



# SHAKESPEARE'S MONKEYS

Presented by Pam Makin

Poet in Residence April/May 2023

Adelaide City Library and Spoken Word SA

# THE INFINITE MONKEY THEOREM

*The Infinite Monkey Theorem states that, given typewriters and sufficient time, an infinite number of monkeys would eventually reproduce the complete works of William Shakespeare.*

*Among Shakespeare's published works were 154 sonnets.*

# WE ARE SHAKESPEARE'S MONKEYS

# NIINA MARNI

*City of Adelaide tampendi, ngadlu Kaurna yertangga banbabanbalyarnendi  
(inbarendi). Kaurna meyunna yaitya mattanya Womma Tarndanyako.  
Parnako yailtya, parnuko tappa purruna, parnuko yerta ngadlu tampendi.  
Yellaka Kaurna meyunna itto yailtya, tappa purruna, yerta kuma burro  
martendi, burro warriappendi, burro tangka martulyaiendi.  
Kumarta yaitya miyurna iyangka yalaka ngadlu tampinthe.*

# ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE

# IAMBIC WHATSANAME

## Workshop 1:

- Why Sonnets?
- Anatomy of a Sonnet
- Samples
- Meter
- Iambic Pentameter
- How We Speak
- Blank Verse



# WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT SONNETS?

---

- Compact
- Suit “universal themes”
- Ideal for prosecuting an argument
- Keep a poem contained
- Connect with history
- Challenge writing habits
- Create new thought patterns



# ANATOMY OF A SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET

*For the purposes of this project, we will be speaking primarily about Shakespearean Sonnets.*

*There are a lot of different kinds of sonnets.*

*Write your own however you want to.*



- Meter
  - *Iambic pentameter*
- Rhyme
  - *End rhyming*
- Fourteen lines
  - *Three quatrains, ending with a couplet*
- Other Features
  - *A single stanza*
  - *A single idea*
  - *Volta*

## SOME SAMPLE SONNETS

- Shakespeare's Sonnet 116
- Browning's Sonnet 43
- Shelley's Ozymandias
- Wordsworth's The World is Too Much with Us



# FEET, AND RELATED STRESSES



- Meter is the rhythmic repetition of stressed sounds
- Each group of sounds, containing one stressed sound, is a foot
- March: LEFT, right, LEFT, right...
- Waltz: ONE, two, three, ONE, two, three...
- Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks (Sonnet 116)
- I love thee purely, as they turn from praise (Sonnet 43)
- I met a trav'ler from an antique land (Ozymadias)
- The winds that will be howling at all hours (*The World is Too Much With Us*)

# IAMB, AND YOU MIGHT BE TOO



One **unstressed** sound  
followed by  
one **stressed** sound  
is called an  
**iamb**

# AT LAST!

Five iambic feet  
in a row make  
**iambic  
pentameter!**



# FIVE IS BETTER THAN FOUR

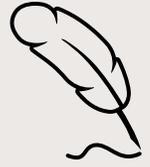


Our modern ears are tuned for four-beat rhythms:

- Nursery rhymes
- Children's books
- Australian bush ballads
- Comic verse
- Popular music

The addition of the fifth foot (beat) offers our brains something new to do. We switch off auto-pilot and take control.

*(Listen to Take Five by Dave Brubeck sometime.)*



## THE THINGS WE SAY THAT MIGHT BE PUT IN VERSE

- The aim of this activity is to produce lines of iambic pentameter.
- You are not seeking poetic excellence, or intellectual insight.
- You are seeking a five beat line:

*de DUM de DUM de DUM de DUM de DUM*

- Have a conversation about anything you want to talk about, and jot down likely lines.
- Check and adapt. Rearrange. Rewrite. Whatever it takes.



