

Robert Browning  
My Last Duchess  
More challenging questions!

Worksheet by:  
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1. The poem is called a DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE.
  - What is a dramatic monologue? (4)
  - In what way can "My Last Duchess" be called a good example of a dramatic monologue? (3)
  - Is there any other dramatic monologue that you can think of? (2)
2. The poem is called "My Last Duchess".
  - Would it have made much of a difference had the poem been called "My Late Duchess"? (4)
3. I gave commands;  
Then all smiles stopped together.
  - What is the Duke telling the envoy about the fate of his former wife? (4)
  - Had the Duchess done anything to displease her husband, the Duke? (4)
4. The narrator -- the Duke of Ferrara -- is an arrogant, hateful, boorish and thoroughly objectionable person. And yet the poem somehow succeeds in getting the reader to identify with him, even to the extent of accepting his decision to put his wife aside or even executing her.
  - How does the poet achieve this? (6)
5. 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.
  - Why was the "nine-hundred-years old name" so important to the Duke? (4)
6. The Duke cast his wife aside or even executed her for some very trivial reasons.
  - What are these trivial reasons? (6)
  - Do you think that the Count, who appears to be negotiating to have his daughter marry the Duke, will actually want to have his daughter marry such a tyrant? (4)
7. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!
  - What is the significance of the Duke's drawing attention to Neptune taming the sea-horse? (4)

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