READING SHAKESPEARE

What does the story Green Eggs and Ham have in common with Shakespeare?

What about if you look at this speech taken from A Midsummer Night’s Dream:

*Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;*

*And therefore is winged cupid painted blind;*

*Nor hath love’s mind of any judgement taste;*

*Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste;*

What about when you look at the speech that we translated, (“Full of vexation I come with complaint...”), what do you notice:

-about how it looks?

-about how it sounds?

-are there any noticeable patterns?

-is it different than the speech above? How?

The truth is they are different, but perhaps not as different as you first assumed!

But first, you need to know some of the technical terms.

**Meter:** recognizable rhythm in a line of verse based on stressed and unstressed syllables.

**Foot/Feet:** the combination of strong stress and weak stress that reoccur in a line of verse.

**Iamb:** A specific type of “foot” that consists of two syllables, Unstressed, then stressed.

(da DUM) Unstressed is represented as a **U,** Stressed is represented as a/, so an Iamb looks like this (**U /** )

**Iambic Pentameter:** A ten syllable line that consists of 5 Iambs.

Now look at the two speeches? Notice anything?

As you may have guessed, Shakespeare writes in different forms:

1. Rhymed Verse:
2. Blank Verse:
3. Prose:

So now you should be able to identify exactly what you’re reading, and maybe even use to rhythm to help you read Shakespeare smoothly!