

# I Am An Iamb Workshop – Anne Hering, Orlando Shakespeare Theater

## IAMB GAME TERMS & RULES

**"I AMB"** (swinging single arm gesture to right or left while knees bend)

- A metric foot (the basic rhythmic unit in poetry) created by one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, as in the words "to day," "hel lo" and "bal loon"
- Equilibrium of the game

**"End Stop"** (hands come together a little below the waist. Then the arms push downward while knees bend)

- A *period* at the end of a sentence
- Reverses direction of the iamb

**"Irregular Line"** (Arms raised meet above the head)

- An Iambic Pentameter verse line with more or less than 10 syllables
- Skips the next person in line.
- Can only be done once, at least one iamb must be said before another "irregular line" may occur

**"Energy to the end of the Line...."** (Send action through the hands. The right arm in front of the chest and the left arm clapping the right while following through with the action.)

- Keeping your vocal energy strong throughout the end of the verse line
- May be passed to any member of the circle
- If an "Allowed A Pause" is given to the person saying "energy to the end of the line" it is their job to keep repeating "Energy to the end of the line" (it may be directed to different people) until someone accepts by returning to iamb.

**"Allowed a Pause"** (both arms come to a "We surrender" position with each hand level with the corresponding shoulder)

- The rare time in Shakespearean verse when you can pause, usually before or after a short verse line
- Rebounds the "Energy to the end of the line" that has just been spoken

**"Alarms and Excursions"** (With the right or left hand, one bends knees and throws an imaginary snake on the ground)

- Common occurrences in Shakespeare's plays
- Must continue in the same direction as the iamb. Like throwing a cannonball on the ground.
- Each member must jump in the air when the cannonball passes under their feet when it reaches them (like "The Wave" at a baseball game)

**"Halt"** (Bends knees and picks up cannonball with either left or right hand)

- An order to stop
- The cannonball continues until it is picked up with a person choosing to say, "Halt"
- Any participants who jump post HALT lose the game.

**"THE DUEL"** Pick a Shakespearean play. Have the 2 finalists stand back-to-back. Call out names of Shakespearean characters. For each character named that IS in the chosen play, they are to take one step forward. If a character is named which is NOT in the chosen play, they immediately turn to draw, saying, "BANG!" The last player standing wins.

HAMLET Act II, Scene 2

*Exit Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

HAMLET: *Ay, so/ God bye/ to you./ - Now I am/ alone. (Iamb & End Stop)*  
*O, what/ a rogue/ and peas/ant slave/ am I!*  
*Is it/ not mons/trous that/ this play/er here,*  
*But in/ a fic/tion, in/ a dream/ of pas/sion, fem (Irregular Line)*  
*Could force his soul so to his own **conceit***  
*That from her working all his visage **wann'd**,*  
*Tears in his eyes, distraction in's **aspect**,*  
*A broken voice, and his whole function **suiting***  
*With forms to his conceit? and all for **nothing!** (Energy to the end of the line)*  
*For Hecuba! (Allowed a Pause)*  
*What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,*  
*That he should weep for her? What would he do,*  
*Had he the motive and the cue for passion*  
*That I have? ....*

## **SAMPLE DIALOGUE FOR PARAPHRASING**

*QUEEN GERTRUDE*

*Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,*

*And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.*

*Do not for ever with thy vailèd lids*

*Seek for thy noble father in the dust.*

*Thou know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die,*

*Passing through nature to eternity.*

*HAMLET*

*Ay madam, it is common.*

*QUEEN GERTRUDE*

*If it be,*

*Why seems it so particular with thee?*

*HAMLET*

*Seems, madam? nay it is, I know not seems.*

*'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,*

*Nor customary suits of solemn black,*

*Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,*

*No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,*

*Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,*

*Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,*

*That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,*

*For they are actions that a man might play,*

*But I have that within which passes show -*

*These but the trappings and the suits of woe.*