

## Section 13

### Poetry and Song Lyrics

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#### 13.1 Fundamentals

- 13.1.1 This section covers poetry written in prose, rhyme, and other configurations. It also covers lyrics written without musical notation, and the use of punctuation and shape as a poetic device. (See *Formats*, §15.5, Line-Numbered Poetry and §15.7, Poetic Rhyme Scheme.)
- 13.1.2 **A Braille Reader's Perspective.** Centering poetry in print is visually attractive. This material is often centered on the page as well as on the line. In braille, the material must first be found. Moving the material to the margin in effect helps to identify the basic form of the poetry by the use of margins.

#### 13.2 Poetry within Narrative Text

- 13.2.1 Follow print when poetry is embedded within narrative text.
- Retain font attributes.
  - Follow print use for either a slash or vertical line to indicate where one poetic line ends and another begins.
  - Follow print for spacing of symbols, which may begin or end a braille line. Identify the use of the symbols on the Special Symbols page, or in a transcriber's note before the text.

### Example 13-1: Poetic Lines within Narrative Text

... suggesting that “the trust Othello puts him in / On some odd time of his infirmity / Will shake this island”

⠠... ⠠suggesting ⠠that ⠠“the ⠠trust ⠠Othello ⠠puts ⠠him ⠠in ⠠/ ⠠On ⠠some ⠠odd ⠠time ⠠of ⠠his ⠠infirmity ⠠/ ⠠Will ⠠shake ⠠this ⠠island”

## 13.3 Poetry in Stanza or Verse Form

13.3.1 The indention pattern is based on the *entire* poem. The main entry begins in cell 1. Each subentry level begins two cells to the right of the previous level. All runovers begin two cells to the right of the farthest indented level.

One level: 1-3

Two levels: 1-5, 3-5

Three levels: 1-7, 3-7, 5-7

Four levels: 1-9, 3-9, 5-9, 7-9

etc.

- a. Leave a blank line before and after a poem. **Exceptions:**  
Do not insert a blank line between a cell-5 or cell-7 heading and the poem to which it applies. Do not insert a blank line between a cell-5 heading entry word and a poem in a glossary.
- b. A line of poetry may not be divided between braille pages.

### Example 13-2: Poem with One Level

My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,  
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the  
same,  
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,  
Hoping to cease not till death.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,  
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the  
same,  
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,  
Hoping to cease not till death.

### Example 13-3: Three-Level Poem

Glory be to God for dappled things—  
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;  
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;  
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;  
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough;  
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

Glory be to God for dappled things—  
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;  
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;  
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;  
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough;  
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

- c. Poems that are centered on the print page use 1-3 margins or are treated as displayed material and use the margin in effect. (See [Sample 13-1: Centered Poem](#) on page 13-13.)
- d. Use normal poetry indentation when print is deeply indented.

### Example 13-4: Poem with Deep Indentation

if the best of immortals really drives me on,  
Hera's lord whose thunder drums the sky!"  
So he shouted  
Lashing the rage and fighting-fury in every Trojan.

The Braille representation of the poem above is shown within a rectangular box. It uses standard Braille notation, including a page change indicator (a six-dot cell with dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) to indicate a new page or section. The indentation of the third line is represented by a series of Braille cells, likely using a heading or a series of dots to indicate the start of a new stanza or section.

## 13.4 Separation of Stanzas

13.4.1 Stanzas are difficult to determine at a print page break when a poem does not have the same number of lines in each stanza. Do not insert a blank line if it is not clear that there is a new stanza at the page break.

- Leave a blank line before each stanza or verse.
- Use cell-5 headings for stanza numbers.
- When a stanza begins at the top of a print page within a braille page, insert the page change indicator and leave one blank line before beginning the stanza.
- Leave a blank line at the top of the next braille page when a stanza ends on line 24 or 25 of the previous page. Start the new stanza on line 2 when a running head is not used, or line 3 when a running head is used.

(See [Sample 13-2: Poem with Stanza Numbers](#) on page 13-14.)

13.4.2 **Stanza Division.** When a page break would occur following the first line of a stanza, take the entire stanza to the next braille page.

