

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xv
<i>On using this book</i>	xviii
1 The rhythms of poetry: a first approach	1
<i>Reading poetry</i>	1
<i>Some basic terms</i>	3
1. Rhythm	3
2. Verse	5
3. Free verse	5
4. Meter and metrical verse	6
5. Beat	9
6. Some other terms	9
<i>Types of meter</i>	11
<i>Functions of rhythm in poetry</i>	11
1. The poem in general	12
2. Within the poem	15
<i>Summary</i>	19
2 The rhythms of spoken English	21
<i>Syntax</i>	21
<i>Syllables</i>	24
<i>Stress</i>	26
1. Word-stress	27
2. Phrasal stress	32
<i>Speech rhythms</i>	35
1. Syllables and stresses	35
2. Stress groups	38
3. Alternation	39
<i>Summary</i>	41

x *Contents*

3	Dancing language	43
	<i>The familiarity of meter</i>	43
	<i>How does language become metrical?</i>	48
	<i>The four-beat rhythm</i>	53
	1. The four-by-four formation	53
	2. Actual and virtual beats	58
	<i>Summary</i>	62
4	Stress verse and strong-stress verse: counting the beats	63
	<i>Stress meter</i>	63
	1. Beats and the scansion of stress verse	64
	2. Offbeats	66
	3. Demotion	70
	4. Promotion	74
	5. Quadruple verse	77
	6. Duple and triple meters	80
	7. Demotion and promotion in triple verse	82
	8. Rising and falling rhythms	85
	<i>Strong-stress meter</i>	87
	1. Old and Middle English	87
	2. Rap	90
	<i>Summary</i>	95
5	Syllable-stress verse: versatility and variation	97
	<i>Stress meter and syllable-stress meter</i>	97
	<i>Duple syllable-stress meter</i>	100
	1. Beginnings and endings of lines	100
	2. Rising and falling rhythms	106
	3. Beats and offbeats; demotion and promotion	108
	4. Inversion	115
	5. Free double offbeats	125
	6. Elision	126
	7. Emphatic stress	131
	8. Reading and scanning duple syllable-stress verse	134
	<i>Triple syllable-stress meter</i>	138
	<i>Foot-scansion</i>	140
	<i>Summary</i>	144

	<i>Contents</i>	xi
6 Major types of syllable-stress verse		147
<i>Four-beat verse</i>		147
<i>Resisting the four-by-four formation</i>		153
<i>Iambic pentameter</i>		159
1. Constraints on five-beat verse		159
2. The movement of five-beat verse		162
<i>Summary</i>		165
7 Free verse: metrical and rhythmic analysis		167
<i>Free verse and metrical verse</i>		167
<i>Metrical analysis</i>		172
<i>Rhythmic analysis</i>		177
<i>Summary</i>		181
8 Phrasal movement		182
<i>The importance of phrasing</i>		182
<i>Analyzing phrasal movement in a poem</i>		190
<i>Some basic principles</i>		199
<i>Phrasing in free verse</i>		202
<i>Summary</i>		209
Appendix 1: Scansion		210
<i>Scanning poetry</i>		210
<i>Single-line scansion</i>		213
<i>Double-line scansion</i>		213
Appendix 2: Glossary		216
Appendix 3: Sources of examples		226
Appendix 4: Suggested responses to the exercises		232
Index		268