

Meter: a controlled pattern of rhythm is called meter. There are several different types of meter, which for a Regents freshman class would prove to be too challenging; however, at the very least, as a reader of poetry, you should be able to identify the amount of syllables in a line of poetry. This will begin your adventure into exploring poetry.

Counting syllables:

Syllable: a unit of pronunciation have one vowel sound.

Example

Wa-ter	Ba-loo-ga	Graph-ic	Nom-i-na-tion	De-in-sti-tu-tion-al-i-za-tion
2	3	2	4	9

Examine the following words and label how many syllables these words have:

Apple	Iowa	Fork	Encounter
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Wash	Washed	Hunt	Hunted
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Verisimilitude	Anthropological	Child	Collateral
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Write a word with

One syllable:

Three Syllables:

Five syllables:

Seven syllables:

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Now that you can count lines, you can learn to count meter. Meter is dividing syllables up in a specific way to figure out the meter of a line of poetry. Sometimes you divide lines of poetry by every two syllables, and other times by every three syllables. The most common is two syllables (iambic or trochaic rhythm). When we divide them this way, we call the grouping feet. For our purposes, we will divide everything by two syllables.

Example:

From ancient grudge break to new mutiny.

From an | cient grudge | break to | new mut | i - ny
1 2 3 4 5

Notice there is a line placed between each two syllables. This sentence is what is known as **pentameter** because it has five groupings of two syllables. Let's try a sentence together: Place a | after every two syllables and then write the number between each grouping.

Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean

Is this sentence pentameter? _____

Let's try two more:

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes

Is this sentence pentameter? _____

Because I could not stop for death.

Is this sentence pentameter? _____

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One Foot = Monometer	Two Feet = Dimeter
Three Feet = Tetrameter	Four Feet = Tetrameter
Five Feet = Pentameter	Six Feet = Hexameter
Seven Feet = Heptameter	Eight Feet = Octameter

Examine the following sentences and divide up the meter and identify how many feet there are.
Show all work!

Example:

Run in | the deep:

1 2

Dimeter

When here the spring we see

Sometimes the only way out is to examine who I can be.

Little Miss Muffet, sat on her tuffet.

He stole along, and nothing spoke

He ran, but he found nothing there

Run, Fast! Now!

Identifying rhyme scheme

Rhyme scheme allows the reader to examine lines of poetry and find a common thread. Sometimes no common thread exists, and other times it is masked within the poetry. When we examine lines of poetry with rhyme, it is marked with letters from the alphabet.

Example:

Look at the <u>cat</u>	A
It has a <u>hat</u>	A
The cat looks <u>sad</u>	B
And I am not <u>glad</u>	B
And that is <u>that</u> .	A

Cat ends the first line of the poem, so we mark it with the first letter of the alphabet (A). Hat rhymes with cat, and because it rhymes, we use the same letter (A). Sad does not rhyme with cat so it gets the next letter in the alphabet (B). Glad rhymes with sad so it also gets the letter B and that rhymes with cat so it gets the letter A.

Try one on your own:

*Hey, diddle diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon.
The little dog laughed to see such sport.
And the dish ran away with the spoon.*

Sometimes the rhymes are sight rhymes, while no rhyme actually occurs, and other times the rhyme is an off rhyme. At these times, it is up to the scanner of the poem to decide what to do; however, more often than not, you mark the poem with the rhyme. i.e.: Afford ; Word

Mark the rhyme scheme for the beginning of this Shakespearean Sonnet.

*Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thy self thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank she lends to those are free:
Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous largess given thee to give?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?*