

Read Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" from lines 1–8 (from "That's my last Duchess painted on the wall" to "The depth and passion of its earnest glance").

1. What specific words and phrases in lines 1-2 does the speaker use to describe the Duchess?
2. What do these words and phrases suggest about the Duchess?
3. Who is the speaker of the poem? What words and phrases indicate the speaker of the poem?
4. What does the Duke mean by "that piece" (line 3)?
5. How does the Duke describe the piece?
6. Who is Frà Pandolf (line 3)? What words and phrases in lines 3–4 indicate who he is?
7. Why might the Duke mention Frà Pandolf in line 3?

8. To whom is the Duke speaking?

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

“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.

10. Describe the Duke’s tone toward the listener in line 5. What words demonstrate this tone?

11. What is “that pictured countenance” in line 7?

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

13. To what does “its” refer in line 8?

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

15. What does the reader learn about the Duchess from the description of her portrait in the first 8 lines of the poem?