



L A U R E L L E A F
Poetry Terms and Scansion



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OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION

Laurel Leaf is a curriculum aid designed to help students learn some of the more common terms of poetic analysis and scansion and to give them the experience of reading some of the best loved English lyrics. The *Laurel Leaf* curriculum aid is designed to be self-explanatory as possible, a valuable supplement to the class's regular literary instruction.

DESIGN

Laurel Leaf is to be accessed primarily as an electronic document. The pdf is designed to be printed front and back on 8 x 11" copier paper. The best way to store the printed pages is in a three-ring binder or a pocket folder. Almost all of the content units are designed to be contained within a page's spread. The white space on a page is purposeful, serving to de-clutter the page so the content presented can be visually grasped more efficiently.

EXAM COPIES

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INDIVIDUALIZED TESTS

Teachers can elect to have their students take up to three exam provided by, and graded by, the *Laurel Leaf* editors. Each test is individualized in that, while the general level of difficulty of the tests remains the same, the specific questions of an exam have been altered from the questions on other exams so that each student must do his or her own work. Students must register for each test by sending an email for each test to laurelleafeditors@gmail.com expressing their intention to take the exam (see below). A test will be emailed to the student ten days before the deadline of the exam set either by the teacher or by the editors. The student emails his or her answers to the editors, who will grade them and notify the student of the correct answers and the grade. No late exams will be graded. Teachers can request a spreadsheet of the scores. The test is open-book.

Teachers can custom set the exam schedule by emailing their desired deadlines for the exams to the editors at laurelleafeditors@gmail.com. Or teachers can follow the default schedule:

Fall Schedule

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Exam A) Terms 1-15 | due 5 Oct |
| Exam B) Terms 16-30 | due 5 Nov |
| Exam C) Terms 31-45 | due 1 Dec |

Spring Schedule

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Exam A) Terms 1-15 | due 25 Feb |
| Exam B) Terms 16-30 | due 1 Apr |
| Exam C) Terms 31-45 | due 1 May |

Students who plan to take one or more of the exams should send an email requesting each exam separately. This way, a reply-thread is established for each exam, making it possible for the editors to track which exams have been sent to whom, and when they have been sent. The email

should include the student's name, his or her teacher's name and school affiliation, and can read something like this: "My name is John Doe. My teacher is Ms. J. Smith from Roanoke U. Please register me for Exam 2." The email can be sent anytime. The exam will be sent ten days before its custom or default deadline.

Since each test is graded by hand, please allow up to ten days for the test results to be determined and sent to the student.

COST

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SECOND, *Laurel Leaf* has exams you can order from the editors. Your teacher may request you to order one or more of these exams. You must order each exam separately by sending an email to the editors at laurreleafeditors@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name, your teacher’s name, and your school’s name in the request email. The email can look something like this:

“My name is Jill Suh. My teacher is Rob McDow from Miami U. Please send me Exam 2.”

Your test will come as a reply to this email, and you must submit the finished exam as a further reply to the test email. In this way an email-thread is set up that helps the editors keep track of test numbers and dates tests were given out and then received back.

These exams are given out and received according to one of two possible schedules—the default schedule set by the editors (see the current dates by clicking the “Schedule” tab at the “Textbooks” page at www.openlatch.com) or a custom schedule designed by your teacher. Please pay careful attention to the schedule. No exams will be given out on the day of an exam, so please request your test well in advance. All exams must be returned by 11:59 pm of the due date or earlier. No late exams will be graded.

NOTE: Only students who have purchased the pdf can request and submit exams.

THIRD, you may want to set up a new Gmail email box to make the testing process easier. Gmail has many formatting features which will help you when you have to underline, highlight, or italicize items in the tests. Also, a separate email box may help organize your work and keep track of upcoming tests. Go to www.gmail.com and click on the “Open a New Account” button. The process of setting up a new email box is surprisingly easy. Just don’t lose your new user name and password! (We recommend you send this information to yourself in an email addressed to your usual email box.)

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Notes on the Text

- The year after the author's name is the year of the poem's first publication.
- Glosses are marked with a single open square bracket.
[gloss
- When two words in the same line need glossing, the comments are separated by a comma.
[gloss on first word; gloss on second word
- Editorial interpretations or explanations of lines or phrases are placed within sets of parentheses.
(interpretation or explanation)
- At times, a word has been divided in order to make the boundaries of a foot clear.
He will not see me stop ping here *Example of iambic tetrameter*

TERMS

Term 1) Hyperbole (hi-per-bo-lee)

Hyperbole is a form of exaggeration to emphasize a point.

