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## Scansion Practice

### Basic Review

Scansion is the act of scanning a line of verses to determine its rhythm or meter. In Latin, this means determining whether each syllable is long or short. Most Latin students first learn scansion in order to scan the dactylic hexameter present in poems such as Vergil's *Aeneid*.

Dactylic hexameter is a meter in which each line consists of six feet. Each foot is either a dactyl or a spondee. This meter is typically used for epic poems, such as *The Aeneid*, mentioned above. Here's the basic guide for scanning a line of dactylic hexameter:

- ̄ ̄ | - ̄ ̄ | - ̄ ̄ | - ̄ ̄ | - ̄ ̄ | - X

Different types of poetry use different meters. Another common meter that you may or may not be familiar with is elegiac couplets. Elegiac couplets, as the name suggests, are pairs of lines—one line of hexameter (scanned just like dactylic hexameter) followed by a line of pentameter (a line of five feet, or two groups of two and a half feet). Here's the guide to scanning the pentameter line of an elegiac couplet:

| - ̄ ̄ ̄ | - ̄ ̄ ̄ | - || - ̄ ̄ | - ̄ ̄ | -

If you would like a review of how to determine short and long syllables in Latin poetry, try <https://hexameter.co/how-to-scan>

### About the Authors

You may be familiar with scansion through authors like Vergil, Ovid, and Catullus, but many authors, inspired by the ancient verse, wrote Latin poetry in meter throughout the Renaissance and Early Modern periods as well. This scansion practice worksheet is unique in that it highlights the work of some of these authors. (For more information on these and other women Latin poets, check out *Women Latin Poets* by Jane Stevenson, from which the biographies of Morel and Memorata are paraphrased.)

**Camille de Morel (1547 - ca. 1611)** was born into the lower-aristocratic family of Jean de Morel in France. She was taught Latin and Greek by her educated mother, Antoinette de Loynes. Her mother also hosted a literary salon in Paris where she showcased the knowledge of Camille and her other daughters, Lucrece and Diane. Camille published occasional\* verse in Latin starting at the age of 12 and continuing throughout her life.

\*“occasional” in this context means “written for a specific occasion” like a birthday, death, or coronation.

**Anna Memorata (1612/1614 - ca. 1645)** was born in Poland to a family of Czech descent. Her highly-educated father, Andrzej Jakub, ensured that she was educated as well. She studied under Comenius (Jan Amos Komeňski) and learned Latin, Greek, Polish, German, and Czech. Many of her poems were written on the topic of important people.

**Caterina Imperiale Lercari Pallavicini (fl. 1721)** was marchioness of Mombaruzzo and a Neo-Latin poet from the greater Genoa region. Her work, which was published in the collections of the Pontifical Academy of Arcadia (Pontificia Accademia degli Arcadi), includes epigrams (short, witty, often satirical poems) and elegies (poems of serious reflection, written in elegiac couplets).

### Directions

Elegiac Couplets: Scan the Latin alternating between the hexameter pattern and the pentameter pattern shown on the previous page. The indented lines are always the pentameter lines. Make sure to work carefully and double check your answer when you're done with each line.

Dactylic Hexameter: *Only scan the lines that are not indented.* Remember that it is often easiest to work backwards through the line, marking the last two feet first. Make sure to work carefully and double check your answer when you're done with each line.

While you are scanning, be on the lookout for unique, Neo-Latin spellings or forms of otherwise familiar words.

Practice

**IN TYPOGRAPHIAM MVSARVM MATREM by Camille de Morel**

Carmine Musarumque Patrem, Musasque puellas

Cantemus, matrem Chalcotypenque Deam.

Chalcotypen omnis pulchrique bonique parente,

Dicamus nostro carmine Chalcotypen.

Namque omnes solus genuit Pater ipse Camoenas,

Non tamen ex una, matribus imo tribus.

Mnemosynae primum commistus fronte serena,

Edidit antiquam progeniem Aonidum.

Progenies sed enim brevis haec erat atque caduca,

Ipsa quidem pulchrae matris, at aevibrevis.

Concepit sobolemque aliarum deinde sororum

Ex Chirographia, Daedaleis-digitis.

His quoque vita fuit brevior, genitrice creatis,

Quae pariat longa pignora pauca mora.

Iamque fere occiderat reliquarum turba sororum,

Nullum unquam in terris, fors, habitura locum.

Ab Iove mortales miserato, ni meliorum

Tertia Musarum stirps reparata foret.

Quam sata Vulcano divaque Tritonide quodam

Nigra superciliis Chalco type genuit.

Quod genus Aonidum longos volvetur in annos,

Nempe ut athena qui sit genitrice satus.

Salvete o multum vates, & ametis athenas

Quas fecit Musas Dia Typographia.

***Magnifico, nobilissimo ac excellentissimo viro D. Christian-Theodoro Schossero by Anna Memorata***

Sol, oculus mundi, dum illustrat lampade terras,

Dat vitam, est vitae quicquid in orbe capax.

Et tu, Phoebe Pater, spaciosa Heliconis in arce

Collustras oculis quaeque minuta tuis.

Inter ego clarias quo tandem nomine digne

Sum memoranda tibi, sum numeranda deas?

Nam si plectra iubes grata tentare Thaliae,

Exiguus nostro pollice tactus abit.

Vis cultas artes? doctae vis carmina vatis?

Heu! vires tenerae me dare posse negant.

Dulcis Elisa dabit, Schurmanni et filia Belgae

Anna Maria, parum quae Memorata potest.

Fallor ego, aut fas est Heliconia numina falli,

Dum quaerunt clarias, est ubi nulla, deas.

***De Aranea in Lauro: An Elegy by Caterina Imperiale Lercari Pallavicini***

Pensilis argutâ desudat aranea lauro,

Visceribus nectens eruta fila suis.

Ac veluti gestet manuumque, pedumque coronam,

Desuper intextas itque, reditque vias.

Sed, dum Phæbeas super astitit inscia frondes,

Nil profecturum se ligat inter opus.

Stamine ab intexto surgit novus orbis, & orbis,

Et quæque est radiis orbita plena suis;

Atque adeo tensus, adeo subtilibus: ipsos

In morem ut credas prætereuntis acus.

Et iam surgit opis: medio stat aranea centro,

Ingenii iudex fiat ut ipsa sui.

Ite triumphales circum mea tempora lauri

Pene ait; apta sibi talia dona putans.

Bombices cedant; dat sibila serica vestis

Excussa ut dominum rideat illa rudem.

Ast, quæ de nostro textura est parta labore,

Circumdat lauros, auree Phæbe, tuas.

Vix ea: cum doctum mirata, Lycoris, Amyntam,

Laurea de arboribus vellereserta parat.

Atque huc accedens ubi pandit aranea telas,

Disjecit casses, Bellua nigra, tuos.

Quin te disjectam, & latebras tellure petentem

Irato attrivit territa Nympha pede.

Vanum opus exsufflat, ridensque coronat Amyntam;

Ignarum & vatem non sinit esse suum

Sit quale hoc sertum, qualis sit dextra Lycoris,

Vultu, inquit, capias tu satis ipse meo!

Dextra etenim puras effecit Apollinis umbras,

Nec passa est mediis bestiolam in foliis.

Ergo sacer vates tollas de versibus, oro,

Quidquid apud Lauros texit inanis Amor.

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