

THE SOUNDS OF POETRY: RHYTHM AND METER

Title of Poem: _____

Author: _____

Meter is the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in poetry. A metrical foot consists of one stressed (/) syllable and one or more unstressed (~) syllables.

Metrical Feet and Examples

iamb (~ /), as in <i>hello</i>	anapest (~ ~ /), as in <i>introduce</i>
trochee (/ ~), as in <i>counter</i>	dactyl (/ ~ ~), as in <i>cheeseburger</i>

The designation of a poem’s meter includes the type of metrical foot and the number of feet in each line: Dimeter means two feet per line; trimeter, three; tetrameter, four; and pentameter, five. Thus, a poem’s meter may be trochaic tetrameter.

Scan three lines from the poem:

What is the poem’s meter? _____

How does the meter affect the poem’s pace? _____

In what ways does the meter contribute to the emotions and meaning that the poem conveys?
