

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Sonnet



A sonnet is a type of poem with the following characteristics:

- It is fourteen lines long
- It has a fixed rhyme scheme
- Sonnets often use iambic pentameter: five sets of unstressed syllables followed by stressed syllables so that there are ten syllables in each line.

The example of iambic pentameter below is a line from Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*. Say the line quietly to yourself. Can you hear the way that you naturally stress the syllables?

˘ / Two house	˘ / holds both	˘ / alike	˘ / in dig	˘ / nity
one foot	one foot	one foot	one foot	one foot

one line of iambic pentameter

The word sonnet comes from the Old Occitan\* phrase *sonet* meaning "little song." Although the Italian poet Giacomo da Lentini invented the form during the 1200s, some of the best known sonnets were written by the English poet, William Shakespeare.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the assigned sonnet. Identify each of the three characteristics of a sonnet listed above.

\* A language widely spoken and written in southern France and parts of Italy up until the French Revolution.