In the following poem, **John Donne** emphasizes the beauty of his mistress by claiming she is richer than all the valuable spices, metals, and gems that England imported from India. She is more precious than all the kings of the East combined.

“**Busy Old Fool, Unruly Sun**” (John Donne, 1633)

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| Busy old fool, unruly Sun, Why dost thou thus, Through windows, and through curtains, call on us? Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run? Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide Late school-boys and sour prentices, Go tell court-huntsmen that the king will ride, Call country ants to harvest offices; Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime, Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time. | 1 | |
| Thy beams so reverend, and strong Why shouldst thou think? I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink, But that I would not lose her sight so long. If her eyes have not blinded thine, Look, and to-morrow late tell me, Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me. Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday, And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay." | 5 | [cheeky [duties [climate, particular region |
| She's all states, and all princes I; Nothing else is; Princes do but play us; compared to this, All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy. Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we, In that the world's contracted thus; Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be To warm the world, that's done in warming us. Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere; This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere. | 10 | |
| Thy beams so reverend, and strong Why shouldst thou think? I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink, But that I would not lose her sight so long. If her eyes have not blinded thine, Look, and to-morrow late tell me, Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me. Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday, And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay." | 15 | |
| She's all states, and all princes I; Nothing else is; Princes do but play us; compared to this, All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy. Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we, In that the world's contracted thus; Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be To warm the world, that's done in warming us. Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere; This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere. | 20 | |
| She's all states, and all princes I; Nothing else is; Princes do but play us; compared to this, All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy. Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we, In that the world's contracted thus; Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be To warm the world, that's done in warming us. Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere; This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere. | 25 | [hypocritical; fake [compressed |
| She's all states, and all princes I; Nothing else is; Princes do but play us; compared to this, All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy. Thou, Sun, art half as happy as we, In that the world's contracted thus; Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be To warm the world, that's done in warming us. Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere; This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere. | 30 | |

Term 2) Paradox (pa-ra-dox)

A paradox is formed when apparently contradictory statements or claims are placed side by side and meant to be applied simultaneously to a single entity. At least one of the terms of the paradox must be taken in a figurative sense in order to save the sense of the passage.

Examples: “Her voice had a soft hardness to it.”

“Most men’s hopes lie upon poor riches.”

In the following poem, **John Donne** claims that the only way he will ever rise straight and true is for God to bend him down (humble, break him), that the only way for him to be truly free is for God to imprison him, and that the only way for him to be pure is for God to overcome him and ravish him.

“**Holy Sonnet XIV**” (John Donne, 1633)

| | | |
|---|----|------------------------|
| Batter my heart, three-person'd God; for you | 1 | |
| As yet but knock; breathe, shine, and seek to mend; | | |
| That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend | | |
| Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new. | | |
| I, like an usurp'd town, to another due, | 5 | [captured |
| Labour to admit you, but O, to no end. | | |
| Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend, | | [substitute |
| But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue. | | |
| Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain, | | [would gladly be loved |
| But am betroth'd unto your enemy; | 10 | [promised |
| Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again, | | |
| Take me to you, imprison me, for I, | | |
| Except you enthrall me, never shall be free, | | [lock me up |
| Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me. | | |

Term 3) Iamb Foot (aye-amb)

A foot is a unit of sound made up of a set number of syllables. An iamb is a unit of two syllables arranged so that a weak (unstressed) syllable comes before a strong (stressed) syllable.

Examples: trapeze → [tra **peze**] *the two syllables of an iambic foot*
 unfreeze → [un **freeze**] *the two syllables of an iambic foot*
 relief → [re **lief**] *the two syllables of an iambic foot*

Read the following poem by **Robert Frost** out loud. Iambic feet make up the poem. Feel the rhythm of the iambs as the lines are pronounced. The first and third lines have been formatted to help you get into the flow of pronouncing the iambs. The individual iambs have been shaded, their strong syllables bolded.

