11.1.1 Unit Overview

“Then all smiles stopped together.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>“My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Lessons in Unit</td>
<td>6</td>
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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, 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, W.11-12.9.a).

Note: This unit introduces Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) for grade 11. See 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCS Standards: Reading — Literature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.4</td>
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<td>RL.11-12.6</td>
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<tr>
<th>CCS Standards: Writing</th>
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<tr>
<td>W.11-12.2.b</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.11-12.5</td>
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</table>
| W.11-12.9.a | Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.  
  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”). |
| 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 grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, 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. |

CCS Standards: Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</table>
| L.11-12.4.a-d | 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.  
  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.  
  b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).  
  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.  
  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). |

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

### Ongoing Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Assessed</th>
<th>RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.6, W.11-12.2.b, W.11-12.9.a, SL.11-12.1.b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of Assessment</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### End-of-Unit Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Assessed</th>
<th>RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b, W.11-12.9.a</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of Assessment</td>
<td>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?</td>
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</table>

## Unit-at-a-Glance Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes/Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“My Last Duchess,” lines 1–8</td>
<td>In this first lesson of grade 11, 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 8 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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“My Last Duchess,” lines 5–21</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Learning Outcomes/Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“My Last Duchess,” lines 21–34</td>
<td>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?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“My Last Duchess,” lines 31–43</td>
<td>In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 31–43 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 new writing standards W.11-12.2.b and W.11-12.5, assessing their own understanding of the standard on the Common Core Learning Standards Tool.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“My Last Duchess,” 43–end</td>
<td>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 pairs, students participate in evidence-based discussions to explain how the choice of Duke as speaker impacts the development of central ideas in the poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“My Last Duchess” entire text</td>
<td>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.</td>
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### Preparation, Materials, and Resources

#### Preparation

- Read and annotate “My Last Duchess.”
• Review the Short Response Rubric and Checklist.
• Review the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit 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 (optional)
• 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 Short Response Rubric and Checklist
• Copies of the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist for standard SL.11-12.1.b
• Copies of the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist
• Copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool
Introduction

In this first lesson of the unit and module, the first English language arts lesson of grade 11, students are introduced to important skills and practices that continue throughout the year: Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) and 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 analyze lines 1–8 (from “That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall” to “The depth and passion of its earnest glance”), in which Browning introduces the speaker and main character, the Duke. Students analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone in the introductory lines of the poem. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: Identify two specific word choices in the first 8 lines of the poem and explain how they impact the meaning and tone.

For homework, students read lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess” (from “I said / ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design, for never read” to “For calling up that spot of joy”), annotating and defining any unfamiliar words. Students also begin to look for a suitable AIR text.

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.4</td>
<td>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.)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Addressed Standard(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.1</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment

Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- Identify two specific word choices in the first 8 lines of the poem and explain how they impact the meaning and tone.

① Throughout this unit, Quick Writes will be assessed using the Short Response Rubric.

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify specific word choices in the first 8 lines of the poem (e.g., “my,” “last,” “painted on the wall” (line 1), “looking as if she were alive” (line 2), “depth and passion,” “earnest glance” (line 8) etc.).

- Explain how these word choices impact meaning and tone (e.g., The word choice “my” (line 1) indicates that either the Duke was simply referring to his relationship to the Duchess or that he is demonstrating his possessiveness of her—that he owns her. The phrase “[l]ooking as if she were alive” (line 2) conveys either that the portrait is so well painted that the Duchess appears lifelike, or that the Duchess is now dead and the portrait makes her seem alive. The ambiguity of these word choices—they could be harmless or sinister—create mystery in the text.).

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
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- ’t (prn.) – it
- glance (n.) – a quick look

Lesson Agenda/Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards &amp; Text:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Standards: RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Text: “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning, lines 1–8 (Masterful Reading: entire text)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

① In order to provide initial context, the masterful reading includes the whole text.

Learning Sequence:

1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 1. 15%
2. Masterful Reading 2. 10%
3. 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
- Copies of “My Last Duchess” for each student
- Copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist

Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no symbol</td>
<td>Plain text indicates teacher action.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</strong></td>
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</table>
Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda  

Begin by outlining the goals for this module and unit. Explain that in this module, students analyze poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction as they reinforce skills for the use of evidence to support analysis, writing, and discussion. Throughout the module, students read texts, analyzing the impact of the authors’ language choices 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. In this unit, students begin this exploration with a poem written by Robert Browning.

Review the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.4. In this lesson, students listen to a masterful reading of “My Last Duchess.” Students read and discuss lines 1–8, working in pairs on initial comprehension and analyzing the impact of specific word choices on the meaning and tone of the text.

- Students look at the agenda.

Distribute 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 Module 11.1 and the rest of the year.

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

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

Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with two standards: RL.11-12.1 and RL.11-12.4. Instruct students to individually read these standards on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of them.

- Students read and assess their familiarity with standards RL.11-12.1 and RL.11-12.4.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think the standards mean. Lead a brief discussion about these standards.

- Student responses should include:

  RL.11-12.1
Students use details from the text to support their analysis.
Students analyze what the text is saying directly and indirectly.
Students note where the text leaves matters unclear.
Students make inferences ("read between the lines").

RL.11-12.4

- Students determine what words and phrases mean in context.
- Students analyze the meaning of similes, metaphors, and multiple meaning words.
- Students explore how words and phrases create meaning and tone.
- Students analyze what makes language beautiful, new, and interesting.

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

**Activity 2: Masterful Reading**

Distribute copies of “My Last Duchess.” Have students listen to a masterful reading of the full text of “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning. Instruct students to focus 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.

2. **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

   Which words show the Duke’s feelings about the Duchess?

**Activity 3: Reading and Discussion**

Instruct students to form pairs. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to annotate the text as they read and discuss, and add to their notes during the discussion.

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.
Consider modeling how to take notes during one of this lesson’s brief whole-class discussions so students have guidance about what to write.

In this lesson, students practice a specific form of annotation (boxing unfamiliar words), but more detailed instruction regarding annotation occurs in 11.1.1 Lesson 2. Annotating the text is an expectation of this curriculum, so it is important to introduce it in this lesson. This begins the process of making students more “word aware,” an important reading and writing skill.

Instruct students to read lines 1–8 of “My Last Duchess” (from “That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall” to “The depth and passion of its earnest glance”) and individually annotate the text by drawing a box around any unfamiliar words, or any words that are used in an unfamiliar way.

- Students follow along, boxing unfamiliar words.

Instruct student pairs to share any unfamiliar words they identified and work together to try to determine their meanings.

- 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.

Instruct student pairs to read lines 1–2 (“That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall, / Looking as if she were alive”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: Duchess means “the wife or widow of a duke (the male ruler of a duchy; the sovereign of a small state).”

- Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer a definition before providing one to the group.

- Students write the definition of Duchess on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

**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)

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

**What do these words and phrases suggest about the Duchess?**
Student responses may include:

- The word “my” (line 1) suggests a relationship to the speaker—the speaker and the Duchess are married. By using “my” (line 1), the speaker may also be suggesting that he owns the Duchess.
- The word “last” (line 1) suggests that she could be the final Duchess or the most recent Duchess.
- The phrase “painted on the wall” (line 1) suggests that she is in a painting or portrait.
- The phrase “looking as if she were alive” (line 2) suggests that the Duchess may not be alive, or that the painting is very realistic.

Who is the speaker of the poem? What words and phrases indicate the speaker of the poem?

- The poem is in the first person: the speaker uses the words “I” (line 2) and “my” (line 1). The speaker is married to a Duchess, which means that he must be a Duke.

From this point on, the speaker can be referred to as “the Duke” for ease of reference.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read 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 following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: Frà means “a title given to an Italian monk or friar (a Catholic man who has withdrawn from the world for religious reasons).”

- Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer a definition before providing one to the group.
- Students write the definition of Frà on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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

- “That piece” (line 3) 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 (line 3)? What words and phrases in lines 3–4 indicate who he is?
Frà Pandolf is the painter. The words that show this are his “hands worked busily a day” (lines 3–4) on the portrait of the Duchess.

Why might the Duke mention Frà Pandolf in line 3?

The Duke mentions Frà Pandolf in line 3 to impress the listener or reader. If students have trouble determining why the Duke mentions Frà Pandolf at this point, explain that they will read more about this in 11.1.1 Lesson 2, when they read lines 5–21.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to reread line 5 (“Will ’t please you sit and look at her?”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Differentiation Consideration: Consider providing students with the following definition: ’t stands for “it.”

Students write the definition for ’t on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

To whom is the Duke speaking?

The Duke is speaking to someone in the room with him.

Who else speaks in the first five lines of the poem?

Other than the Duke, nobody else speaks in the first five lines of the poem.

Inform students that “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 line 5. What words demonstrate this tone?

The Duke’s tone is polite as evidenced by the courteous offering, “Will ’t please you.”

If necessary, define tone for the students as “the attitude a speaker has towards the subject about which he or she is speaking.”

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 brief whole-class discussion of student responses.
Instruct student pairs to read 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 before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: countenance means “face” and earnest means “serious in intention, purpose, or effort; showing depth and sincerity of feeling.”

1. Students may be familiar these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the group.
   - Students write the definitions of countenance and earnest on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Differentiation Consideration: Consider providing students with the following definition: glance means “a quick look.”

1. Students write the definition of glance on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What is “that pictured countenance” in line 7?

- When the Duke says, “that pictured countenance” (line 7), he refers 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 read the “pictured countenance” (line 7), or 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?

- In line 8, “its” refers to the portrait’s face and expression, i.e., the Duchess.

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 8 lines of the poem?

- Student responses may include:
  - The Duchess is or was very beautiful, or at least her portrait is. The Duke calls the piece “a wonder” (line 3) and refers to “the depth and passion of its earnest glance” (line 8).
o The phrase “the depth and passion of its earnest glance” (line 8) suggests that the Duchess was passionate and sincere.
o The Duchess may or may not be alive because the phrase “looking as if she were alive” (line 2) suggests either that the painting is so well painted that the Duchess looks lifelike, or that the Duchess is now dead and the painting makes her look as if she were alive.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

**Activity 4: Quick Write**

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 use a Text Analysis Rubric.

Lead a brief discussion of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist. Review the components of a High Performance Response.

Quick Write activities continue to engage students in thinking deeply about texts, by encouraging them to synthesize the analysis they carry out during the lesson and build upon that analysis. Inform students that they typically have 4–10 minutes to write.

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 student needs.

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

**Identify two specific word choices in the first 8 lines of the poem and explain how they impact the meaning and tone.**

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition 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.

Students will reference the Quick Write from this lesson in the End-of-Unit Assessment in 11.1.1 Lesson 6.

Activity 5: Closing 15%

Explain to students that part of the daily homework expectation is to read outside of class. 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.

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.

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to begin to look for a suitable text for their AIR. 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.

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.

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

Students follow along.

Homework

Begin to look for a suitable text to read for your Accountable Independent Reading.

Also, read lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess” (from “I said / ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design, for never read” to “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 text.
# 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
<th>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</th>
<th>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</th>
<th>I am not familiar with this standard.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CCRA.R.9</strong> Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CCS Standards: Reading—Literature</strong></td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</td>
<td>I am not familiar with this standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RL.11-12.1</strong> 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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCS Standards: Reading—Literature</th>
<th>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</th>
<th>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</th>
<th>I am not familiar with this standard.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RL.11-12.2</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RL.11-12.3</strong></td>
<td>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).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RL.11-12.4</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Reading—Literature</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RL.11-12.5</strong></td>
<td>Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RL.11-12.6</strong></td>
<td>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).</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Reading—Informational</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</td>
<td>I am not familiar with this standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RI.11-12.1</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Reading—Informational</td>
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<tr>
<td>RI.11-12.2</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RI.11-12.3</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.11-12.6</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Writing</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.</td>
<td>I am not familiar with this standard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.11-12.2</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.11-12.2.a</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.11-12.2.b</td>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Writing</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.2.c</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.2.d</strong></td>
<td>Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.2.e</strong></td>
<td>Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.2.f</strong></td>
<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.5</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.9</strong></td>
<td>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W.11-12.9.a</strong></td>
<td>Apply <em>grades 11–12 Reading standards</em> 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”).</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **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.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCS Standards: Writing</th>
<th>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</th>
<th>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</th>
<th>I am not familiar with this standard.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <em>The Federalist</em>, presidential addresses]&quot;.</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCS Standards: Speaking &amp; Listening</th>
<th>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</th>
<th>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</th>
<th>I am not familiar with this standard.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL.11-12.1</td>
<td>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Speaking &amp; Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SL.11-12.1.a</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SL.11-12.1.b</strong></td>
<td>Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SL.11-12.1.c</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SL.11-12.1.d</strong></td>
<td>Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Speaking &amp; Listening</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL.11-12.1.e</td>
<td>Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Language</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</td>
<td>I am not familiar with this standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.11-12.1</td>
<td>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.11-12.2</td>
<td>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Language</td>
<td>I know what this is asking and I can do this.</td>
<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.11-12.4</td>
<td>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.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.11-12.4.a</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.11-12.4.b</td>
<td>Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.11-12.4.c</td>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CCS Standards: Language</td>
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<td>This standard has familiar language, but I haven’t mastered it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>standard usage.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>L.11-12.4.d</strong></td>
<td>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).</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.11-12.5</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.11-12.5.a</strong></td>
<td>Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.11-12.5.b</strong></td>
<td>Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Short Response Rubric

**Assessed Standard: ____________________________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2-Point Response</th>
<th>1-Point response</th>
<th>0-Point Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inferences/Claims</strong></td>
<td>Includes valid inferences or claims from the text. Fully and directly responds to the prompt.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Does not address any of the requirements of the prompt or is totally inaccurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Includes evidence of reflection and analysis of the text.</td>
<td>A mostly literal recounting of events or details from the text(s).</td>
<td>The response is blank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Includes the most relevant and sufficient textual evidence, facts, or details to develop a response according to the requirements of the Quick Write.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>The response includes no evidence from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Uses complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.</td>
<td>Includes incomplete sentences or bullets.</td>
<td>The response is unintelligible or indecipherable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Short Response Checklist

**Assessed Standard:**

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

In this lesson, students continue their study of Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” building their reading skills through a close exploration of lines 5–21 (from “I said / ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design, for never read” to “For calling up that spot of joy”), in which the Duke further describes the Duchess. Students also begin to practice the important skill of text annotation. Students listen to a masterful reading of the poem before annotating the text in pairs and engaging in small group discussions centered on Browning’s choices regarding the development of the Duke’s character. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: What does the reader learn about the Duke through his description of the Duchess in lines 1–21 of the poem?

For homework, students reread lines 9–10 (“But to myself they turned (since none puts by / The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)”) and respond to a writing prompt. Also for homework, students continue to look for possible Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) texts.

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
<th><strong>RL.11-12.3</strong> 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).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Addressed Standard(s) | **W.11-12.9.a** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.  
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>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”).</strong></td>
<td><strong>b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>SL.11-12.1.b</strong> Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. **</td>
<td><strong>b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

Assessment

Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

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

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify at least one aspect of the Duke’s character (e.g., The Duke thinks very highly of himself, or the Duke is jealous and possessive).