## 13.5 Shape Poetry

13.5.1 A shape poem is one that has its lines arranged to represent the shape of an object or to suggest action, motion, mood, or feeling. When it is important to show the poem's shape or spatial style add a description in a transcriber's note, or provide a tactile graphic.

- 13.5.2 Poetic lines are not always easy to determine in some shape poems. Use punctuation and change of thought as a guide. (See [Sample 13-3: Shape Poem](#) on page 13-16.)

## **13.6 Poems with Irregular Lines of Poetry**

- 13.6.1 Use normal poetry format when the indentions of irregular lines of poetry form a discernible pattern. (See [Sample 13-4: Poem with Discernible Lines of Poetry](#) on page 13-17.)

- 13.6.2 Treat the poem as a single level, using 1-3 margins, when the indentions of irregular lines of poetry have no discernible pattern or the poem uses uneven spacing. Some poems may need a transcriber's note of explanation. Sample:

The poem has inconsistent indention patterns, which are not reproduced.

or

The poem has multiple irregular indentions, which are not reproduced.

- 13.6.3 Use three blank cells to separate widely spaced words or phrases. Explain the blank cells in a transcriber's note. Sample:

Three blank cells indicate wide spacing.

(See [Sample 13-5: Poem with Uneven Indention and Wide Spacing](#) on page 13-18.)

- 13.6.4 When unusual combinations of punctuation marks and letters might create difficult reading:

- a. Use uncontracted braille. Use the grade 1 passage indicator and terminator around the entire poem. (See *UEB*, §5.4, Grade 1 Passage Indicator and §5.5, Grade 1 Terminator.)
- b. Insert a transcriber's note to explain the use of uncontracted braille. Sample:

This poem has unusual letter and punctuation combinations. Braille is uncontracted so punctuation can be identified easily.

(See [Sample 13-6: Embedded Punctuation in an Uncontracted Poem](#) on page 13-20.)

## **13.7 Prose Poetry**

13.7.1 Prose poetry is ordinary speech or writing without rhyme or meter. It is written in a narrative format that does not follow the normal rules for writing poetry.

- a. Precede and follow a prose poem with blank lines.
- b. Follow print for paragraph indentation.
- c. Ignore font attributes except where they are required for emphasis or distinction.

(See [Sample 13-7: Prose Poem](#) on page 13-21.)

## **13.8 Reference Marks and Notes in Poetry**

13.8.1 Transcribe references in poetry at the bottom of the print page, separated from the poetry by a note separation line. (See *Formats*, §16, Notes.)

Leave a blank between the end of a stanza, or the end of a poem, and the note separation line.

(See [Sample 13-8: Poem with Reference Marks](#) on page 13-22.)

## **13.9 Scansion, Accent, and Meter**

13.9.1 Scansion is the analysis of a poem's meter, and the marking of the stressed and unstressed syllables in each line. There are a variety of print symbols used for marking scansion, stress, and meter. Use the following guidelines when structuring documents with different print symbols than those used here.

13.9.2 Follow print for symbols and terminology when identifying stress symbols on the Special Symbols page, or in a transcriber's note before the text. (See *UEB*, §4, Letters and Their Modifiers and §15.2, Stress.)

13.9.3 Transcribe a poem that contains stress, scansion, or meter marks twice. Place the two versions on a single braille page if possible. The first version should include the title and author or other attribution.

- a. Use contracted braille in the first version; do not show scansion, accented letter(s), meter, or emphasis that indicates stress.

- b. Leave a blank line between the first and second versions.
- c. To help offset the second writing, transcribe the second version using cell 3 for the left margin and the standard nested list format.
- d. Transcribe the second version in uncontracted braille. Show all typeform, scansion, stress, and meter symbols.
- e. Follow print when stress and meter symbols are placed above the affected words. The symbols are placed above the first letter of the syllable to which they apply. To accommodate room for one-letter syllables immediately followed by another syllable, it is permissible to place the stress or meter symbol over the space or capital indicator which precedes the word.
- f. Blank lines are required preceding and following each line of the poem.

**Example 13-5: Diagrammed Scansion with Ictus (Slash) and X**

x	/	x	/	x	/	x	/	x	/
But	SOFT!	What	LIGHT	through	YONder	WINdow	BREAKS?		

Braille transcription of the poem with scansion symbols (X for stress, / for ictus) placed above the first letter of the syllable to which they apply. The transcription is in uncontracted Braille.

