

How Do I Love Thee?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Why does a poem that promises to “count” love keep moving beyond measurement?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Sonnet 43 - complete poem

TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

START	How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
END	I shall but love thee better after death.
PASSAGE ID	sec-sonnet43-01

THE MOVE

Analyze how a list expands an idea instead of containing it

WHY THIS PASSAGE

The opening suggests that love can be counted, but each new measure uses a different scale: physical dimension, ordinary life, moral freedom, past grief, childhood faith, and the boundary of death. The list therefore demonstrates that the feeling exceeds any single kind of measurement.

MARK

Number the different “ways” the speaker names. Circle language of physical measurement. Underline references to ordinary daily life. Box the final movement beyond death.

NOTICE

- Which lines sound measurable in a literal sense?
- When does the poem shift from dimensions to values and memory?
- How does the final line exceed the promise to count?

THINK

Answer provisionally: Why does a poem that promises to “count” love keep moving beyond measurement? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

STRONG ANSWER

The poem begins as if love can be measured, but the list keeps changing units. Depth and breadth become daily need, moral choice, memory, breath, and finally life beyond death, showing that no single scale is sufficient to contain the speaker’s claim.

EVIDENCE

Use one early measurement image and one later emotional or spiritual measure.

WATCH FOR

Do not simply list the ways. Explain how the changing kinds of measurement make the idea of love larger rather than more precise.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 9 · LESSON 295

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WORK	How Do I Love Thee?
TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION	Sonnet 43 - complete poem

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Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

START

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

END

I shall but love thee better after death.

READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK Number the different “ways” the speaker names. Circle language of physical measurement. Underline references to ordinary daily life. Box the final movement beyond death.
2. NOTICE Which lines sound measurable in a literal sense? When does the poem shift from dimensions to values and memory? How does the final line exceed the promise to count?
3. THINK Answer provisionally: Why does a poem that promises to “count” love keep moving beyond measurement?
4. WRITE Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. CLOSE Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.