- Demonstrate the emergence of this aspect of the Duke’s character in lines 1–21 (e.g., The Duke’s references to Frà Pandolf (lines 3 and 6), who seems to be a famous painter, imply that the Duke thinks highly of himself for owning such a painting. Secondly, the Duke’s use of “durst,” which means “dare,” in the phrase “as they would ask me, if they durst” (line 11), suggests that the Duke thinks he is such an important person that people believe it is risky to ask him about the painting. The reader also learns that the Duke is jealous and possessive of the Duchess. He dismisses the compliments Frà Pandolf pays the Duchess as “such stuff” (line 19). Also, he implies his displeasure that the Duchess is pleased by something other than him. He says it is not only “her husband’s presence” that “call[s] that spot of joy” into the Duchess’ cheek (lines 14–15)).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- durst (v.) – dared
- mantle (n.) – a loose, sleeveless cloak or cape
- laps (v.) – lays partly over something underneath

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

- design (v.) – plan or project

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- thus (adv.) – in this way or manner; like this
• presence (n.) – the fact of being in a particular place
• flush (n.) – a redness on a person’s face because of emotion
• courtesy (n.) – polite behavior that shows respect for other people

Lesson Agenda/Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards &amp; Text:</th>
<th>% of Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standards: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.9.a, SL.11-12.1.b</td>
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<td>Text: “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning, lines 5–21</td>
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Learning Sequence:
1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda
2. Homework Accountability
3. Introduction to Annotation
4. Masterful Reading
5. Reading and Discussion
6. Quick Write
7. Closing

Materials

• Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
• Copies of the Annotation Markings Bookmark for each student
• Free Audio Resource: https://archive.org/ (Google search terms: My Last Duchess, Zachariah Wells)
• Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
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<td>no symbol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bold text</td>
<td>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the 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’s character in lines 5–21 (from “I said / ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design, for never read” to “For calling up that spot of joy”). To support their analysis, students practice annotating the text as an important part of reading and using textual evidence.

- Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson, they begin to work with three new standards: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.9.a, and SL.11-12.1.b. Instruct students to individually read these standards on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of them.

- Students read and assess their familiarity with standards RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.9.a, 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?**

- Student responses should include:
  - Plot/story
  - Character
  - Structure
  - 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 W.11-12.9.a and SL.11-12.1.b and talk in pairs about what they think each standard means. Lead a brief discussion about the standards. Remind students to pay attention to the overarching standards W.11-12.9 and SL.11-12.1 as well as substandards W.11-12.9.a and SL.11-12.1.b.
Student responses for W.11-12.9.a may include:
- The standard requires students to gather and use evidence from literary texts to support ideas in writing.

Student responses for SL.11-12.1.b may include:
- Students participate in cooperative discussions.
- Students work together in pairs and with all their classmates.
- Students are polite and fair in discussions.
- Students listen to others’ ideas and share their own related ideas.
- Students set clear goals.
- Students keep track of time during discussions.
- Students stay focused during discussions.
- Students establish and take on individual roles during discussions.

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 students if they have anything to add 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 practice applying their understanding of SL.11-12.1.b in small group discussions later in the lesson.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

Instruct students to take out their responses to the first part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Begin to look for a suitable text to read for your Accountable Independent Reading.) Instruct students to discuss their responses in pairs. Lead a brief whole-class discussion about methods for choosing AIR texts and resources to help students.

Instruct students to take out the second part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Read lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess.” 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 text.) Instruct student pairs to share and discuss the vocabulary words they identified and defined.

Students may identify the following words: design, durst, mantle, and laps.
Differentiation Consideration: Students may also identify the following words: thus, presence, flush, and courtesy.

Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.

Activity 3: Introduction to Annotation

Ask students the following questions about the importance of annotation.

What are some purposes for marking the text?

Student responses may include:

Marking the text helps students to:

- Remember what they are reading by writing their thoughts about the text.
- Keep track of important ideas.
- Think about unfamiliar words.
- Question the text or make connections between ideas.

Consider explaining to students that annotation is an important skill for reading and gathering textual evidence. Note 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, and standard W.11-12.9.a: annotation helps students gather evidence for use in their writing.

How does annotation change the way students read?

Student responses may include:

- Annotation connects the student to the text more deeply by making the student read more actively and pay close attention to details.
- Annotation makes it difficult to just skim-read because it slows down the student’s reading.

Distribute copies of the Annotation Markings Bookmark. 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 note your question.
- 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 thoughts 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 thoughts about the text.

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

Differentiation Consideration: To help students remember annotation codes, consider posting them in the classroom in addition to providing them to students on the bookmark.

**Activity 4: Masterful Reading**

Have students listen to a masterful reading of “My Last Duchess.” Ask students to pay attention to how the Duke describes the Duchess.

- Students follow along, reading silently.

Differentiation Consideration: Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

**What does the reader learn about the Duke in lines 5–21?**

**Activity 5: Reading and Discussion**

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct student groups to read lines 5–21 of “My Last Duchess” (from “I said / ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design, for never read” to “For calling up that spot of joy”) and focus on their observations about the Duke.

- Consider reminding students that working in groups is an opportunity to apply standard SL.11-12.1.b when building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively in civil, democratic discussions with their peers. Also, remind students to use their annotations to help them answer the questions.

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

Instruct student groups to read lines 6–12 (from “for never read / Strangers like you that pictured countenance” to “if they durst, How such a glance came there”), ignoring the words in parentheses in lines 9 and 10. Instruct student groups to paraphrase these lines.
Strangers like you always ask me, if they dare, how the Duchess came to look that way in the portrait.

Differentiation Consideration: If students struggle, consider asking the following questions.

Who is the “they” the speaker refers to?

“They” refers to strangers who look at the painting of the Duchess.

To what does the speaker refer when he says “there”?

By “there” the speaker means the Duchess’s face, or “countenance” (line 7).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read lines 5–12 (from “I said / ‘Frà Pandolf’ by design, for never read” to “if they durst / How such a glance came there”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

To whom does the Duke refer 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,” because design means “to plan.”

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 means “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 it that they ask him “[h]ow such a glance came there” (line 12), or who was talented enough 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 or intimidating person, because “durst” means “dare,” so the Duke believes that few people dare ask him questions.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to reread lines 13–21 (from “Sir, ’twas not / Her husband’s presence only” to “For calling up that spot of joy”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

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

- The Duke 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 15–21 might have caused such an expression?**

- The Duke implies that the Duchess is blushing with pleasure. The Duchess was pleased by the “courtes[ies]” (line 20), or compliments, from Frà Pandolf.

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

- The phrase “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, because the phrase “such stuff” makes the compliments sound unimportant or frivolous.

**How did the Duchess respond to “such stuff” (line 19)?**

- The Duchess was pleased by the compliments: “such stuff / Was courtesy, she thought” (lines 19–20), and she would blush with pleasure.

**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)?**

- Student responses may include:
  
  o The Duke implies that he disapproves of the Duchess’s pleasure in “such stuff” (line 19).
  
  o The Duke’s remark on line 19 also implies that he is possessive of the Duchess, because he disapproves of the idea that something other than “[h]er husband’s presence” (line 14) makes her happy.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.
Activity 6: Quick Write

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?**

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition 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.
- Students will use their responses to this Quick Write again in 11.1.1 Lesson 4.

Activity 7: Closing

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to reread lines 9–10 of “My Last Duchess” (“But to myself they turned (since none puts by / The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)”) and respond in writing to the following prompt:

**What does the reader learn about the portrait? How does this information develop the Duke’s character?**

Instruct students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Also remind students to use the Short Response Checklist and Rubric to guide their written responses.

Also for homework, instruct students to continue their search for a suitable AIR text.

- Students follow along.

Homework

Reread lines 9–10 of “My Last Duchess” (“But to myself they turned (since none puts by / The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)”) and respond in writing to the following prompt:
What does the reader learn about the portrait? How does this information develop the Duke’s character?

