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Thanks, xkcd! Spoken language has patterns of stress, and you can construct utterances so these patterns fall into a regular beat, like iambics (weak/STRONG stress): well, I can **MEET** the **PLANE** at **TEN** of **SIX**. Penta (5) meter is when you have the weak/STRONG pattern repeated five times.

Other possibilities are trochaics (**Let** me **call** you **when** it's **over**), STRONG/weak; anapests (if I **call** from the **road** is that **good**?), weak/weak/STRONG; and dactyls (**I** do not **like** what you **said** to me), STRONG/weak/weak. And you can write lines in monometer (one metrical unit, rare); dimeter (like the dactylic example, two metrical units), trimeter (like the anapests, three units), or tetrameter (like the trochaics).

The goal of these exercises is to help **tune your ear** so you can hear and recognize some of the possible metrical patterns in English.

1: Arrange four or more nouns (you can use the grocery list below, the periodic table, or any such set of related nouns) into two lists that exhibit two different stress patterns. You can use “and” if needed!

Groceries:

leeks	rutabega	pinto beans	gomasio
Celeriac	carrots	prosciutto	furikake
broccoli	tomatoes	mozzarella	mayonnaise
Camembert	oranges	tofu	miso
Cheddar	jasmine rice	basmati	ketchup
lentils	oatmeal	chutney	injera
Swiss	granola	frozen spinach	(your groceries here)

2. Let’s imagine that the SHASS faculty play sports together – tennis, baseball, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, hockey, football, and so on – and you are writing about them. Using the lists of proper names below, write two sentences about their play roughly on the model of “X [did action] [to/with/for etc.] [object/person].”

E.g.: “Jim kicked the soccer ball to Wyn.”

BUT – a/ make them metrical (that example isn’t), and b/ try two different metrical patterns. “Ian passed the ball to Emma” would be an example in trochaic tetrameter (STRONG/weak x 4).

Hint: use polysyllabic words to make a start on the meter – the faculty names are grouped by the metrical feet they fall into. For a higher degree of difficulty, try working in monosyllables, which can play either weak or strong roles, depending on the sentence.

Names:

<b>(monosyllable)</b>	<b>trochee</b>	<b>iamb</b>	<b>dactyl</b>	<b>amphibrach*</b>
Jane	Emma	Joaquin	Kimberly	Diana
Pete	Shankar	Lisette	Christopher	Shigeru
Craig	Kenda	Michel	Harriet	Bettina

Word examples

<b>Verbs ;</b>	<b>Prepositions</b>	<b>Nouns</b>	
tackled	past	goal	hoop
played	on	hockey	goal line
ran	from	lacrosse	net

took	to	(the) ball	field
shot	at	puck	shot
passed	with	basketball	stick
dribbled	down	football	
hit		tennis ball	

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