

Shakespeare's Epitaph Project

Epitaph: a short poem or verse in memory of someone

Shakespeare's Epitaph:

Good Friends, for Jesus' sake forbear,

To dig the bones enclosed here!

Blest be the man that spares these stones,

And curst be he that moves my bones.

Assignment:

You will re-write Shakespeare's epitaph so it properly pays tribute to the greatest writer in the English language. Let's honor him properly, now that the threat of grave robbers is over.

1. Write a minimum of six lines in iambic pentameter.
2. The first four may be in blank verse (or rhymed if you 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 serious and formal, paying serious homage to the contributions Shakespeare made to the world. You can do this how you choose, for example, you can use a metaphor or a simile to discuss his writings.
4. You can fudge to make the iambic pentameter work just as Shakespeare did by accenting certain syllables that normally wouldn't be stressed, or using contractions.
5. Write out two versions: one regular copy and one divided into syllables and scored with the soft/stressed beats in iambic pentameter.