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written response. Use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide your written response.

Also, continue your search for a suitable Accountable Independent Reading text.
### Annotation Markings Bookmark

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Introduction

In this lesson, students read lines 21–34 of Robert Browning’s “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”), in which the Duke further describes the Duchess. Students continue to gather evidence of the Duke’s character and the emergence of the Duchess’s character as described by the Duke. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write and self-assessed discussion at the end of the lesson: What is the impact of Browning’s choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess?

For homework, students respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: What does the reader 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? Also for homework, students continue their search for a suitable Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text, which must be chosen by 11.1.1 Lesson 4.

Standards

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<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
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<td>RL.11-12.3</td>
<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.6</td>
<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL.11-12.1.b</td>
<td>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
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<td>b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Addressed Standard(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L.11-12.4.a-d</td>
<td>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, 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.

b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).

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.

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).

Assessment

Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write and self-assessed discussion at the end of the lesson. Students respond to 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 the Duchess?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify a discrepancy between how the Duke presents information about the Duchess and what the information actually means (e.g., The Duke claims the Duchess had a “bough of cherries” forced on her by “some officious fool” (line 27). She actually accepted the “bough” and it pleased her, which means the “fool” (line 27) could not have forced it on her. Or, the Duke criticizes the Duchess for her heart: “She had / A heart … too soon made glad, / Too easily impressed” (lines 21–23). Although the Duke is criticizing the Duchess in these lines, he actually shows that she was a pleasant person who enjoyed a great variety of things, not just the Duke’s “favour” (line 25).

- Convey the understanding that the Duchess is presented solely by the Duke, who is an unreliable narrator (e.g., The Duke’s description of the Duchess reveals that he is not a reliable narrator. He negatively describes harmless things like the Duchess’s appreciation for sunsets and gifts. Also, he implies that she was not grateful enough to him for his name, his title. The Duke feels she “ranked” (line 32) the “gift of [the Duke’s] nine-hundred-years-old name / With anybody’s gift” (lines 33–34).
Instead of demonstrating the Duchess’s weakness, the Duke shows himself to be demanding and proud, an unreliable narrator.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- favour (n.) – a gift bestowed as a token of goodwill, kind regard, love, etc., as formerly bestowed upon a knight by his lady

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

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- breast (n.) – the chest thought of as the place where emotions are felt
- orchard (n.) – a place where people grow fruit trees
- mule (n.) – an animal that has a horse and a donkey as parents
- terrace (n.) – a flat area created on the side of a hill and used especially for growing crops

Lesson Agenda/Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student-Facing Agenda</th>
<th>% of Lesson</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standards &amp; Text:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards: RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.6, SL.11-12.1.b, L.11-12.4.a-d</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text: “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning, lines 21–34 (Masterful Reading: entire text)</td>
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① In order to provide context, the masterful reading includes the entire poem.

Learning Sequence:

1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda
2. Homework Accountability
3. Masterful Reading
4. Reading and Discussion
Materials

- Copies of the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist for standard SL.11-12.1.b for each student
- Student copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Free Audio Resource: https://archive.org/ (Google search terms: My Last Duchess, Zachariah Wells)
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

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<td>Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.</td>
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<td>📚</td>
<td>Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.</td>
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Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda  

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.6, and SL.11-12.1.b. In this lesson, students focus on how Browning develops the characters of the Duke and the Duchess through the viewpoint of the Duke in lines 21–34.

- Students look at the agenda.

Inform students that later in the lesson they self-assess their participation in a small group discussion of the text. Distribute a copy of the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist for SL.11-12.1.b to each student. Instruct students to read the rubric and ask questions to ensure comprehension.
Students read the rubric and ask questions as necessary.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson, they begin to work with two new standards: RL.11-12.6 and L.11-12.4.a-d. Instruct students to individually read these standards on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of them.

Students read and assess their familiarity with standards RL.11-12.6 and L.11-12.4.a-d.

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

- Student responses may include:
  - Students identify the point of view in complex texts.
  - Students determine the difference between what is said and what is really 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-d and talk in pairs about what they think the standard means. Lead a brief discussion on the similarities between L.11-12.4.a-d 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.
  - Standard L.11-12.4.a-d focuses on the strategies for determining word meaning, including using context, word patterns, and reference tools like dictionaries, glossaries, and thesauruses.
  - 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 take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Reread lines 9–10 of “My Last Duchess” and respond in writing to the following prompt: What does the reader learn about the portrait? How does this information develop the Duke’s character?) Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about their responses to the homework prompt.
Student responses may include:

- No one is allowed to “put[] by” (line 9), or move, the curtains hiding the painting except for the Duke. This shows that he guards his possessions carefully and, since he is 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.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct the class to give a show of hands to indicate which students have already selected their AIR texts. Remind those who have not yet chosen a text that their selections are due in 11.1.1 Lesson 4.

**Activity 3: Masterful Reading**

Have students listen to a masterful reading of “My Last Duchess” in its entirety. Ask students to focus on how Browning develops the character of the Duchess.

- Students follow along, reading silently.

Differentiation Consideration: Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

**What is the difference between the Duchess’s actions and how the Duke talks about her actions?**

**Activity 4: Reading and Discussion**

Instruct students to form groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct students to select one member of the group to read aloud lines 21–25 (from “She had / A heart – how shall I say?“ to “her looks went everywhere. / Sir, ’twas all one!”), and ask the other members of the group to annotate the text as that person reads. Instruct students to answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

To promote fluency, consider modifying the reading technique to whisper or group reads (in which students read in low voices by themselves or in small groups).
Reread lines 21–23: “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” (lines 22 and 23) 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?” (line 22) on lines 21–23?

- The dashes around “how shall I say?” indicate that the Duke is pausing to think about the right words to say.

In the next lesson, students consider a similar instance of a verbal interjection from the Duke (“Even had you skill / In speech—(which I have not) —” (lines 35–36)), 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 have more context to understand the Duke’s character and mannered tone.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read lines 25–31 (from “My favour at her breast, / The dropping of the daylight in the West” to “the approving speech, / Or blush, at least”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: favour means “a gift bestowed as a token of goodwill, kind regard, love, etc., as formerly bestowed upon a knight by his lady.”

- Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer a definition before providing one to the group.
  - Students write the definition of favour on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

**Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: breast means “the chest thought of as the place where emotions are felt,” orchard means “a place where people grow fruit trees,” mule means “an animal that has a horse and a donkey as parents,” and terrace means “a flat area created on the side of a hill and used especially for growing crops.”

- Students write the definitions of breast, orchard, mule, and terrace on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What does the Duke mean by “the dropping of daylight in the West” (line 26)?
The Duke means sunset, because the sun sets “in the West” (line 26).

What does bough mean in the line “The bough of cherries some officious fool / Broke in the orchard for her” (lines 27–28)? What words are associated with bough that can help to define it?

- The words orchard and cherries help define bough, because an orchard is a place where people grow fruit trees, and cherries grow on the branches of cherry trees. A bough is a branch or, in this case, a branch covered in cherries.

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

What happens in lines 27–28?

- Someone gives the Duchess a gift of a branch of cherries.

What is the connotation of the word officious? (line 27)? What words or phrases suggest this connotation?

- Officious is a negative word. The Duke combines it with the word fool.

Consider providing students with the following definition: officious means “objectionably aggressive in offering one’s unrequested and unwanted services, help, or advice; meddlesome.”

Students write the definition of officious on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What does the Duke mean when he claims the Duchess’s “looks went everywhere” (line 24)?

- Student responses may include:
  - The Duchess “look[ed]” (line 24) too often at other men.
  - The Duke could mean that the Duchess was interested in many different things, such as his “favour” (line 25), the sunset (line 26), or gifts such as cherries (lines 27–28).

