

# Pure Meter

A poet uses “stresses” or “accents” in the words of the poem to create meter. Single-syllable words might normally be stressed, or they might not; little words like “and” and “I” and “the” are not usually stressed. But single-syllable verbs like “drive” are. In multi-syllable words, one of the syllables is usually pronounced more strongly than the others. For example, in the word “alive”, the second syllable is pronounced more strongly: “a-LIVE”.

In this exercise, you will use two made-up words to understand how meter works in a poem. The stressed word will be “blah”; the un-stressed word will be “bli”. Only the last line of each poem will contain a real word or words. To get the idea, read the verse below out loud.

Bli blah bli blah bi blah to drive  
 Bli blah bli blah alone  
 Bli blah bli blah bi blah alive  
 Bli blah bli blah bli home!



A particular combination of stressed and un-stressed syllables in a line of poetry is called a “foot”. In the poem above, each foot is composed of one un-stressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable.

1. How many feet are in the first line of the poem?
2. How many feet are in the second line of the poem?
3. Find the last foot in the first line of the poem. Write it on the line.
4. Find the last foot in the second line of the poem. Write it on the line.
5. Choose words from the Word Bank to complete each line of the poem below. The words you choose should have the same meter as the other feet in the poem. Write your words on the line. The second and fourth lines of your poem should rhyme.

Bli blah bli blah bi blah \_\_\_\_\_

## WORD BANK

Bli blah bli blah \_\_\_\_\_

suspense    right    audience

Bli blah bli blah bi blah \_\_\_\_\_

potato    the play    because

Bli blah bli \_\_\_\_\_!

