

Name:

Date:

The Rules of Sonnets

Rhyme Pattern

A How heavy do I journey on the *way*,
B When what I seek – my weary travel’s *end* –
A Doth teach that ease and that repose to *say*,
B ‘Thus far the miles are measur’d from thy *friend!*’
C The beast that bears me, tired with my *woe*,
D plods dully on, to bear that weight in *me*,
C As if by some instinct the wretch did *know*
D His rider lov’d not speed, being made from *thee*:
E The bloody spur cannot provoke him *on*
F That sometimes anger thrusts into his *hide*;
E Which heavily he answers with a *groan*,
F More sharp to me than spurring to his *side*;
G For that same groan doth put this in my *mind*,
G My grief lies onward, and my joy *behind*.¹

Iambic Pentameter: The style that sonnets are commonly written. Each line consists of five iambic feet, meaning that each line includes ten syllables and has the following stress style to it:

da-DUM/da-DUM/da-DUM/da-DUM/da-DUM/

Example: “The beast that bears me, tired with my woe...”
is spoken as:

The BEAST/ that BEARS/ me TIR/ ed WITH/ my WOE

The rule of thumb is that if the line has ten syllables then it will fit iambic pentameter.