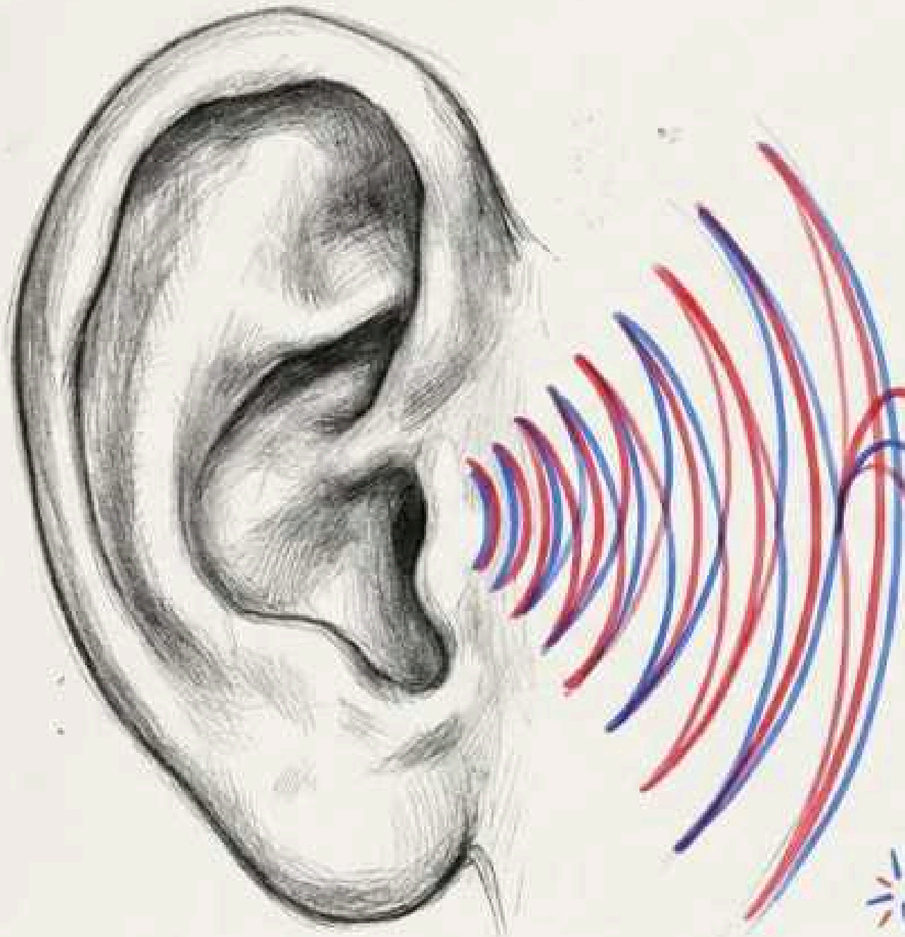
Poetry is an Art of the Ear

¶ 2.1

Theorem: Effects depend on the sounds of words and the patterns they make.
Even read silently, we hear poems in our heads.



fopan fuition...

[*l*] + [*ight*] = [*n*] + [*ight*]