“**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**” (Robert Frost, 1923)

Whose **woods** these **are** I **think** I **know**. 1

His house is in the village though;

He **will** not **see** me **stop** ping **here**

To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer 5 [strange
 To stop without a farmhouse near
 Between the woods and frozen lake
 The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake 10
 To ask if there is some mistake.
 The only other sound's the sweep
 Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
 But I have promises to keep,
 And miles to go before I sleep, 15
 And miles to go before I sleep.

Term 4) Trochee Foot (tro-kee)

A foot is a unit of sound made up of a set number of syllables. A trochee is a unit of two syllables arranged so that a strong (stressed) syllable comes before a weak (unstressed) syllable.

Examples: happy → [**ha** ppy] *the two syllables of a trochee foot*
 clearly → [**clear** ly] *the two syllables of a trochee foot*
 water → [**wa** ter] *the two syllables of a trochee foot*

Read the following poem by **Ben Jonson** out loud. For the most part, trochee feet make up the poem. Feel the rhythm of the trochees as the lines are pronounced. The first, fifth, and seventh lines have been formatted to help you get into the flow of pronouncing the trochees. The individual trochees have been shaded, their strong syllables bolded.

“Come, my Celia, Let Us Prove” (Ben Jonson, 1607)

| | | |
|--|----|-------------------------------------|
| Come my Celia, let us prove, | 1 | [test, or enjoy |
| While we may, the sports of love. | | |
| Time will not be ours for ever: | | |
| He at length our good will sever. | | |
| Spend not then his gifts in vain; | 5 | |
| Suns that set may rise again, | | |
| But if once we lose this light | | |
| 'Tis, with us, perpetual night. | | |
| Why should we defer our joys? | | |
| Fame and rumour are but toys. | 10 | |
| Cannot we delude the eyes | | |
| Of a few poor household spies? | | |
| Or his easier ears beguile, | | |
| So removed by our wile? | | |
| 'Tis no sin love's fruit to steal, | 15 | |
| But the sweet theft to reveal; | | |
| To be taken, to be seen, | | |
| These have crimes accounted been. | | [To be caught or exposed is a crime |

Term 6) Feminine Ending

A line of poetry that ends in a soft or unstressed syllable is called a feminine line. More commonly, it is said to have a “feminine ending.”

Read the following lines by **John Keats** out loud. For the most part, the lines are composed of iambic feet. The third line is formatted to help you pronounce the stress patterns of the iambs you read the lines out loud. Notice that in the fifth line, there is an extra syllable after the last iamb. This syllable is not part of a foot and is not stressed. It is a feminine syllable and makes the line have a feminine ending.

“A Thing of Beauty Is a Joy for Ever” (John Keats, 1818, partial section from *Endymion*)

| | | |
|---|----|-------------------------------|
| A thing of beauty is a joy for ever: | 1 | |
| Its loveliness increases; it will never | | |
| Pass in to no thingness; but still will keep | | |
| A bower quiet for us, and a sleep | | [leafy shelter or quiet place |
| Full of sweet dreams , and health , and qui et breath ing. | 5 | |
| Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing | | |
| A flowery band to bind us to the earth, | | |
| Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth | | |
| Of noble natures, of the gloomy days, | | |
| Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways | 10 | |
| Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all, | | [death pallor |
| Some shape of beauty moves away the pall | | |
| From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon, | | [gift or aid |
| Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon | | |
| For simple sheep; and such are daffodils | 15 | |
| With the green world they live in; and clear rills | | [streams |
| That for themselves a cooling covert make | | [hidden area or niche |
| 'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake, | | [thicket |
| Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms: | | |
| And such too is the grandeur of the dooms | 20 | [destinies or myths |
| We have imagined for the mighty dead; | | |
| All lovely tales that we have heard or read: | | |
| An endless fountain of immortal drink, | | |
| Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink. | | |
| Nor do we merely feel these essences | 25 | |
| For one short hour; no, even as the trees | | |
| That whisper round a temple become soon | | |
| Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon, | | |
| The passion poesy, glories infinite, | | |
| Haunt us till they become a cheering light | 30 | |
| Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast | | |
| That, whether there be shine or gloom o'er-cast, | | |
| They always must be with us, or we die. | | |

Term 7) Dactyl Foot (dac-tyl)

A foot is a unit of sound made up of a set number of syllables. A dactyl is a unit of three syllables arranged so that a strong (stressed) syllable comes before two weak (unstressed) syllables.