[Dot locator for “use” precedes grade 1 passage indicator standing alone. *UEB*, §3.14]

- g. Explain the two writings on the Transcriber’s Notes page when there are multiple locations in the volume that use this technique. If the technique is used in a single location in the volume, explain the usage in a transcriber’s note before the text. Sample:

The text is first shown without stress symbols, and then repeated with the appropriate symbols and no contractions. Stress symbols are inserted above the syllable to which they apply. Symbols used:

- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ Stressed syllable
- ⠠⠠⠠ Unstressed syllable

(See [Sample 13-9: Lines of Poetry with Stress Marks](#) on page 13-23.)

- 13.9.4 **Meter.** Each section between the slashes or vertical lines is a *foot*. Foot division can appear within a word. The *meter* is the number of feet in a line. A *caesura* indicates a long pause in the middle of a line.
- a. These symbols are used to represent the signs indicating meter or rhythmic pattern of poetic lines. Follow print spacing of symbols and punctuation.
  - b. Identify meter symbols on the Special Symbols page or in a transcriber's note before the text. Use the names given in print (if any) when identifying the symbols for these signs. The foot is usually the solidus or vertical line (pipe). The caesura is usually the double solidus or double vertical line.
- |    |      |                          |
|----|------|--------------------------|
| /  | ⠠⠠   | Solidus (foot)           |
| // | ⠠⠠⠠⠠ | Double solidus (caesura) |
|    | ⠠⠠   | Vertical line (pipe)     |
|    | ⠠⠠⠠⠠ | Double vertical line     |
- c. The foot and caesura symbols may begin or end a braille line when it is necessary to divide a line between braille lines. **Exception:** Do not break a line at a meter symbol when it is unspaced within a word.
  - d. A line break may not occur within a foot, e.g., between the vertical lines.
  - e. Contractions are *not* used in the second writing when some words are syllabified, and metered lines show only foot and/or caesura symbols. Contractions *are* used in the second writing when all words are not syllabified, and metered lines show only foot and/or caesura symbols.

- f. Titles and authors are shown with the first writing. Titles/authors are only included with the second writings if they include symbols of scansion, accent/stress, or meter.
- g. Attributions are shown with the first writing of the material and omitted in the second writing.

(See [Sample 13-10: Attribution with First Writing](#) on page 13-24 and [Sample 13-11: Sentences with Foot and Caesura Symbols](#) on page 13-25.)

#### Example 13-6: Word with Unspaced Internal Foot

All the | night sleep | came not u|pon my | eyelids

The Braille representation shows the poem with foot and caesura symbols. The first line is 'All the | night sleep | came not u|pon my | eyelids'. Below it are four lines of Braille, with some cells highlighted in grey to show specific symbols like the foot and caesura marks.

(See [Sample 13-12: Lines of Poetry with Stress and Meter](#) on page 13-26.)

- 13.9.5 **Diagrammed Scansion and Meter.** Follow print for spacing and punctuation of scansion and meter symbols when the text shows only a diagram consisting of accent/stress and meter signs with no lines of poetry. Use 1-3 margins for each diagrammed line.

#### Example 13-7: Diagrammed Scansion and Meter

The diagram shows the poem 'All the night sleep came not upon my eyelids' with scansion and meter symbols. The first line is 'All the | night sleep | came not u|pon my | eyelids'. Below it are four lines of Braille, with some cells highlighted in grey to show specific symbols like the foot and caesura marks.

## **13.10 Hymnals and Songbooks**

13.10.1 Many sponsoring religious agencies have established specific formats and guidelines for the transcription of hymnals and songbooks, both with and without music. General directives are provided below for transcribing songs or hymns that appear in nonreligious materials.

13.10.2 **Lyrics without Music Notation.** Use 1-3 margins.

13.10.3 **Lyrics with Music Notation.** Follow the rules provided in the *Music Braille Code* when transcribing music notation, as well as any lyrics shown with that notation.

Music notation may be omitted when lyrics of a song or hymn are accompanied by music notation for illustrative purposes only, and there is no intention for that notation to be used for practice or performance. Insert a transcriber's note to explain this omission. Transcribe the lyrics as directed below.

