

Iambic Pentameter

Sonnets are often written in a meter called 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

DIRECTIONS: Practice writing lines in iambic pentameter. Write one unstressed and stressed "foot" in each box.



˘ /	˘ /	˘ /	˘ /	˘ /

˘ /	˘ /	˘ /	˘ /	˘ /