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

- The exclamation point in “’twas all one!” suggests that the Duke is angry or agitated by the fact that the Duchess responds to other people and things the same way as she does to him.

Differentiation Consideration: If students struggle, consider posing the following question.

What does the Duke mean by “’twas all one!” in line 25?
By “‘twas all one!” the Duke means that his “favour” (line 25), or love, for her, the “bough” (line 27), and the sunset were the same to the Duchess—she was pleased equally by all of them.

What inferences can be made about the Duchess based on lines 25–29?

- The Duchess enjoyed a great variety of things in life: people, the “bough of cherries” (line 27) someone gives her, the beauty of a sunset (line 26), and her husband’s “favour” (line 25).

Although students are not introduced to standard RL.11-12.2 formally until 11.1.1 Lesson 5, when they consider the development and interaction of central ideas in a text, consider asking students to begin thinking about the central ideas in the poem. Thus far, several central ideas have begun to develop, including jealousy, power and status, voice, etc. Several of these ideas are also developed in other module texts. Students’ work with these and other central ideas supports their work in the Module 11.1 Performance Assessment.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student 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”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

What does the Duke mean by the “gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name” (line 33)?

- The Duke’s family name is “a nine-hundred-years-old name” (line 33). The Duke considers his last name to be a gift because it is an important and prestigious name. 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 the gift of the Duke’s family name?

- The Duchess “rank[s]” (line 32) the Duke’s family name 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?

- The Duke seems to value his name above all other gifts. He says, “I know not how” (line 32) the Duchess ranked his gift with “anybody’s gift” (line 34).

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 is not a reliable narrator. Anger and jealousy, which are reflected in exclamations such as “Sir, ’twas all one!” (line 25), influence his view of the Duchess. The Duke’s descriptions of the Duchess, like his claim that “her looks went everywhere” (line 24), are not what they at first appear to be.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

**Activity 5: Self-Assessed Discussion**

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist for SL.11-12.1.b. Direct students to form small groups and engage in a discussion about the following prompt:

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

Explain that students will self-assess their participation at the end of the discussion, using the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist.

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

Instruct students to use the 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist to self-assess their participation in the discussion.

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

**Activity 6: Quick Write**

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?**

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

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

**What does the reader 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?**

Instruct students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Also remind students to use the Short Response Checklist and Rubric to guide their written responses.

Also for homework, instruct students to continue their search for a suitable AIR text, which must be chosen by the next lesson, 11.1.1 Lesson 4.

- Students follow along.

**Homework**

Respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What does the reader 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?**

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written response. Use the Short Response Checklist and Rubric to guide your written response.

Also, continue your search for a suitable Accountable Independent Reading text, which must be chosen by the next lesson, 11.1.1 Lesson 4.
### 11.1 Speaking and Listening Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4 – Responses at this Level:</th>
<th>3 – Responses at this Level:</th>
<th>2 – Responses at this Level:</th>
<th>1 – Responses at this Level:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Collaboration and Presentation  
The extent to which the speaker works with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, setting clear goals and deadlines and establishing individual roles as needed. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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 grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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. | Skillfully 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.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.b) | Work somewhat effectively 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.b) | Work ineffectively with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, or establish individual roles as needed. (SL.11-12.1.b) |

- 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.
11.1 Speaking and Listening Checklist

Assessed Standards: ______________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration and Presentation</th>
<th>Does my response...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making? <em>(SL.11-12.1.b)</em></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with peers to set clear goals and deadlines? <em>(SL.11-12.1.b)</em></td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with peers to establish individual roles, if necessary? <em>(SL.11-12.1.b)</em></td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.1.1 Lesson 4

Introduction

In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 31–43 of “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning (from “She thanked men,—good! but thanked / Somehow—I know not how” to “E’en then 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. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Browning further develop the character of the Duke in lines 34–43? Students then discuss the significance and relevance of the evidence they cited in their responses in relation to W.11-12.2.b and W.11-12.5, the new standards introduced in this lesson.

For homework, students begin to read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text through the lens of focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1.

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.3</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.11-12.2.b</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addressed Standard(s)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.11-12.5</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.11-12.4.a, b</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).

Assessment

Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- How does Browning further develop the character of the Duke in lines 34–43?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Analyze how Browning further develops the character of the Duke in lines 34–43 (e.g., Browning further develops the Duke’s character by providing clues about how the Duke may have treated the Duchess while she was alive. The Duke repeats that he did not “stoop to blame” (line 34) the Duchess for her behavior, but he continues to speak about the Duchess in a way that suggests he wants to control her. The Duke claims that he never told the Duchess how she “disgusts” (line 38) him or how she misses or “exceed[s] the mark” (lines 38–39), but the text suggests that the Duke may be deceptive or manipulative. For example, the Duke says he does not have “skill / In speech” (lines 35–36) to explain to the Duchess how he wants her to behave, but based on his words throughout the poem, it is obvious that he is an eloquent speaker capable of explaining his desires.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- trifling (n.) – idle or frivolous conduct, talk, etc.
- forsooth (adv.) – in truth; in fact; indeed

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

- stoop (v.) – to do something that is not honest, fair, etc.; to bend down or over
- will (n.) – a person’s choice or desire in a particular situation
- lessoned (v.) – taught; instructed; given a lesson; admonished; reproved
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- disgusts (v.) – causes (someone) to have a strong feeling of dislike for something especially because it has a very unpleasant appearance, taste, smell, etc.
- exceed (v.) – to go beyond the limit of (something)
- mark (n.) – a specified point or level; something that is aimed at or shot at
- wits (n.) – the ability to think or reason
- e’en (contraction) – even

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards &amp; Text:</th>
<th>% of Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standards: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b, W.11-12.5, L.11-12.4.a, b</td>
<td>1. 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text: “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning, lines 31–43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learning Sequence:

1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda                                                                 | 1. 10%     |
2. Homework Accountability                                                                    | 2. 10%     |
3. Masterful Reading                                                                           | 3. 5%      |
4. Reading and Discussion                                                                      | 4. 50%     |
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)
- Student Quick Write responses from Lesson 2 (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 2)
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no symbol</td>
<td>Plain text indicates teacher action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold text</td>
<td>Indicates text dependent questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italicized text</td>
<td>Indicates a vocabulary word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶</td>
<td>Indicates student action(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✉</td>
<td>Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⚫</td>
<td>Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3 and W.11-12.2.b. In this lesson, students work in groups to analyze how Browning further develops the character of the Duke. After drafting a short written response about how Browning develops the character of the Duke, students discuss the relevance and significance of the evidence used in their responses.

▶ Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with two new standards: W.11-12.2.b and W.11-12.5. Instruct students to individually read these standards on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of them.

▶ Students read and assess their familiarity with 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 the substandard W.11-12.2.b.

✉ Student responses may include:

- Students write texts that inform or clearly explain ideas.
- Students organize their ideas in their writing.
- Students analyze a topic in their writing.
- In their writing, students use strong details, definitions, or quotes from the text to support their ideas and analysis.
- Students make choices about what evidence most clearly and accurately supports ideas and analysis in their writing.
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:
  - Students revise writing to meet the needs of a specific purpose or audience.
  - Students revise and edit their writing to make it better.
  - Students plan before beginning to write.

**Activity 2: Homework Accountability** 10%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: What does the reader 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?) Instruct students to form pairs to discuss their responses to the homework assignment.

- Student responses may include:
  - The reader learns more about the Duchess than 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 alike the approving speech” (lines 29–30). The reader also learns that she was easily pleased and impressed: “she liked whate’er / She looked on” (lines 23–24). The reader also learns that the Duke may think the Duchess was unfaithful. He says, “her looks went everywhere” (line 24).
  - Although the lines appear to describe the Duchess, the reader learns more about the Duke than about the Duchess. The reader learns 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. The reader also sees 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, so we are only offered one point of view.