## **13.11 Titles, Hymn or Song Numbers**

13.11.1 Center the title or number of each hymn (both, if shown in print). Titles or numbers may be placed on line 1 unless a running head is used.

13.11.2 Information below the title.

- a. Block permission-to-copy notices in the fifth cell to the right of the material to which they apply, on the line after the title or heading. (See *Formats*, §9.5, Source Citations and Permission to Copy.)
- b. Leave a blank line following the title. List the information printed between the title and the song in the following order:
  - (1) Text centered below the title.
  - (2) Text printed on the left side of the page.
  - (3) Text printed on the right side of the page.

Use 7-5 margins for each item; do not leave blank lines between these items. Do leave a blank line before the beginning of the first verse. (See [Sample 13-13: Song Title with Additional Information](#) on page 13-28.)

13.11.3 When it is not possible to include the title or number (with any accompanying information) and at least *one braille line* of the first verse at the end of a page, begin the song or hymn on a new braille page.

13.11.4 **Songs with Verses**

- a. Transcribe verse numbers as cell-5 headings.
- b. Follow print for capitalization and punctuation of the verses.
- c. Omit hyphens that are printed between syllables unless they are intended to be part of the word.
- d. Use 1-3 margins for each line of the lyric. Use punctuation and rhyme scheme to determine each line of the lyric.
- e. When text shows the lyrics of the first verse—or any portion of a song or hymn—printed within the music notation and followed by the remaining verses printed in poetry format, the same format is used for *all* the verses. (See [Sample 13-14: Song with Verses](#) on page 13-29.)
- f. Follow print if the refrain or chorus is repeated.
- g. Follow print if only the word “refrain” or “chorus” indicates the repetition.

## 13.12 Samples

[Sample 13-1: Centered Poem](#), page 13-13

[Sample 13-2: Poem with Stanza Numbers](#), page 13-14

[Sample 13-3: Shape Poem](#), page 13-16

[Sample 13-4: Poem with Discernible Lines of Poetry](#), page 13-17

[Sample 13-5: Poem with Uneven Indentation and Wide Spacing](#), page 13-18

[Sample 13-6: Embedded Punctuation in Uncontracted Poem](#), page 13-20

[Sample 13-7: Prose Poem](#), page 13-21

[Sample 13-8: Poem with Reference Marks](#), page 13-22

[Sample 13-9: Lines of Poetry with Stress Marks](#), page 13-23

[Sample 13-10: Attribution with First Writing](#), page 13-24

[Sample 13-11: Sentences with Foot and Caesura Symbols](#), page 13-25

[Sample 13-12: Lines of Poetry with Stress and Meter](#), page 13-26







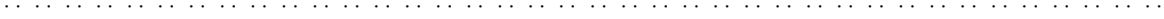




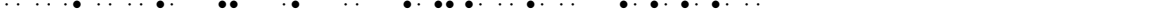
[Sample 13-13: Song Title with Additional Information](#), page 13-28

[Sample 13-14: Song with Verses](#), page 13-29

### Sample 13-1: Centered Poem

Presented here is a familiar example from one of Donne's songs:

Go and catch a falling star,  
Get with child a mandrake root,  
Tell me where all times past are,  
Or who cleft the Devil's foot;  
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,  
Or to keep off envy's stinging,  
And find  
What wind  
Serves to advance an honest mind.

10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20  21 

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

## Sample 13-2: Poem with Stanza Numbers

### A Victim

by Alfred Tennyson

#### I.

A plague upon the people fell,  
A famine after laid them low;  
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,  
For on them brake the sudden foe;  
So thick they died the people cried,  
'The Gods are moved against the land.'  
The Priest in horror about his altar  
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:  
'Help us from famine  
And plague and strife!  
What would you have of us?  
Human life?  
Were it our nearest,  
Were it our dearest,—  
Answer, O answer!—  
We give you his life.'

