

## 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>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Homework Accountability</li> <li>Masterful Reading</li> <li>Lines 21–34 Reading and Discussion</li> <li>Self-Assessed Discussion</li> <li>Quick Write</li> <li>Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>5%</li> <li>40%</li> <li>15%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>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.
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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.

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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"/>