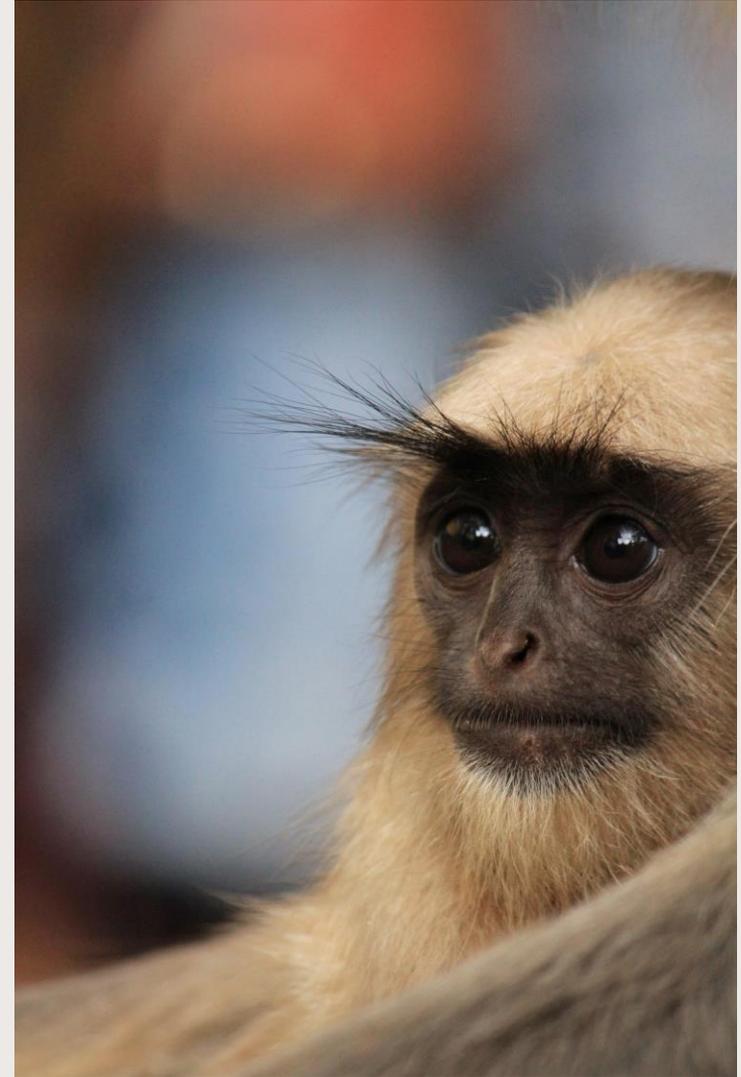
# BREAK



# BLANK VERSE\*

- Now put your lines together to form poetry.
- When, or if, you get to 14 lines that go together, stop.  
That will be your sonnet.

\*It's basically lines of iambic pentameter that don't rhyme.



# THERE'S MORE!

---

## Workshop 2: Some Poems Rhyme

*What even is rhyme? We all think we know, but do we?  
Do we need to?*

This workshop will focus on various forms of rhyme, rhyme schemes and their annotation, and other associated poetic elements.

**Wednesday 26 April 2023**

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

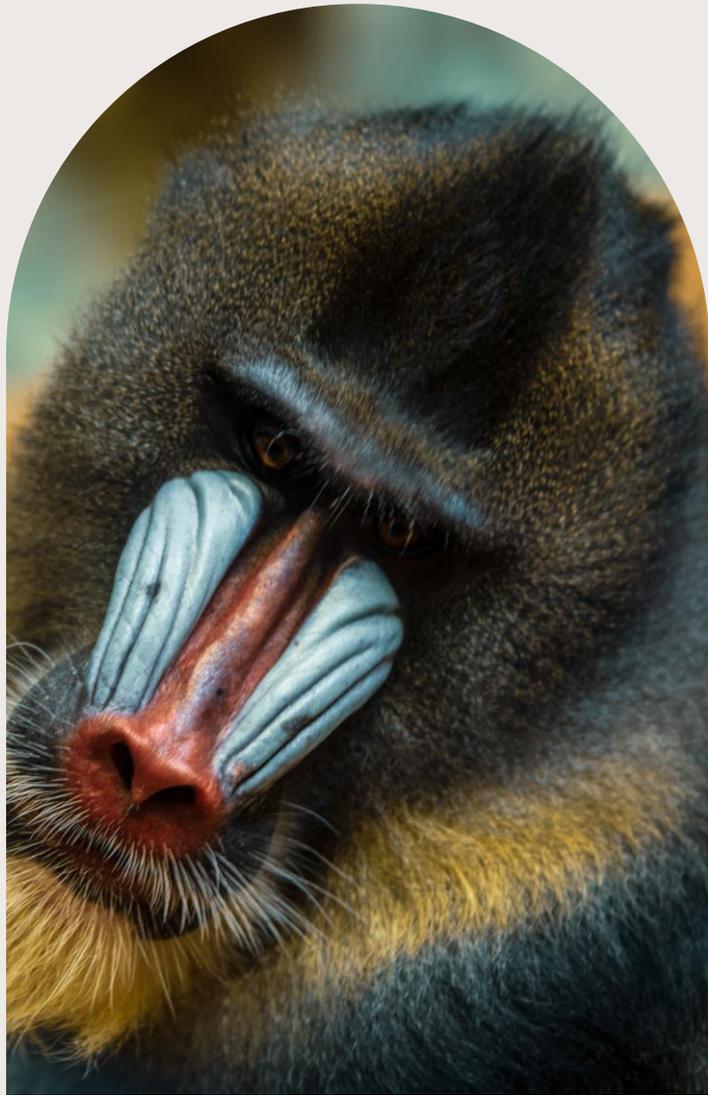
## Workshop 3: Doing Lines

*Guaranteed to be more interesting than doing lines at school, we will look at groups of two, three, four, and six lines. Unlike school, we stop at fourteen!*

This workshop will focus on how lines of poetry are put together in couplets, tercets, quatrains and sestets, and how these are in turn used to form a sonnet.

**Saturday 29 April 2023**

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM



# THANK YOU

[pammakin.com.au](http://pammakin.com.au)

[@pamthepoet](https://www.instagram.com/pamthepoet)

[FB/pamthepoet](https://www.facebook.com/pamthepoet)

Photos by Unsplash

Presented by Pam Makin

Poet in Residence April/May 2023

Adelaide City Library and Spoken Word SA