[*moun*] + *tain* = [*foun*] + *tain*

Repetition of final stressed vowel & following sounds

¶ 2.2

The Spectrum of Rhyme

Perfect Rhyme

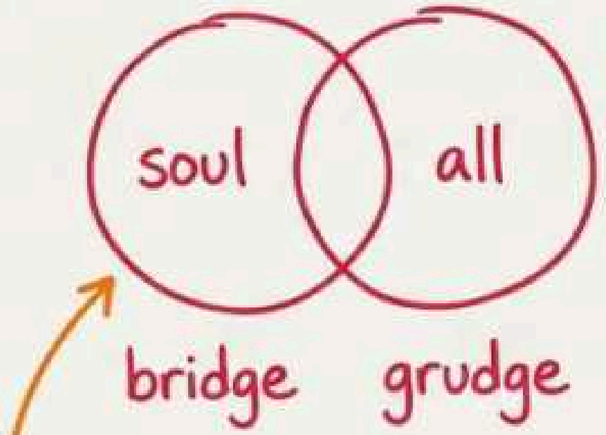


Perfect Rhyme

cat ↔ hat

Exact match

Slant / Half Rhyme



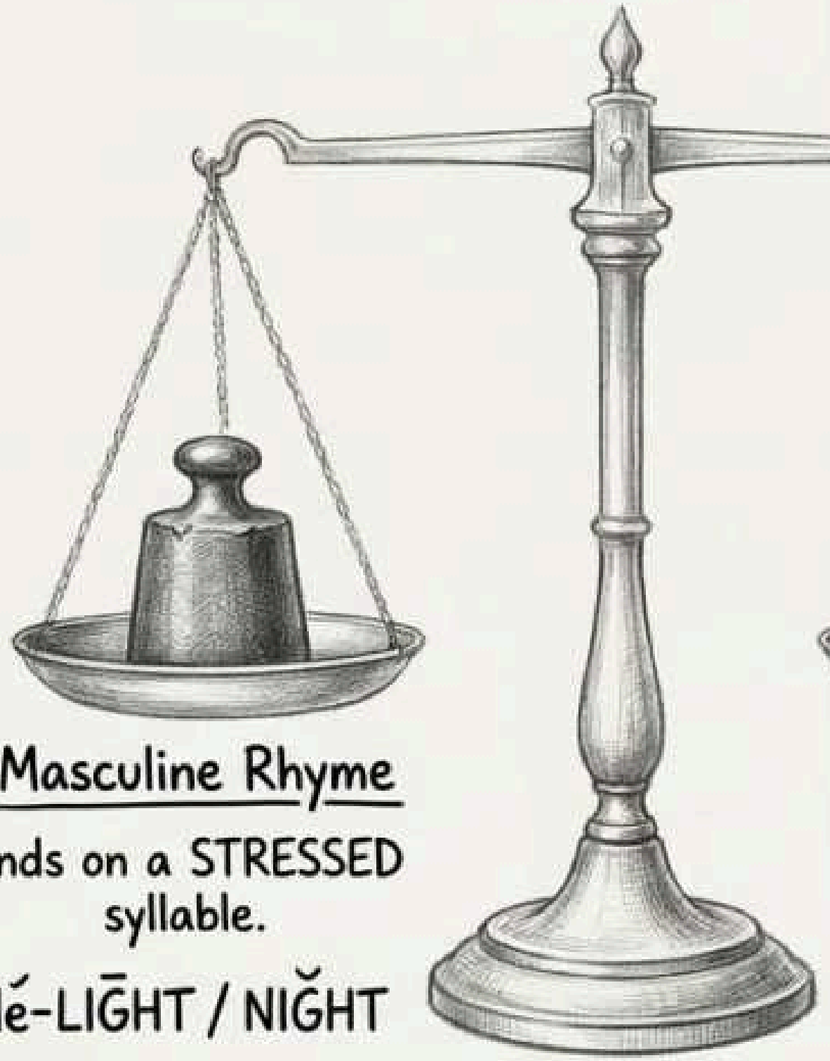
Emily Dickinson's signature: creates an unsettled, questioning sound.

Internal Rhyme

The fair breeze blew,
the white foam flew,
the furrow followed free.

Falls within a line, rather than at its end.

Weighing the Syllables and Scheming the Lines



often sounds lighter or comic.

Masculine Rhyme

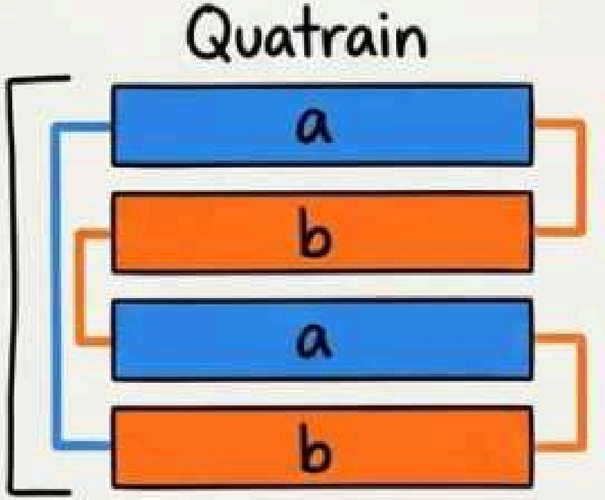
Ends on a STRESSED syllable.