Examples: tenderly → [**ten** der ly] *the three syllables of a dactyl foot*
 clearly → [**ca** rou sel] *the three syllables of a dactyl foot*
 water → [**ob** sti nant] *the three syllables of a dactyl foot*

Note: The word *dactyl* is Greek for “finger.” The main knuckle of a finger, followed by the smaller two knuckles leading to the fingertip, resembles the stress patterns of the syllables in a dactyl foot (large, small, small, or Strong, weak, weak).

Read the following lines by **Alfred Tennyson** out loud. Feel the rhythm of the dactyls as the lines are pronounced. The first, third, fifth, and seventh lines have been formatted to help you get into the flow of pronouncing the dactyls. The individual dactyls have been shaded, their strong syllables bolded. Note that many of the lines end in a foot other than a dactyl.

“The Charge of the Light Brigade” (Alfred Tennyson, 1882, partial section)

| | | |
|---|----|----------------|
| Half a league, half a league, Half a league onward, All in the valley of Death Rode the six hundred. | 1 | |
| "Forward, the Light Brigade! "Charge for the guns!" he said: Into the valley of Death Rode the six hundred. | 5 | [small cavalry |
| "Forward, the Light Brigade!" Was there a man dismay'd? Not tho' the soldier knew Someone had blunder'd: Theirs not to make reply, Theirs not to reason why, Theirs but to do and die: Into the valley of Death Rode the six hundred. | 10 | |
| | 15 | |

Term 8) Anapest Foot (an-a-pest)

A foot is a unit of sound made up of a set number of syllables. An anapest is a unit of three syllables arranged so that a strong (stressed) syllable comes after two weak (unstressed) syllables.

Examples: intervene → [in ter **vene**] *the three syllables of an anapest foot*
 understand → [un der **stand**] *the three syllables of an anapest foot*
 seventeen → [se ven **teen**] *the three syllables of an anapest foot*

Read the following lines by **George Gordon Byron** out loud. The lines are made up of anapest feet. Feel the rhythm of the anapests as the lines are pronounced. The first, sixth, and ninth lines have been formatted to help you get into the flow of pronouncing the anapests. The individual anapests have been shaded, their strong syllables bolded.

“**The Destruction of Sennacherib**” (George G. Byron, 1815)

| | | |
|---|----|---------------|
| The As syri an came down like the wolf on the fold , | 1 | |
| And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold; | | |
| And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea , | | |
| When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee. | | |
| Like the leaves of the for est when Sum mer is green , | 5 | |
| That host with their banners at sunset were seen: | | [army |
| Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown, | | [newly passed |
| That host on the morrow lay withered and strown. | | |
| For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast, | 10 | |
| And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed; | | |
| And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill, | | [grew |
| And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still! | | |
| And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide, | | |
| But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride; | 15 | |
| And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf, | | |
| And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf. | | |
| And there lay the rider distorted and pale, | | |
| With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail: | | [armor |
| And the tents were all silent, the banners alone, | 20 | |
| The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown. | | |
| And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail, | | |
| And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal; | | |
| And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword, | | [not struck |
| Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord! | 25 | |

Term 9) Spondee Foot (spon-dee)

A foot is a unit of sound made up of a set number of syllables. A spondee foot is usually two syllables of equally strong stress. At times, a third strong syllable can be added to a spondee to make a “triple spondee.”

Read the following lines by **Percy Bysshe Shelley**. The spondees have been shaded and bolded to illustrate the stress patterns. Notice that the poem opens with a triple spondee. A regular spondee begins the last stanza, if you pronounce *wild* with one syllable.

“**O Wild West Wind**” (Percy B. Shelley, 1819, partial selection from “Ode to the West Wind”)

| | | |
|---|----|------------|
| O Wild West Wind , thou breath of Autumn's being | 1 | |
| Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead | | |
| Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing, | | |
| Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red, | | [brilliant |
| Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou | 5 | |
| Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed | | [drives |
| The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low, | | |
| Each like a corpse within its grave, until | | |
| Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow | | [blue |
| Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill | 10 | [horn |
| (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air) | | |
| With living hues and odours plain and hill; | | |
| Wild Spi rit, which art moving everywhere; | | |
| Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear! | | |