#### II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,  
And cattle died, and deer in wood,



### Sample 13-3: Shape Poem

Ampersand  
Patrick Winstanley



1 .....:.....  
2 .....  
3 .....  
4 .....  
5 .....  
6 .....  
7 .....  
8 .....  
9 .....  
Or

10 .....  
11 .....  
[\(Return to Text\)](#)

## Sample 13-4: Poem with Discernible Lines of Poetry

### Buffalo Bill's

Buffalo Bill's

defunct

who used to

ride a watersmooth-silver

stallion

and break onetwothreefourfive pigeonsjustlikethat

Jesus

he was a handsome man

and what i want to know is

how do you like your blueeyed boy

Mister Death

e.e. cummings

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

### Sample 13-5: Poem with Uneven Indention and Wide Spacing

## The Sky Was

by E. E. Cummings

the

sky

was

can dy lu

minous

edible

spry

pinks shy

lemons

greens coo l choc

olate

s.

un der,



### Sample 13-6: Embedded Punctuation in an Uncontracted Poem

brought allofher tremB  
-ling  
to a:dead.

stand-  
;Still)

from *she being Brand*, by e. e. cummings

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

### Sample 13-7: Prose Poem

*Tender Buttons* [A Chair]  
by Gertrude Stein

A CHAIR.

A widow in a wise veil and more garments shows that shadows are even. It addresses no more, it shadows the stage and learning. A regular arrangement, the severest and the most preserved is that which has the arrangement not more than always authorised.

A suitable establishment, well housed, practical, patient and staring, a suitable bedding, very suitable and not more particularly than complaining, anything suitable is so necessary.

...































11	
12	
13	
14	
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16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	































[\(Return to Text\)](#)





























### Sample 13-8: Poem with Reference Marks

This is the song that the truck drivers hear  
In the grinding of brake and shifting of gear,  
From the noise of the wheel and the clarion<sup>1</sup> horn  
From the freight and the weight;  
a song has been born:

<sup>1</sup>clarion (klar'-ē-ən): loud and clear.

14                              

15                              

16                            

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

### Sample 13-9: Lines of Poetry with Stress Marks

Seen from above, the sky

Is deep. Clouds float down there,

[illegible]

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

### Sample 13-10: Attribution with First Writing

I may / assert / Eter- / nal Prov- / idence.

And jus- / tify / the ways / of God / to men.

Milton, *Paradise Lost*, page 227, lines 25-26

1 .....  
2 .....  
3 .....  
4 .....  
5 .....  
6 .....  
7 .....  
8 .....  
9 .....  
10 .....  
11 .....  
12 .....  
13 .....  
14 .....  
15 .....  
16 .....  
17 .....  
18 .....

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

### Sample 13-11: Sentences with Foot and Caesura Symbols

Ah, dis | -tinct-ly | I re | -mem-ber || it was | in the | bleak De | -cem-ber;  
And each | sep-'rate | dy-ing | em-ber || wrought its | ghost u | -pon the | floor.

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

### Sample 13-12: Lines of Poetry with Stress and Meter

## William Blake

*The Piper* (first two stanzas) (Trochaic)

Píping down the valleys wild,

Píping | sǒngs | of | pléasant | glee,

On a clóud I saw a child,

And hē<sup>1</sup> laughīng<sup>1</sup> said tō<sup>1</sup> me:

"Ding-a-dong! ding-a-dong!"

Figure 1 shows a 20x100 grid of dots. The grid is divided into four quadrants by a vertical line at column 50 and a horizontal line at row 10. The top-left quadrant (rows 1-10, columns 1-50) contains a sparse pattern of dots. The top-right quadrant (rows 1-10, columns 51-100) contains a sparse pattern of dots. The bottom-left quadrant (rows 11-20, columns 1-50) contains a sparse pattern of dots. The bottom-right quadrant (rows 11-20, columns 51-100) contains a sparse pattern of dots. The grid is labeled with numbers 1 to 20 on the left side, corresponding to the rows.

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## Sample 13-13: Song Title with Additional Information

**Over the Rainbow**

Words by E. Y. Harburg      from *The Wizard of Oz*      Music by Harold Arlen

Some - where o - ver the rain - bow, way up high,

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

[\(Return to Text\)](#)

## Sample 13-14: Song with Verses

### *On Top of Old Smokey*

On top of old Smokey, All covered with snow, I lost my true love, By courtin' too slow.

2. Now, courtin's a pleasure,  
And parting is grief;  
But a false-hearted lover,  
Is worse than a thief.

3. A thief will just rob you  
And take all you have,  
But a false-hearted lover  
Will lead you to the grave.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14

[\(Return to Text\)](#)