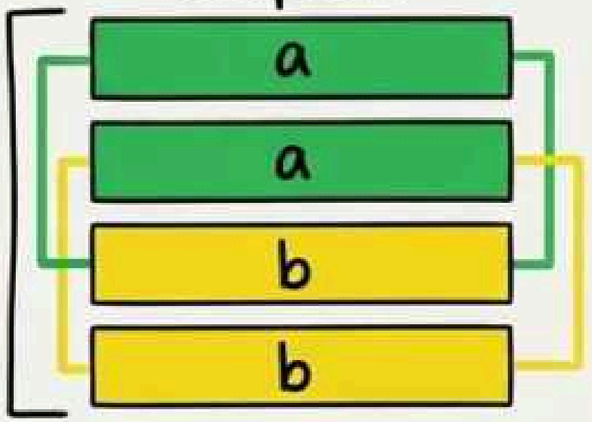
dé-LIGHT / NIGHT

Feminine Rhyme

Ends on an UNSTRESSED syllable.

MOUN-tain / FOUN-tain





¶2.4

The Proverbial Punch of Alliteration

when to the sessions
of sweet silent thought

Hushing effect

[Old English Foundation] → Stress + Alliteration = Proverbial Punch

Bed & Breakfast ✓

¶2.5

Knitting the Line with Internal Echoes



Assonance – Internal Vowels

thou still unravish'd
bride of quietness

Long vowels slow a line down.

Consonance – Internal/Ending Consonants

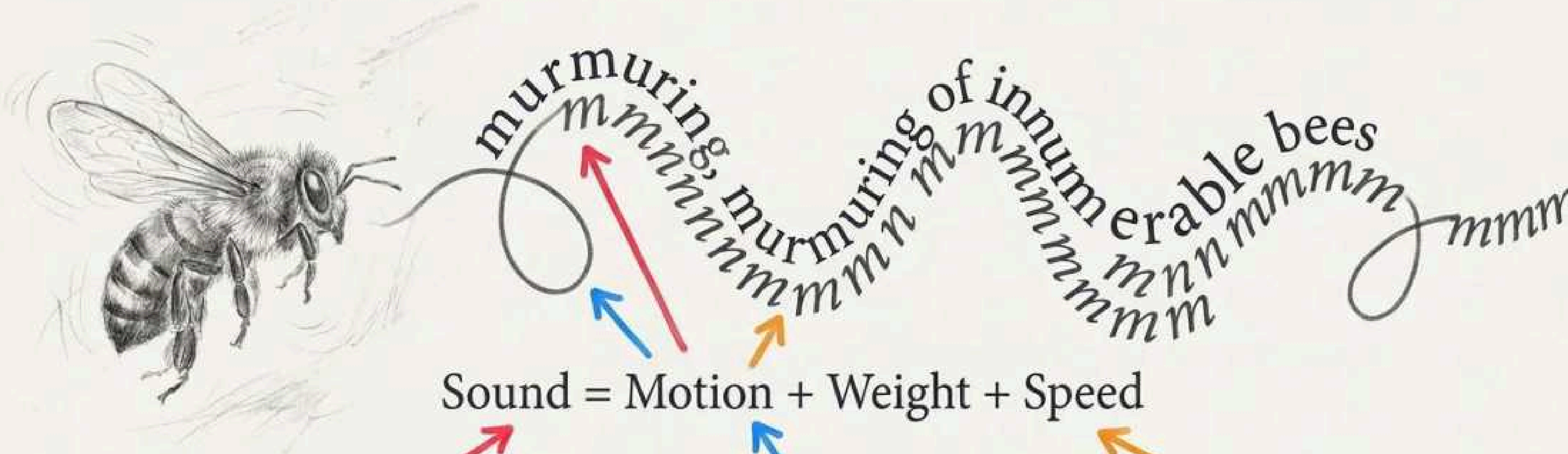
blank ↔ think

Short sounds quicken the line.

