Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too short a date.

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;

And every fair from fair some time declines,

By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade

Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;

Nor shall Death brag thou wand rest in his shade,

When in eternal lines to time thou grow`st:

So long as men can breath or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

The sonnets comprise four stanzas of three <u>quatrains</u> and a final <u>couplet</u> composed in iambic pentameter with the <u>rhyme</u> scheme *abab cdcd efef gg*

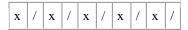
An iambic foot is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. We could write the rhythm like this:

da DUM

A line of iambic pentameter is five of these in a row:

da DUM da DUM da DUM da DUM da I	М
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We can notate this is with a 'x' mark representing an unstressed syllable and a '/' mark representing a stressed syllable. In this notation a line of iambic pentameter would look like this:



The following line from John Keats' ode *To Autumn* is a straightforward example: [11]

To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells

We can notate the scansion of this as follows:

X	/	x	/	x	/	X	/	X	/
То	swell	the	gourd,	and	plump	the	ha-	zel	shells

We can mark the divisions between feet with a |, and the <u>caesura</u> (a pause) with a double vertical bar ||.

x / x / x / x / x /

To swell | the gourd, | and plump | the ha- | zel shells