Check to ensure all students have completed the second part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment: selecting an AIR text.
Activity 3: Masterful Reading

Have students listen to a masterful reading of “My Last Duchess,” lines 31–43 (from “She thanked men,—good! but thanked / Somehow” to “E’en then would be some stooping; and I choose / Never to stoop”). Instruct students to focus on how Browning develops the Duke’s character.

1. Students listened to a masterful reading of the entire poem at the beginning of 11.1.1 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.

1. **Differentiation Consideration**: Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

   What does the reader learn about the Duke’s relationship with the Duchess in lines 34–43?

1. Consider leading a brief whole-class discussion to ensure comprehension.

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

Instruct students to form groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct student groups to read lines 31–35 (from “She thanked men,—good! but thanked / Somehow” to “Who’d stoop to blame / This sort of trifling?”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *trifling* means “idle or frivolous conduct, talk, etc.”

1. Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer the definition before providing it to the class.
   - Students write the definition of *trifling* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

**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 their favors, as though the Duke’s gifts of his “nine-hundred-years-old name” (line 33) and status were no more important than others’ gifts.
How does the Duke describe his response to the Duchess’s “trifling” (line 35)?

- The Duke says that he does not “stoop to blame” (line 34) the Duchess for her actions. In other words, he does not lower himself to tell her how he disapproves of her actions.

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

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

Differentiation Consideration: Consider providing the following definitions: stoop means “to do something that is not honest, fair, etc.; to bend down or over.”

- Students write both definitions of stoop on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

- Encourage students to discuss how both the literal and figurative meanings 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.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read lines 35–43 (from “Even had you skill / In speech—(which I have not)” to “E’en then would be some stooping; and I choose / Never to stoop”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: forsooth means “in truth; in fact; indeed.”

- Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer the definition before providing it to the class.

- Students write the definition of forsooth on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Differentiation Consideration: Consider providing students with the following definitions: disgusts means “cause(someone) to have a strong feeling of dislike for something especially because it has a very unpleasant appearance, taste, smell, etc.,” exceed means “to go beyond the limit of (something),” mark means “a specified point or level; something that is aimed at or shot at,” wits means “the ability to think or reason,” and e’en means “even.”

- Students write the definitions of disgusts, exceed, mark, wits, and e’en on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
What does the Duke say about his own speaking ability?

- The Duke says he does not have “skill / In speech” (lines 35–36), or that he is not an eloquent speaker.

What does the language of the poem suggest about the Duke’s speaking ability? What specific details and examples illustrate his speaking ability?

- Student responses may include:
  - The language of the poem suggests the Duke is an eloquent speaker. For example, he uses artistic language such as “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 uses beautiful language such as: “they would ask me, if they durst, / How such a glance came there” (lines 11–12) and “Paint / Must never hope to reproduce the faint / Half-flush that dies along her throat” (lines 17–19).

What inference can be made 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 is actually a good speaker.
  - The Duke presents himself as a simple man with little skill for human interactions but, he may, in fact, be manipulative.

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

- “Such an one” refers to the Duchess.

What is the meaning of the word will on line 36?

- Will in this context means wishes or desires.

Differentiation Consideration: To support comprehension, consider posing the following question:

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

- The Duke is referring to his own will. After the Duke uses the term “your will” (line 36) he proceeds to share specific details about what “stooping” (line 42) based on the Duchess’s behavior would look like.
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 disappoints him. This further develops the idea that the Duke wants to control the Duchess.

Inform students that “if she let / Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set / Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse” (lines 39–41) means “if she let herself be lectured in this way and did not argue or make excuses.”

What is the meaning of *lessoned* as Browning uses it in 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 taught.

**Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to define the word *lessoned*, consider posing the following questions:

What common word is in the word *lessoned* (line 40)? How does this common word help define the word *lessoned*?

- The common word “lesson” is in the word *lessoned*, so the word *lessoned* must have something to do with learning or teaching a lesson.

What words or phrases from the poem help define the word *lessoned* (line 40)?

- The Duke says that if the Duchess would “let / Herself be lessoned” (lines 39–40), so the word *lessoned* must mean taught.

**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.

Paraphrase lines 35–43 (from “Even had you skill / In speech” to “and I choose / Never to stoop”).

- Even if a man was an eloquent speaker who could tell a woman what about how her actions disgust him, and if the woman listened and made no excuses, it would still it would be beneath the man to speak to the woman about her actions. And I (the Duke) never chooses to do things that are beneath me.

How do specific words or phrases in the Duke’s statement, “I choose / Never to stoop” (lines 42–43) impact the meaning or tone of the text?

- Student responses may include:
  - “Never” (line 43) 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” (line 43), the Duke emphasizes that he believes he is higher than, or superior to, the Duchess.

The Duke’s use of “I choose” (line 42) shows that he is in control of the situation; he is the one making decisions.

How does the repetition of stoop contribute to the Duke’s development as a character?

- The Duke’s repetition of 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 higher or better than the Duchess.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

**Activity 5: Quick Write** 10%

Instruct students to reread their response to the 11.1.1 Lesson 2 Quick Write and then respond briefly in writing to the following 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 and to support their analysis with new evidence from lines 34–43. Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their writing.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition 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 their Quick Write responses in small groups.
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.

- Student groups share out their evidence.
- Student responses may include:
  - After the Duke has demonstrated many examples of beautiful and poetic language, he says he does not have “skill / In speech” (lines 35–36), which is not true. Therefore, the Duke is either modest or pretending to be modest.
  - The Duke asks rhetorically who would “stoop to blame” (line 34) a woman like the Duchess. He repeats that he never stooped to blaming or criticizing the Duchess. The Duke’s use of the word “stoop” shows that he believes he is above the Duchess and to tell her how he feels would be to lower himself to her level.

Activity 7: Closing

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

Introduce standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 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?—to soon made glad.’ This line contributes to Browning’s development of the Duke as a character who harshly judges the Duchess for being easily pleased by the people and objects around her.”

- Students follow along.

Homework

Begin reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.
Introduction

In this lesson, students read and analyze lines 43–56 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!”), in which the Duke explains why the Duchess is no longer with him and suggests that he will soon take the Count’s daughter as his new wife. Working with a new standard, RL.11-12.2, students analyze how Browning develops central ideas such as power and status, jealousy, voice, and madness. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Browning’s choice of speaker impact the development of central ideas in the poem?

For homework, students respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: Why is the bronze statue described in lines 54–56 important to the Duke? Students also review and expand their annotations about how Browning introduces and develops the poem’s narrator (and main character), the Duke. Also for homework, students continue to read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) texts.

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.2</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL.11-12.6</td>
<td>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).</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Addressed Standard(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.11-12.9.a</td>
<td>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  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”). |
| L.11-12.4.d           | 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.

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).

Assessment

Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- How does Browning’s choice of speaker impact the development of central ideas in the poem?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Determine that the poem is written from the Duke’s point of view.
- Identify one or more central ideas of the poem (e.g., power and status, voice, jealousy, and madness).
- Explain how writing the poem from the Duke's point of view contributes to the development of one or more central idea (e.g., Browning’s choice to write the poem in the voice of the Duke contributes to the development of central ideas including power and voice. The final lines of the poem confirm the Duke’s obsession with power: He is a possessive, controlling man. Because the Duchess “smiled” (line 43) at others, the Duke “gave commands” (line 45) so that “all smiles stopped together” (line 46), which may be a euphemism for having the Duchess killed or at least silenced. The Duke preventing the Duchess from smiling at others develops the central ideas of power and voice by showing how a man uses his power over a woman to establish himself as an authority figure and to take away a woman’s ability to express herself.).