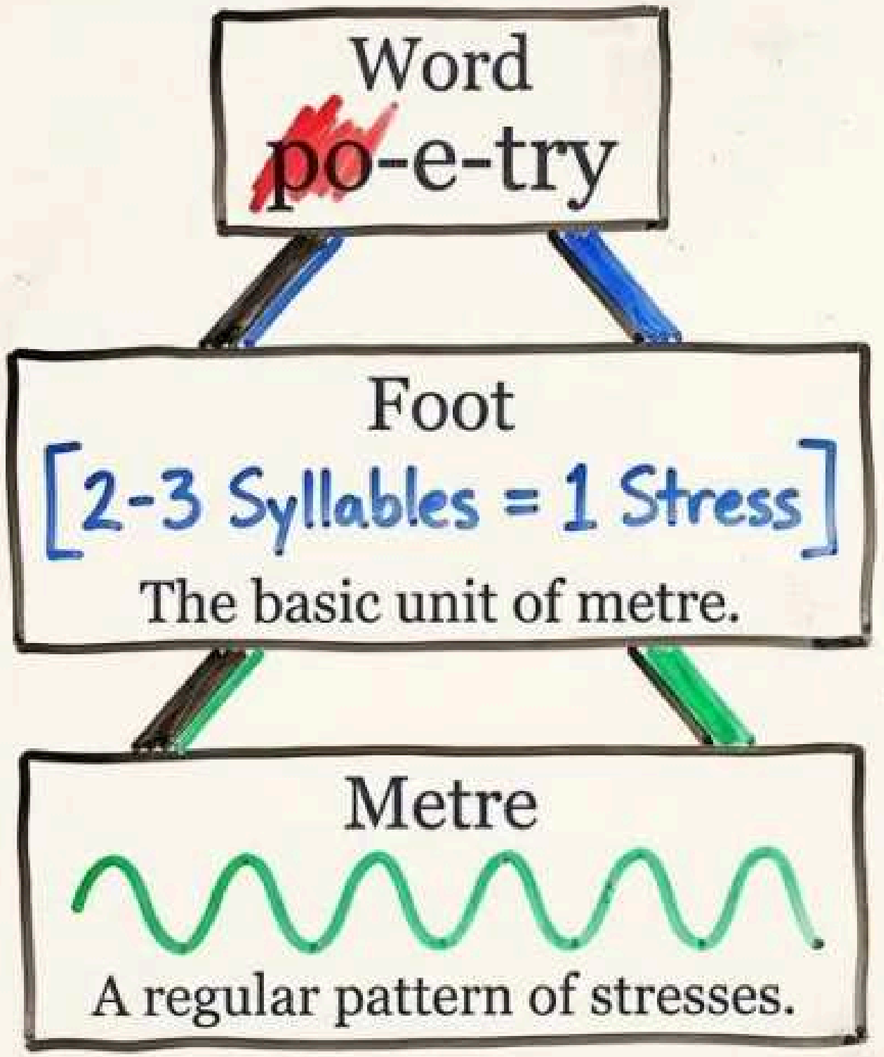
These subtle patterns knit lines together and create mood.

