e	Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds.			
CCS Standards: Language		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.
L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.			
L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.			
L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple- meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11–12 reading and</i> <i>content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.			
L.11-12.4.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.			

L.11-12.4.b	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).		
L.11-12.4.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.		
L.11-12.4.d	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).		
L.11-12.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.		
L.11-12.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.		
L.11-12.5.b	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.		

Short Response Rubric

Assessed Standard:	

Name:	Class:	Date:

	2-Point Response	1-Point response	0-Point Response
Inferences/Claims	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
Analysis	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
Evidence	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
Conventions	Uses complete sentences where errors do not impact readability	Includes incomplete sentences or bullets	The response is unintelligible or indecipherable



Short Response Checklist

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