Vocabulary

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

- munificence (n.) – the quality or action of giving or bestowing liberally
- 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
Lesson Agenda/Overview

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Standards &amp; Text:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Standards: RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.6, W.11-12.9.a, L.11-12.4.d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Text: “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning, lines 43–56</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Learning Sequence:
1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 1. 10%
2. Homework Accountability 2. 10%
3. Masterful Reading 3. 5%
4. Reading and Discussion 4. 55%
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)
• Free Audio Resource: [https://archive.org/](https://archive.org/) (Google search terms: My Last Duchess, Zachariah Wells)
• Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.1.1 Lesson 1)
**Learning Sequence**

### How to Use the Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no symbol</td>
<td>Plain text indicates teacher action.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>Indicates student action(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔴</td>
<td>Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>📑</td>
<td>Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.</td>
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</table>

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda  

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.2 and RL.11-12.6. In this lesson, students consider how Browning introduces and develops central ideas in the poem.

- Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 11.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with a new standard: RL.11-12.2. Instruct students to individually read the standard on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of it.

- Students read and assess their familiarity with standard RL.11-12.2.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think standard RL.11-12.2 means. Lead a brief discussion about this standard.

- Student responses may include:
  - Students must determine and analyze more than one central idea in a text.
  - Students analyze how authors develop central ideas throughout a whole text.
  - Students determine how central ideas affect other central ideas in a text.
  - Students summarize a text clearly and without their own opinions.

Check student understanding by asking students to clarify the meaning of the term *central idea*.

- Student responses may include:
  - An idea that is important to the text
  - A big idea in a text
  - A theme
An idea that is repeated throughout a text

Remind students that they will work with this standard as they read in this lesson. Instruct students to look for central ideas, paying attention to how the author develops the ideas and how the ideas relate to one another.

In 11.1.1 Lesson 3, students may have begun to identify emerging central ideas informally, 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 focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 to their AIR texts. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson’s AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 to their AIR texts.

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

Activity 3: Masterful Reading 5%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of “My Last Duchess,” lines 43–56 (from “Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt, / Whene’er I passed her” to “Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!”). Ask students to pay attention to how the Duke reports what happened to the Duchess.

- Students follow along, reading silently.

Differentiation Consideration: Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

What central ideas does Browning develop at the end of the poem?

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion 55%

Instruct students to form pairs. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss, using the code CI where they notice a central idea in the text.
Remind students that annotating helps them keep track of evidence they use later in the lesson assessment as well as the 11.1 Performance Assessment, which focuses on the development of similar central ideas in multiple texts.

- This annotation exercise supports students’ engagement with W.11-12.9.a, which addresses the use of textual evidence in writing.

Instruct student pairs to read 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”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: whene’er means “whenever.”
  - Students write the definition of whene’er on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

**What does the rhetorical question in lines 44–45 suggest about the Duke?**

- The Duke acknowledges that the Duchess smiled “no doubt” (line 43) whenever she passed him. However, the Duke perceives that other people also received “[m]uch the same smile” (line 45). The Duke’s desire to be the only one who receives the Duchess’s smiles suggests that he is jealous and possessive.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** To support comprehension, consider posing the following question:

  **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.

**To what does the phrase “This grew” (line 45) refer?**

- The phrase “This grew” refers to the Duchess’s smiles for the Duke and others: “she smiled, no doubt, / Whene’er I passed her; but who passed without / Much the same smile?” (lines 43–45). With the phrase “This grew” (line 45), the Duke suggests that the Duchess began to smile at even more people or to smile at him and others more often.

**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.

- **Student responses may 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 affect the meaning of the poem?

Student responses may include:

- The repetition 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 than the Duchess herself. The portrait “as if alive” is better than the living Duchess.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read lines 47–53 (from “Will ’t please you rise? We’ll meet / The company below” to “as I avowed / At starting, is my object”) and answer the following question before sharing out with the class.

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

The Duke and the listener go downstairs to “[t]he company below” (line 48).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to read 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 answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: munificence means “the quality or action of giving or bestowing liberally,” ample means “fully sufficient or more than adequate for the purpose or needs; plentiful; enough,” warrant means “something that serves to give reliable or formal assurance of something; guarantee, pledge, or security,” just means “guided by truth, reason, justice, and fairness,” pretence means “a claim made or implied,” and dowry means “the money, goods, or estate that a wife brings to her husband at marriage.”

Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer the definition before providing it to the class.

Students write the definitions of munificence, ample, warrant, just, pretence, and dowry on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
Some students may notice the British spelling of *pretence*. Explain that, in British spelling, *c* is sometimes used instead of the *s* used in American spelling.

**Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions:
- *disallowed* means “decided that (something) is not acceptable or valid,” *avowed* means “openly declared,” and *cast* means “to form (something, such as a sculpture) by casting metal, plaster, etc.”
- Students write the definitions of *disallowed*, *avowed*, and *cast* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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”)?

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

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

* In this context, the word *object* means “goal or desire.”

What other meaning does the word *object* have?

* The word *object* can also mean “thing.”

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

* Student responses may include:
  - The use of the word *object* suggests that the Duke cares more about things than he does about people.
  - The use of the word *object* suggests that the Duke will view his next wife as another object or possession.

Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.d through the process of verifying preliminary and multiple meanings of a word.

How do the final three lines of the poem contribute to the development of the Duke’s character?

* Student responses may include:
  - Browning’s choice to end the poem with the Duke’s description of a statute reinforces the idea that the Duke is materialistic. The final words, “cast in bronze for me” (line 56), connect
the Duke’s description of the Duchess painting to the bronze statue—both objects of art that he had created for himself.

- Before the Duke takes his visitor downstairs, he tells the visitor to “notice” a bronze sculpture of “Neptune ... / Taming a sea-horse” (lines 54–55). The Duke’s pride and attention to the sculpture reflect the Duke’s words about the painting of the Duchess. The similarity between the sculpture and the Duchess highlights how the Duke views women as possessions or objects.

Differentiation Consideration: To support comprehension, consider posing the following question:

What does the Duke ask the listener to “notice” (line 54) as they go downstairs?

The Duke wants the listener to “notice” a bronze sculpture of “Neptune ... / Taming a sea-horse” (lines 54–55).

Students further consider the significance of this imagery later in the homework assignment.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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

Student responses may include:

- Jealousy: The Duke is jealous because the Duchess gave “much the same smile” (line 45) to everyone.
- Power/Voice: The Duke “gave commands” that caused the Duchess’s smiles to stop (lines 45–46), thus ending her ability to speak for herself through her smiles and interactions with him and with others. The Duke directs the listener when it is time to go downstairs (lines 47–48).
- Power (Possessiveness/Objectification): 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” (line 50) of the Duke for dowry will be “disallowed” (line 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 “object[s]” (lines 53–56).
Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student 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 students may have identified in 11.1.1 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.

2. The ideas of voice and power and the relationship between them will be important in students’ study of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and the excerpt from Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* in 11.1.2 and 11.1.3. 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 review their annotations and notes from today’s lesson and earlier lessons in 11.1.1 in order to gather text evidence to support their responses.

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

**How does Browning’s choice of speaker impact the development of central ideas in the poem?**

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. 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.

2. 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 43–56 or on the poem as a whole.

Transition 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. For homework, instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:
Why is the bronze statue described in lines 54–56 important to the Duke?

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

In addition, instruct students to prepare for the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment by reviewing and expanding on their annotations about how Browning introduces and develops the poem’s narrator (and main character), the Duke.

Also for homework, instruct students to continue to read their AIR texts through the lens of focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

- Students follow along.

**Homework**

Respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

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

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written response. Use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide your written response.