¶2.6

Sound as an Echo of the Sense


murmuring, murmuring of innumerable bees
mmmm

The Underlying Mechanics of Rhythm



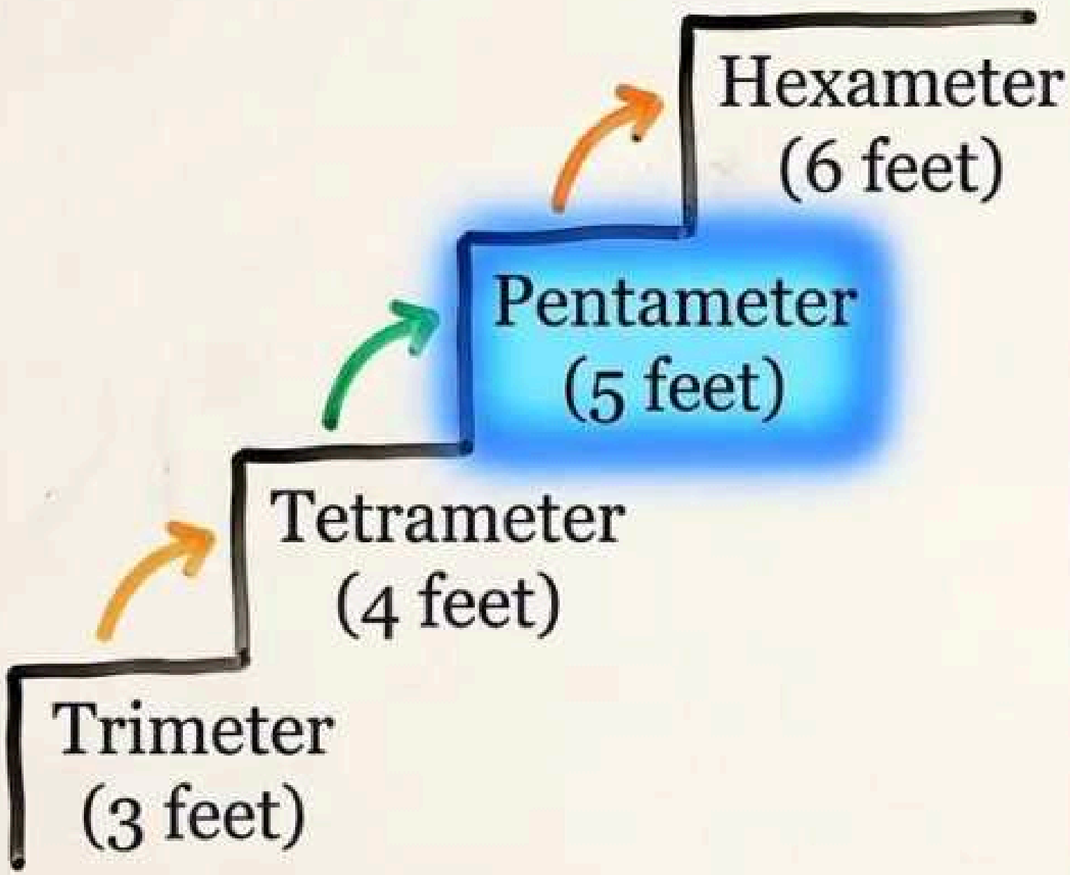
¶2.8

The Four Pillars of Poetic Metre

Iamb  to-DAY (Most common in English)	Trochee  GAR-den
Anapest  un-der-STAND	Dactyl  PO-e-try

¶ 2.9

Sizing the Line from Trimeter to Hexameter



The Most Important Metre in English

5 Iambs × 2 Syllables = 10 Syllables

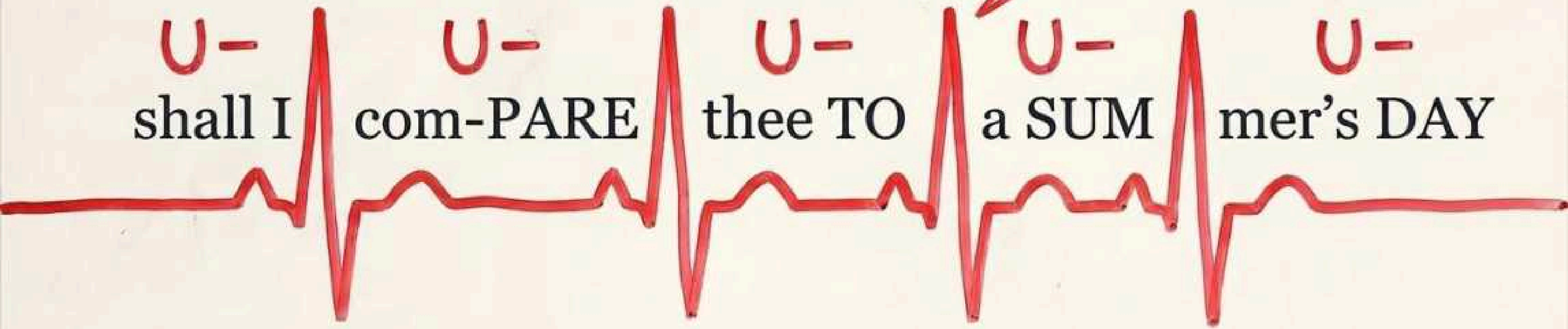
Iambic Pentameter

The architecture of Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth.

¶ 2.10

The Poetic Heartbeat of Blank Verse

The rhythm mirrors the human heartbeat.



Used in Shakespeare's plays and Milton's Paradise Lost →

Iambic Pentameter - Rhyme = Blank Verse

The Analytical Practice of Scansion

Step 1: Read the line naturally



↓

Step 2: Mark the stressed syllables

=

↓

Step 3: Divide the line into feet

||

Caution:
Do not force words into an unnatural rhythm.

Real poems vary their metre. The variations are where the meaning lies.

