



## The 5-STRESS-4-BEAT STRUCTURE SYLLABIC RHYTHMS and PENTAMETER

Markings developed by Kate Reese Hurd  
as in the report, *Revealing the Music of Pentameter*

**Syllabic markings** for shaping the *upper* rhythm of the lines in relation to the metrical *lower* rhythm:

- x = first syllable is heavy: xmeasure
- ˘ = first syllable is light or short: ˘celestial
- x˘ = move from heavy to light quickly: x˘kitt'ns
- ˘x = move from light to heavy quickly: ˘xbedeck
- = syllable is longer: x˘dazzling x˘minnows
- = dot lengthens a syllable to create a dotted skipping rhythm, as in music: x•stalked 'n caught =  x•pause 'n fall = 
- | = articulate between words: cinched|cellophane
- [a] = intentionally unspoken syllable: [a]'way

**Pentameter is a formative musical-metrical structure.** *The relationship of the five stresses to the four-beat measure of each line of blank verse is a lively one.* Note which stress lands on each of the four beats; write the beat number under that syllable and place a broken vertical before the syllable that falls on the third beat, to demarcate the middle of the 4/4 measure. The fifth stress will land *between* two beats (usually on the half-beat). Hence it can

sound in varied places within the stream of the 4/4 time. Here are just the most basic possibilities. Where the fifth stress lands is marked with + :

1	2	3	+	4	
1	2	3		4	+
<hr/>					
1	+	2		3	4
1		2	+	3	4
<hr/>					
1	+	2	+	3	(4 is empty)
1		(2 is empty)		3	+
					4
					+



The first thing to notice is that one half of the measure will have more stresses sounding in it than the other does, because one (or maybe more) of the stresses falls on a half-beat. *A beautiful musical differentiation arises naturally: the stresses in one half come more quickly than those in the other, crowding that part of the measure, the line. Syllables shorten or lengthen and vary in weight accordingly, creating rhythmic complexity.* In this novel relationship between the rhythmic iambic units and the beat structure, the iambic feet do not *walk* on the beats one-to-one, the way the metrical feet of other meters do, such as in tetrameter and hexameter (with its two caesuras): the fifth iambic foot is freed; and it calls for sensitive musical handling. Blank verse is *poetry*, distinct from the prose narrative and dialogue in the plays; and as Rudolf Steiner said, poems are scores that need to be fathomed and brought to expression, just as in music (see “Poetry and the Art of Speech,” April 6, 1921 lecture, Dornach).

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

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