

INTRO TO HAMLET

Unit Overview

“Then all smiles stopped together.”

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

Introduction

In the first unit, 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.9-10.3, W. 9-10.2.b, W. 9-10.9.a).

Literacy Skills and Habits

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

Standards for This Unit

CCS Standards: Reading — Literature	
RL.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
RL.9-10.6	Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.
CCS Standards: Writing	
W.9-10.2.b	<p>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.</p> <p>Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.</p>
W.9-10.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific

	purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grades 9-10 here .)
W.9-10.9.a	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply <i>grades 9-10 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]").</p>
CCS Standards: Speaking & Listening	
SL.9-10.1.b	<p>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</p>
CCS Standards: Language	
L.9-10.4.a-d	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 9-10 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A</u> 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.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.B</u> Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy</i>).</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.C</u> 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, or its etymology.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.D</u> 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).</p>

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

Unit Assessments

Ongoing Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.9-10.2, RL. 9-10.3, RL. 9-10.4, RL. 9-10.6, W. 9-10.2.b, W. 9-10.9.a, SL. 9-10.1.b
Description of Assessment	Varies by lesson but may include responses to text-dependent questions focused on character development, central idea development, and word choice through discussion and informal writing prompts.

End-of-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL. 9-10.3, W. 9-10.2.b, W. 9-10.9.a
Description of Assessment	Students individually write a single paragraph response addressing the following prompt: How does the revelation in lines 45–47 impact the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the poem?

Unit-at-a-Glance Calendar

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
1	“My Last Duchess,” lines 1–8	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. 9-10.4). Students learn to cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support their analysis.
2	“My Last Duchess,” lines 5–21	Students continue their study of Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” building their close reading skills through an exploration of lines 5–21 of the poem. At the same time, they are introduced to the important skill of text annotation, which they then practice. They listen to a masterful reading of the relevant section of the poem before annotating the text in pairs and engaging in small group discussion. In doing so, they will also be introduced to the addressed standard of the lesson SL. 9-10.1.b, which they will read in order to create a class checklist for the elements of a civil and democratic discussion.

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
3	“My Last Duchess,” lines 21–34	In this lesson, students read lines 21–34 of “My Last Duchess,” continuing to gather evidence of the Duke’s character and the emergence of the Duchess’s character as described by the Duke. Students are assessed on their ability to follow established criteria in small group discussions about the question: What is the impact of Browning’s choice of speaker on the development of the Duchess?
4	“My Last Duchess,” lines 31–43	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. 9–10.2.b and W. 9–10.5, assessing their own understanding of the standard on the Common Core Learning Standards Tool.
5	“My Last Duchess,” 43–end	In this lesson, students read the final 14 lines of “My Last Duchess.” Students learn to identify central ideas in the poem. In the course of this lesson, students read and analyze a new standard, RL. 9–10.2. 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.
6	“My Last Duchess” entire text	In this lesson, the End-of-Unit Assessment, students engage in an evidence-based discussion of Browning’s choices in introducing and developing the Duke in “My Last Duchess.” Students use speaking, listening, and textual analysis skills to participate in a collaborative discussion. This discussion prepares students to draft a one-paragraph analysis of how the revelation at the end of the poem impacts the development of the Duke’s character over the course of the poem. This assessment builds upon students’ understanding of Browning’s choices to develop the Duke’s character over the course of the text, and requires them to put into practice the writing standards introduced in the earlier lessons of the module.

Preparation, Materials, and Resources

Preparation

- Read and annotate “My Last Duchess.”

- Review the 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. 9-10.1.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