¶ 2.12

Breathing Life into Mechanical Metre

— ∪ at line start

Trochee

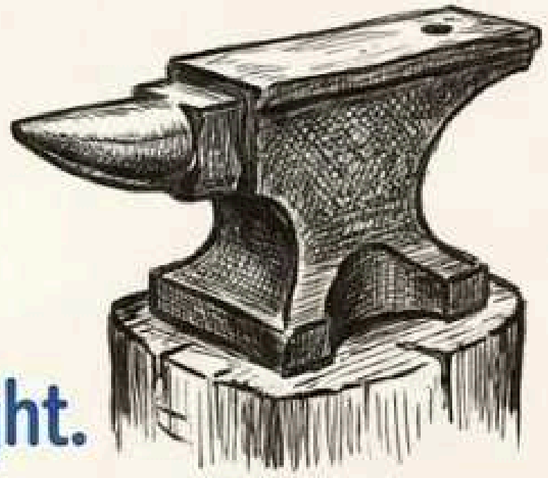


Urgent, strong opening.

— —

Spondee

Slows the line, adds heavy weight.



∪ ∪

Pyrrhic

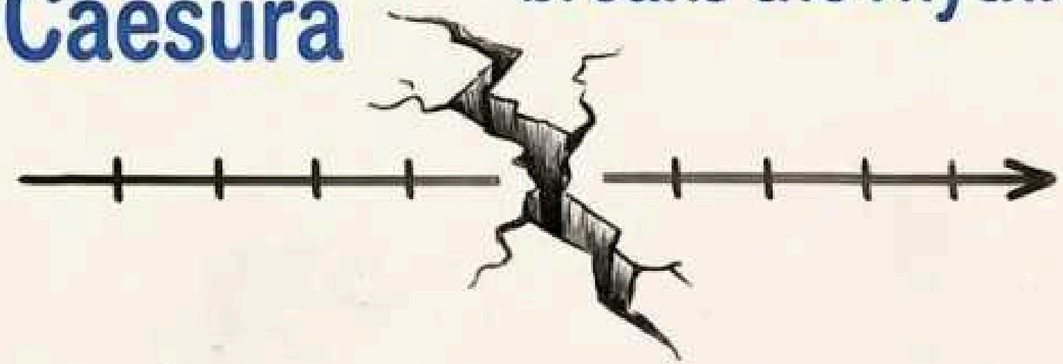


Speeds the line up.

||

Caesura

A pause that breaks the rhythm.



¶ 2.13

Matching Metre to Mood

Anapests & Dactyls



Galloping or Comic

Byron's *The Destruction of Sennacherib*

Trochees



Chants or Spells

The witches in *Macbeth*

Iambs



Closest to natural English speech

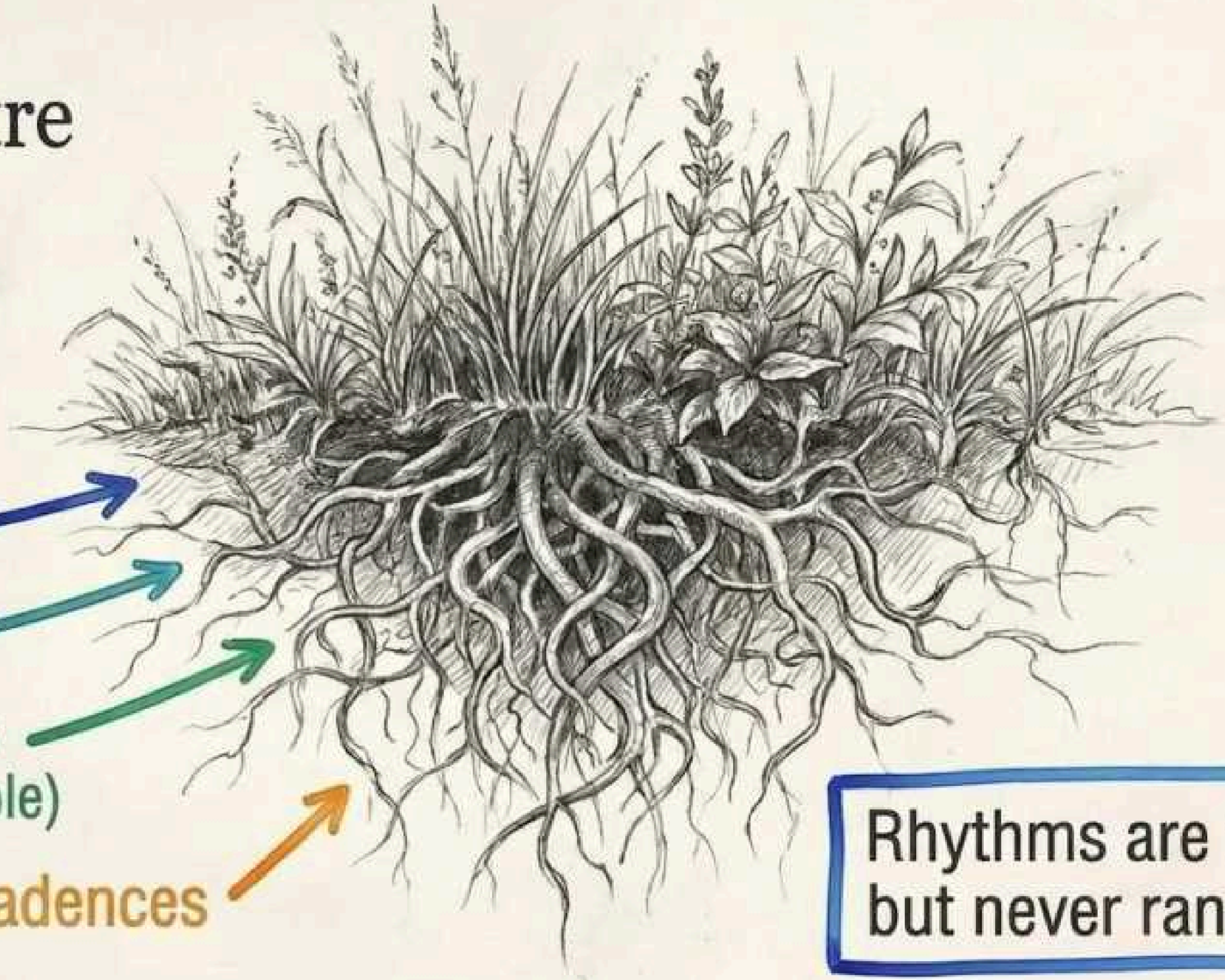
Most of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*

