POETIC METER

lyricalLANGUAGE LAB
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What is METER?

The arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables in a specific, recurring, and rhythmic pattern.

Stressed and unstressed syllables + Metrical Feet + Metrical Lines = **METER**

WHAT IS A METRICAL FOOT?

A unit of measurement made up of stressed and unstressed syllables and repeated in a line of poetry. Metrical feet have names!

iamb	u /	**da-DUM**
trochee	/ u	**DUM-da**
anapest	u u /	**da-da-DUM**
dactyl	/ u u	**DUM-da-da**

Each metrical foot contains
one stressed syllable
one or two unstressed syllables

Occasional variants to the standard feet

spondee	/ /	**DUM-DUM**
pyrrhus	u u	**da-da**

WHAT IS A METRICAL LINE?

The number of metrical feet in a single line of poetry. Metrical lines have names!

monometer	**1**	**foot per line**
dimeter	**2**	**feet per line**
trimeter	**3**	**feet per line**
tetrameter	**4**	**feet per line**
pentameter	**5**	**feet per line**
hexameter	**6**	**feet per line**
heptameter	**7**	**feet per line**
octameter	**8**	**feet per line**

and so on...

A **RISING METER** ends on a stressed syllable. **IAMBS** and **ANAPESTS** are rising meters.
A **FALLING METER** ends on an unstressed syllable. **TROCHEES** and **DACTYLS** are falling meters.

PUT IT TOGETHER.

1) Figure out the metrical foot.
2) Count the number of feet in the line.

u	/	u	/	u	/	u	/	u	/
But soft!		What light		through yon		der win		dow breaks?	
1		2		3		4		5	

u / = iamb | 5 repetitions in the line | **IAMBIC PENTAMETER**