In addition, prepare for the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment by reviewing and expanding on your annotations about how Browning introduces and develops the poem’s narrator (and main character), the Duke.

Also, continue reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.
Introduction

In this final lesson of the unit, the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment, students engage in an evidence-based discussion of Robert Browning’s choices in introducing and developing the Duke over the course of “My Last Duchess.” This discussion prepares students to craft 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 text.

For homework, students continue to read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) texts through the lens of the focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1.

Standards

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<td>RL.11-12.3</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 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. |
| W.11-12.9.a          | Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.  
|                       | 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”). |

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<td>SL.11-12.1.b</td>
<td>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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)

Student learning is assessed via a formal one-paragraph response at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

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

Student responses are assessed using the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric.

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

• Identify the revelation in lines 45–47 (e.g., The Duke reveals that he disposed of his wife, possibly by murder, and is now seeking to marry the Count’s “fair daughter[]” (line 52.).).

• Determine several aspects of the Duke’s character that emerge over the course of the poem (e.g., jealous, controlling, proud, arrogant, obsessed with possessions, etc.).

• Discuss how Browning develops these aspects through the revelation at the end of the poem (see examples below).

A High Performance Response may include the following evidence in support of a one-paragraph analysis:

• The revelation that “all smiles stopped together” (line 46) confirms the suspicions Browning planted that the Duke is a jealous and controlling character whose desire to possess the Duchess completely may have driven him to murder. The Duke’s actions in silencing his Duchess and suppressing her smiles show him to be ruthless in his desire for control.

• The ending of the poem confirms the Duke’s presentation of himself as a powerful man, at whose commands “all smiles stopped” (line 46), 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.

• The power of his commands to stop all smiles also contradicts the Duke’s statement that he is a man with little skill in speech: clearly, when he speaks, others listen and act.

• The revelation and the ending of the poem sheds 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
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 is “too soon made glad” (line 22) and “[t]oo easily impressed” (line 23).

- 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)

- None.*

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

- None.*

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- None.*

*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 using the strategies outlined in L.11-12.4.a-d.

Lesson Agenda/Overview

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<td>Text: “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Sequence:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda</td>
<td>1. 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Homework Accountability</td>
<td>2. 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Small Group Discussion and Evidence Gathering</td>
<td>3. 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment</td>
<td>4. 50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Closing</td>
<td>5. 5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Materials

- Copies of the “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool for each student
- Copies of the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment for each student
- Copies of the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist for each student

Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no symbol</td>
<td>Plain text indicates teacher action.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▶</td>
<td>Indicates student action(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td>◀</td>
<td>Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>⚡</td>
<td>Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.</td>
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Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda 5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b, and W.11-12.9.a. 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. Students 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 the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the text.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability 15%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RL.11-12.1 to their AIR texts. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson’s AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RL.11-12.1 to their AIR texts.
Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied the focus standard to their AIR texts from the previous lesson’s homework.

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: Why is the bronze statue described in lines 54–56 important to the Duke?) Instruct students to share their responses to the homework assignment in pairs.

Student responses may include:

- The statue is “thought a rarity” (line 55), an object the Duke values as part of his art collection.
- The statue was cast in bronze especially for the Duke.
- The statue is of Neptune taming a sea horse, which mimics the Duke’s need for power and control.

Activity 3: Small Group Discussion and Evidence Gathering 25%

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 the text leaves 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 a collaborative discussion, students add descriptions and evidence of the Duke’s character into the “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool. Each student should record ideas on his or her own tool for use in the End-of-Unit Assessment.

Activity 4: 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment 50%

Instruct students to write a one-paragraph 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?
Remind students to use the 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric to guide their written responses. Ask students to use this unit’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to refer to the notes, tools, and annotated text from the previous lessons.

1. Consider instructing students to reference their responses to the 11.1.1 Lesson 1 Quick Write. Reviewing their initial impressions of meaning and tone in the first 8 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.

1. Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.
   - Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
   - See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

1. Students who finish early can read their AIR text.

**Activity 5: Closing**

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

- Students follow along.

**Homework**

Continue reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of focus standard RL.11-12.1 or RI.11-12.1 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.
“My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does the text say explicitly about the Duke’s character?</th>
<th>Which aspects of the Duke’s character does the text leave uncertain?</th>
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</table>
**Model “My Last Duchess” Discussion Tool**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Directions:** In the first column, record what the text says explicitly about the Duke. In the second column, record aspects of the Duke’s character the text leaves uncertain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does the text say explicitly about the Duke’s character?</th>
<th>Which aspects of the Duke’s character does the text leave uncertain?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JEALOUSY/CONTROLLING NATURE:</strong> The Duke keeps the portrait behind a curtain that only he is allowed to draw (lines 9–10). He is upset by the fact that the Duchess 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).</td>
<td><strong>MURDERER?</strong> 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).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PRIDE:</strong> 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 “some 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-years-old name / With anybody’s gift” (lines 31–34). He views the idea of correcting his Duchess as “stooping” (line 42) or beneath him—suggesting that he is too proud to correct her.</td>
<td><strong>MADMAN?</strong> We are left uncertain as to the sanity of the Duke: is he a murderous mad man who is calmly recounting the killing of his wife, or is he merely a snobbish eccentric lover of art?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>POWER:</strong> The Duke is powerful enough to silence the Duchess: “I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together” (lines 45–46).</td>
<td><strong>RELATIONSHIP WITH WIFE?</strong> The Duke’s relationship to his wife is left ambiguous; it is not clear whether he ever “stoop[ed]” (line 43) to correct her or whether they quarreled about her friendliness.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ARROGANCE:</strong> The Duke remarks that people would ask him about the portrait “if they durst” (line 11), implying that he sees himself as an intimidating and important figure. He is also arrogant enough to imply in lines 45–46 that he may have murdered his wife: “I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LOVE OF ART:</strong> 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” (line 55) of the bronze statue of Neptune taming a sea horse in the final lines.</td>
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</table>
11.1.1 End-of-Unit Assessment

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 11.1.1 End-of-Unit 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

CCSS: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.2.b, W.11-12.9.a

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.

This task measures W.11-12.9.a because it demands that students:
- Draw evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
## 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric

**Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 – Responses at this Level:</th>
<th>3 – Responses at this Level:</th>
<th>2 – Responses at this Level:</th>
<th>1 – Responses at this Level:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content and Analysis</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The extent to which the response analyzes the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story.</td>
<td>Skillfully analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story.</td>
<td>Accurately analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story.</td>
<td>With partial accuracy, analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>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).</td>
<td>Thoroughly and skillfully develop the topic with 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.b)</td>
<td>Develop the topic with 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.b)</td>
<td>Partially develop the topic with weak facts, extended definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic. (W.11-12.2.b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Command of Evidence and Reasoning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The extent to which the response thoroughly develops the topic through the effective selection and analysis of 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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2</td>
<td>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.</td>
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http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2.b</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Command of Evidence and Reasoning</strong></td>
<td>Skillfully utilize textual evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.</td>
<td>Accurately utilize textual evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.</td>
<td>Somewhat effectively or with partial accuracy utilize textual evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.</td>
<td>Ineffectively or inaccurately utilize textual evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9.a</strong></td>
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<td>Draw evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, and research; apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature.</td>
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</table>

- 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.
### 11.1.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Checklist

**Assessed Standards:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does my response...</th>
<th>✔</th>
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</table>

**Content and Analysis**

- Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate the elements of a story or drama? *(RL.11-12.3)*

**Command of Evidence and Reasoning**

- Develop the topic with the most significant and relevant textual evidence? *(W.11-12.2.b)*
- Use textual evidence to support analysis, reflection, or research? *(W.11-12.9.a)*
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
'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)
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
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
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,
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,
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
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
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;
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
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,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!