¶ 2.14

The Organic Architecture of Free Verse

[X] Regular Metre & Rhyme

[✓] Rhythm



Line breaks

Repetition

Parallel structures
(like the King James Bible)

Natural speech cadences

Rhythms are freer, but never random.

¶2.15

Reinventing the Rules: Sprung Rhythm



Invented by
Gerard Manley Hopkins
(1870s/80s)



Creates a crowded, energetic music packed with alliteration and internal rhyme.
Metre can be reinvented.

The Sprung Equation:

$$\left[\text{Foot} = 1\ \text{Stress} + [\infty\ \text{Unstressed Syllables}]\right]$$

Exercise in Constraint and Freedom

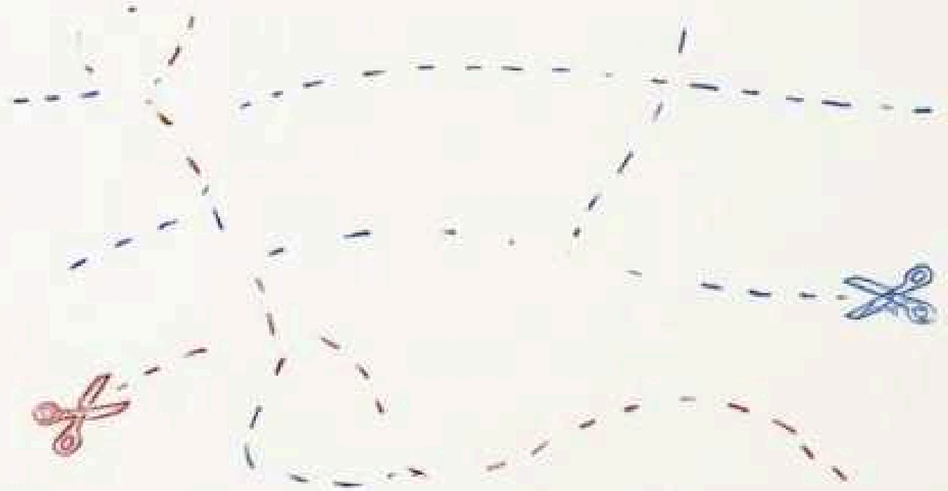
Workspace A (Constraint)

Write 4 lines of Iambic Pentameter about something you see right now.

Count 10 syllables. Check stresses by reading aloud.

Workspace B (Freedom)

Rewrite the same lines as Free Verse.



Break the lines wherever a natural pause feels right. Compare the music.

¶ 2.17

Mapping the Architecture of Poetry

