

# ACTIVITY: CREATE YOUR OWN SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET

**RECOMMENDED AGE: 13 and up**

**TIME: 30-60 minutes**

**SET-UP: None**

## **SUPPLIES:**

- **Internet Access**
- **Shakespeare's sonnets** (<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/Poetry/sonnets.html>)
- **Shakespeare Glossary** (<https://www.shakespeareswords.com/Public/Glossary.aspx>)
- **Writing supplies (pencil/paper or computer/smartphone/tablet)**
- **Optional: filming equipment (computer/smartphone/tablet)**

What is a sonnet? A sonnet is a poem of 14 lines and typically each line will have 10 syllables. Traditional Shakespeare sonnets have their own unique rhyming pattern, called **ABAB CDCD EFEF GG**. This means the first and third line rhyme together, the second and 4th line rhyme together, the 5th and 7th together, the 6th and 8th together, the ninth and 11th together, the 10th and 12th together, and the 13th and 14th together.

Explore poetry and Shakespeare by learning about sonnets and creating one of your own!

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Choose one of Shakespeare's sonnets using the link above.
2. Break down what each line means individually. For example, the first line of Shakespeare's first sonnet is "From fairest creatures we desire increase". What does this line mean? Continue to do this for each of the 14 lines in the sonnet. To help discover the meaning of the sonnet you've chosen, the link to the Shakespeare glossary above is a great resource.
3. Write a brief summary of what the sonnet is saying.
4. Thinking of the themes in this sonnet, write your own, following the same rules as Shakespeare.
5. Perform your original sonnet! If you want, you can film it yourself or have someone film you, or perform it live for your household or via video call for a friend.



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