

## The Shakespearean Sonnet: Worksheet

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,  
And young affection gapes to be his heir;  
That fair for which love groaned for and would die,  
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.  
Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,  
Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks;  
But to his foe supposed he must complain,  
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.  
Being held a foe, he may not have access  
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear,  
And she as much in love, her means much less  
To meet her new belovèd anywhere;  
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,  
Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet.

You will be assigned to do one part at a time. Do not work ahead. With your partner:

### Part One:

1. Number each line, then break the sonnet up by placing a small line under each quatrain.
2. Look at the last words in each line and identify the rhyme scheme using the letters: a, b, c, d, e, f, g (meaning that you will assign a letter to each line, in chronological order).
3. Count the number of syllables in the first and second line of this sonnet.

### Part Two:

4. Break the first two lines into five sets of syllable pairs: ex. And she | as much | in love | ...
5. Put a U over the unstressed syllable and a / over the stressed syllable in each pair.
6. Read the line out loud, putting slightly more emphasis on the stressed syllables.
7. Count up the total syllables for each line in the remainder of the sonnet and put a star or a dot next to any irregular lines (not ten syllables?). We will discuss them as a class.

## **Shakespearean Sonnet notes:**

Part One:

A **sonnet** is:

A **Shakespearean** or **Elizabethan** sonnet contains:

A **quatrain** is:

A **couplet** is:

The Shakespearean sonnet **rhyme scheme** is:

Question:

What are the sonnets we have encountered so far in R&J?

Part Two:

The type of **meter** used in Shakespearean sonnets is:

The **meter** of a poem is:

An **iamb** is:

An **unaccented** syllable is identified with a:

An **accented** syllable is identified with a:

**Pentameter** means:

Therefore, if an iamb contains two syllables, and there are five total iambs in each line, the **total number of syllables per line** in a Shakespearean sonnet is:

**\*Why iambic pentameter?**

(NOTES KEY BELOW)

## Shakespearean Sonnet NOTES:

Part One:

A sonnet is:

a **lyric** poem consisting of fourteen lines.

A **Shakespearean** or **Elizabethan** sonnet contains:

three **quatrains** (four lines each) and a final rhyming **couplet** (two lines)

A **quatrain** is: One of three four-line stanzas in a Shakespearean sonnet.

A **couplet** is: The final two rhyming lines in a Shakespearean sonnet.

The Shakespearean sonnet **rhyme scheme** is: abab, cdcd, efef, gg

Question:

What are the three sonnets we have encountered so far in R&J?

2 prologues – beginning and end of Act I

I, v, 102-116) – when Romeo and Juliet first meet at the ball

Part Two:

The type of **meter** used in Shakespearean sonnets is:

**iambic pentameter.**

The **meter** of a poem is:

its rhythm of **accented** or **unaccented** syllables organized into patterns called **feet.**

An **iamb** is:

a foot consisting of two syllables, one unaccented (unstressed) and one accented (stressed).

An **unaccented syllable** is identified with a: U

An **accented syllable** is identified with a: /

**Pentameter** means:

five feet (*pent* is Greek root for five). So, each line in a sonnet contains five **iamb**s.

**Therefore**, if an iamb contains two syllables, and there are five total iambs in each line, the total number of syllables per line in a Shakespearean sonnet is: 10

**\*Why iambic pentameter:**

- Because it reflects the natural rhythm of the human heartbeat
- Because it is the rhythm most common to our natural way of speaking.