

Poetry Scanning Worksheet

Scanning poetry is not really a difficult job if you say the words out loud softly to yourself, exaggerating the accents slightly. As you do so, pay attention to which syllables are stressed. You may wish to work in pairs, since some people have difficulty hearing themselves. Every syllable that you stress should be marked with a DUMM or / . The unstressed syllables should be marked with a de or ~ . I have already divided these examples in your exercises into syllables to help you this first time.

1. First scan the line marking all stressed syllables. Determine what dominant rhythmic pattern is used – iambic (de DUMM), trochaic (DUMM de), anapestic (de de DUMM), dactylic (DUMM de de), spondaic (DUMM DUMM). Most poems will not be completely regular.
2. After determining what kind of rhythm is dominant in the lines, determine how many feet are used in most lines of the poem -- monometer, dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, pentameter, etc.
3. Thus, each exercise should have the lines all marked and a two-word label, such as iambic dimeter.

EXERCISE ONE

The stag at eve had drunk his fill
Where shines the moon on Mo nan's rill.

EXERCISE TWO

Lit tle flit ting white fire in sect,
Lit tle dan cing white fire crea ture,
Light me with your lit tle can dle,
Ere u pon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eye lids.

EXERCISE THREE

The As syr ian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his co horts were gleam ing in pur ple and gold,
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls night ly on deep Ga li lee.

EXERCISE FOUR

Can non to right of them,
Can non to left of them,
Can non in front of them,
Vol leyed and thun dered.

EXERCISE FIVE

I like to see it lap the Miles –
And lick the Val lys up –
And stop to feed it self at Tanks –
And then -- pro dig ious step
A round a Pile of Moun tains --

EXERCISE SIX

My heart's in the High lands, my heart is not here,
My heart's in the High lands a- chas ing the deer
A- chas ing the wild deer and fol low ing the roe --
My heart's in the High lands, wher ev er I go!

EXERCISE SEVEN

To mor row, and to mor row, and to mor row,
Creeps in ths pet ty pace from day to day,
To the last syl la ble of re cor ded time;
And all our yes ter days have light ed fools
The way to dus ty death. Out, out, brief can die!
Life's but a walk ing sha dow, a poor play er
That struts and frets his hur up on the stage
Nd then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an i di ot, full of sound and fu ry
Sig ni fy ing no thing.

EXERCISE NINE

And still she slept an az ure- lid ded sleep
In blanch ed lin en, smooth and lav en dered,
While he from forth the clos et brought a heap
Of can died ap ple, quince, and plum, and gourd;

EXERCISE EIGHT

Thus I
Pass by
And die
As one
Un known
And gone.

EXERCISE TEN: Write yur own nme in the space below, breaking it into syllables and scanning it. Do this with your full name and with the name you normally go by in class.

EXERCISE ELEVEN

God made, they say, the country
And man, they say, the town
But God for gets his hand I work
When the sun goes down.

EXERCISE TWELVE

The Chameleon changes his color;
He can look like a tree or a wall;
He is timid and shy and he hates to be seen,
So he simply sits down on the grass and grows green,
And pretends he is no thing at all.

EXERCISE THIRTEEN

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

EXERCISE FOURTEEN

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely seas and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by.