

Rewriting Shakespeare's Epitaph Using Iambic Pentameter

Please follow these assignment guidelines:

1. Write a minimum of six lines in iambic pentameter.
2. The first four may be in blank verse (or rhymed if you so choose), but you must end your poetic epitaph as Shakespeare did a scene--in an heroic couplet.
3. The tone of your epitaph must be eloquent and formal, paying serious homage to the literary contributions which Shakespeare made to the world. How you do this, however, is up to you. For example, you might choose to write your tribute using a metaphor, such as a golden pen. Or you could employ a simile, comparing Shakespeare's plays to the arias of heaven. Be as creative as you choose.
4. If you need to fudge to make the iambic pentameter work, you can cheat in the same manner Shakespeare did. Use **elisions** (word contractions) to eliminate a beat, or accent a silent syllable to add an extra beat.
5. Write out two versions of your final work: one regular copy and one divided into syllables and scored with the soft/stressed beats in iambic pentameter.
6. You may work on this assignment in groups of three.
7. Each group will be reading its completed epitaph to the class.
8. Scoring--20 points:
 - 10 points for appropriateness of content: grace, meaning, and creativity
 - 10 points for the technical accuracy of the iambic pentameter/heroic couplet

Good Luck! And have fun!