



-Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you,  
trippingly on the tongue

**THE  
ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION (OP)  
OF SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLISH**

by  
**PAUL MEIER**

**Based on the work of  
David Crystal  
in Early Modern English (EME)**

**with embedded sound files**

# ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION

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## THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET

I have used the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet to represent in the text the sounds you hear me making in the recordings. While only a few of my readers may be familiar with this alphabet, I have found that simply seeing the sounds represented visually this way strongly reinforces what you are hearing; and, as its name implies, the IPA, among many phonetic systems, has been the international standard since the early twentieth century.

When I was a student at the Rose Bruford School of Speech and Drama in London, I had a wonderful phonetics teacher, Greta Stevens, who painstakingly demonstrated the sounds in class until her students “fixed” the sounds associated with each symbol. We also were able to purchase the huge, old 78 r.p.m. discs with Daniel Jones, the father of the system, speaking the cardinal vowels. Under Miss Stevens’ superb tutelage, I took my studies as far as I could, culminating in the rigorous proficiency examination administered by the International Phonetics Association. It is a testament to her skill that, among those gaining the IPA Certificate of Proficiency that year, 1968, I was the high scorer. My love of phonetics and its ability to record the way humans speak has never diminished.

Things have come a long way since 1968, and, beginning with the fourth edition of *Accents & Dialects for Stage & Screen*, I was able to offer an online demonstration of the IPA, created by Professor Eric Armstrong, my colleague at Toronto’s York University. Eric created the Flash animation charts while I voiced all the sounds. My students have found it a delightfully easy way to learn the alphabet, and I am sure you will too. Whenever you want to hear a sound in isolation, or to compare it with a similar sound, these charts are the best way we know for you to accomplish this. You will find them on my Website at:

[www.paulmeier.com/ipa/charts.html](http://www.paulmeier.com/ipa/charts.html)

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## THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 1993)

### CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ			ʀ					ʀ		
Tap or Flap				ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

### CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
◌ ɸ	ɓ Bilabial	ʼ as in:
	ɗ Dental/alveolar	ɸ' Bilabial
!	ɟ (Post)alveolar	t' Dental/alveolar
≠	ɠ Palatoalveolar	k' Velar
	ʄ Alveolar lateral	s' Alveolar fricative

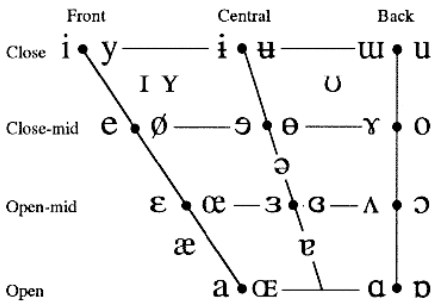
### SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ Primary stress	ˌ Secondary stress	ː Long	ˑ Half-long	˚ Extra-short	· Syllable break	ˌ Minor (foot) group	ˎ Major (intonation) group	˘ Linking (absence of a break)
ˈ	ˌ	ː	ˑ	˚	·	ˌ	ˎ	˘
ˈfounəˈtɪʃən								

TONES & WORD ACCENTS	
LEVEL	CONTOUR
↗ Extra high	↘ Rising
↖ High	↘ Falling
↔ Mid	↗ High rising
↘ Low	↗ Low rising
↘ Extra low	↗ Rising-falling etc.
↓ Downstep	↗ Global rise
↑ Upstep	↘ Global fall

### VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

### OTHER SYMBOLS

ɱ Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ɕ ʑ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
ʋ Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɺ Alveolar lateral flap
ɰ Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ɥ Simultaneous ʃ and X
ħ Voiceless epiglottal fricative	Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.
ʕ Voiced epiglottal fricative	
ʡ Epiglottal plosive	kp̥ ts̥

### DIACRITICS

Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ɲ̥

◌̥ Voiceless	◌̇ Breathily voiced	◌̄ Dental
◌̆ Voiced	◌̈ Creaky voiced	◌̆ Apical
◌̆ Aspirated	◌̆ Linguolabial	◌̆ Laminal
◌̆ More rounded	◌̆ Labialized	◌̆ Nasalized
◌̆ Less rounded	◌̆ Palatalized	◌̆ Nasal release
◌̆ Advanced	◌̆ Velarized	◌̆ Lateral release
◌̆ Retracted	◌̆ Pharyngealized	◌̆ No audible release
◌̆ Centralized	◌̆ Velarized or pharyngealized	
◌̆ Mid-centralized	◌̆ Raised	◌̆ Lowered
◌̆ Syllabic	◌̆ Advanced Tongue Root	◌̆ Retracted Tongue Root
◌̆ Non-syllabic		
◌̆ Rhoticity		

The chart above is reproduced courtesy of the International Phonetic Association.

