

Unlocking Shakespeare's Language - Classical Text Analysis

KCACTF workshop online, January 2022 - presented by Chrissy Calkins Steele

chrissy.steele@principia.edu

Verse or prose

Rhythm - Iambic Pentameter (- /); trochee (/ -); spondee (- -)

Long lines or short lines

Pauses or shared lines

Monosyllabic strings

Sounds in language – how do they affect you?

Alliteration – repetition of consonants (thinking)

Assonance – repetition of vowels (emotional)

Punctuation

Comma (,) – springboard to keep thoughts moving forward

Full stop (. ? !) – thought complete

Semi colon (;) – thoughts rushing forward, next thought more impassioned; think ‘and’

Colon (:) – next thought is more articulate, a better version or new twist; think ‘therefore’

Line Endings – length of a natural breath; length of a thought phrase

Use of “O” - ecphronesis - a sudden outcry of emotion

Repetition of words, phrases

Antithesis (or opposition)

Use of ‘You’ or ‘Thou’

Thou – spoken to a lover or inferior; also used for insults, to express anger or contempt;
deliberate refusal to use ‘you’, choice not to be polite

You – more formal, spoken to superior

Embedded Stage Directions

Banter

Thinking on the line

Direct address to audience