

Speech From A Midsummer Night's Dream

Shakespeare is using a pattern called iambic pentameter in this speech, and notice how he is also using rhyme. This means that every second syllable is stressed. Notice how Shakespeare does not always follow this exact pattern, and sometimes the first syllable and not the second is stressed (for example, the first word of the last line of the speech).

Every pair of lines rhyme, and this is called a couplet.

Have students recite the speech below, placing emphasis on the stressed syllables indicated.

The King doth keep his re-vels here to-
night.

Take heed the Queen come not with-in
his sight,

For O-ber-on is pass-ing fell and wrath
Be-cause that she, as her at-tend-ant,
hath

A love-ly boy stol-en from an In-dian
king;

She nev-er had so sweet a chan-ge-
ling.

And jeal-ous O-ber-on would have the
child
Knight of his train, to trace the for-ests
wild.