Think Sheet for “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning

1. Explain how the author indirectly characterizes the speaker of the poem? Use examples in your answer for support.
2. Describe the tone of the poem through the speaker. Use examples in your answer for support.
3. List and explain the irony of the traits the Duke describes of his wife. How do those traits make the Duke feel?
4. What does the quote, “**She thanked men-good! But thanked somehow- I know not how-as if she ranked my gift of a 900 year old name with anybody’s gift,”** reveal about the speaker?
5. What is implied by the lines**, “This grew; I gave commands;/Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands/ As if alive”?**
6. What is the tone of the above said quote? Use examples in your answer for support.
7. To what does the Last Duchess refer – the final duchess or the last in a most recent series?
8. How does the duchess pose a risk to the rigid order of society?
9. From a gender perspective, answer the following questions**:**
10. Who is in charge- male or female?
11. How does the Duke benefit from such a gender-biased society?
12. How does the duchess not benefit from a gender-biased society**?**
13. Explain how the painting of “MY Last Duchess” is also a portrait of the Duke. Make sure to use examples in your answer for support.