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## STANDARD LEXICAL SETS

When studying a particular dialect, it helps to know that words in the same *lexical set*, to a large extent, are pronounced with the same vowel. So if you know the signature sound of the set and can assign to that set the word in which you are interested, you can pronounce it with some reasonable confidence of being correct. For example, *last, master, dance, pass, staff, basket, half, and demand* are all members of the *bath* lexical set. In Received Pronunciation (RP), for example, they are all pronounced with [ɑ], and in General American (GenAm) with [æ]. Leading scholar J.C. Wells developed the classification system now widely used by others in the field, and it is his classification and a shortened list of his sample words that follows. You may find the full discussion in his book, *Accents of English, Volume 1*, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

**KIT:** RP [ɪ]; GenAm [ɪ]; *ship, rib, dim, milk, slither, myth, pretty, build, women, busy.*

**DRESS:** RP [e]; GenAm [ɛ]; *step, ebb, hem, shelf, effort, threat, bread, ready, any, friend.*

**TRAP:** RP [æ]; GenAm [æ]; *tap, cab, ham, scalp, arrow, plaid.*

**LOT:** RP [ɒ]; GenAm [ɑ]; *stop, rob, Tom, solve, profit, honest, swan, waffle, knowledge.*

**STRUT:** RP [ʌ]; GenAm [ʌ]; *cup, rub, hum, pulse, butter, done, monk, touch, blood.*

**FOOT:** RP [ʊ]; GenAm [ʊ]; *put, full, cuckoo, good, woman, could.*

**BATH:** RP [ɑ]; GenAm [æ]; *staff, path, brass, clasp, blast, ask, after, master, basket, fasten, laugh, dance, grant, branch, demand, example, chancel, calf, shan't, Iraq.*  
And some words that, in RP, can be either *trap* or *bath* words: *chaff, plastic, lather, contralto.*

**CLOTH:** RP [ɒ]; GenAm [ɑ] or [ɔə]; *off, cough, froth, cross, soft, often, Australia, gone, moth, long, accost, foster, wash, origin, borrow, florid, horrid, Morris, sorrow, Lawrence, quarrel.* (N.B. There is great variability in GenAm among these words, which, for many speakers, may fall into the *lot* set, or into no standard lexical set.)

**NURSE:** RP [ɜ]; GenAm [ɜ]; *usurp, curb, turn, burnt, shirt, firm, myrrh, assert, verb, term, certain, earth, heard, rehearsal, work, worst, scourge, attorney.*

**FLEECE:** RP [i]; GenAm [i]; *creep, seed, seem, see, needle, these, shriek, ceiling, be, reap, bead, team, sea, feast, metre, complete, deceive, Caesar, phoenix, quay, police, mosquito.*

**FACE:** RP [eɪ]; GenAm [eɪ] or [e]; *tape, babe, name, change, taper, April, bass* (in music), *gauge, crepe, wait, day, rein, they, weigh, reign, great.*

**PALM:** RP [ɑ]; GenAm [ɑ]; *calm, bra, hurrah, Brahms, spa, Shah, cantata, bravado, Zhivago, Dali, llama, candelabra, Koran, khaki, enchilada, almond, Ghana* (N.B. This set is unstable and membership in it varies greatly from dialect to dialect, with *trap* being the leading other set to which words may be assigned.)

**THOUGHT:** RP [ɔ]; GenAm [ɒ]; *taught, naughty, ought, taut, applaud, autumn, gawp, jaw, chalk, all, bald, halt, alter, fault.*

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- GOAT:** RP [əʊ]; GenAm [oʊ] or [o]; *soap, road, note, robe, hole, so, noble, brooch, bowl, soul, colt, roll, sew, dough.*
- GOOSE:** RP [u]; GenAm [u]; *loop, mood, boom, boost, move, tomb, group, dupe, cube, plume, funeral, duty, flu, ludicrous, sleuth, sewage, fruit, view, beauty.*
- PRICE:** RP [aɪ]; GenAm [aɪ]; *price, tribe, time, Friday, indict, isle, hi-fi, type, eider, height, fight.*
- CHOICE:** RP [ɔɪ]; GenAm [ɔɪ]; *boy, noise, void, coin, poison, buoy, employ, hoist.*
- MOUTH:** RP [aʊ]; GenAm [aʊ]; *out, loud, noun, count, flour, crowd, dowry, bough, MacLeod.*
- NEAR:** RP [ɪə]; GenAm [ɪə]; *beer, here, bier, pier, weir, fear, fierce, weird, beard, serious, eerie, and RP and GenAm both use [ɪə] in idea, Korea, European, Sophia, museum, real.*
- SQUARE:** RP [ɛə]; GenAm [ɛə]; *care, air, bear, heir, their, there prayer, scarce, vary, canary, Mary, dairy, aerial.*
- START:** RP [ɑ]; GenAm [ɑ]; *far, bazaar, sharp, card, farm, snarl, party, heart, sergeant, aardvark, sari, safari, aria, Sahara, tiara.*
- NORTH:** RP [ɔ]; GenAm [ɔ]; *for, war, distort, orb, form, porpoise, orbit, normal, quart, Laura.*
- FORCE:** RP [ɔ]; GenAm [ɔ]; *ore, boar, floor, four, deport, afford, borne, portent, coarse, court, oral, glorious, uproarious. (NOTE: North and force, historically distinct, have merged in many dialects.)*
- CURE:** RP [ʊə]; GenAm [ʊə]; *moor, poor, dour, your, allure, gourd, tourist, assurance, mural, centurion, curious, during, Europe.*
- happy:** RP [ɪ]; GenAm [ɪ]; *happy, lovely, city, baby, spaghetti, tax, salami, movie, birdie, prairie, committee, coffee, money, valley, Chelsea, Swansea.*
- letter:** RP [ə]; GenAm [ə]; *father, batter, scorer, sinner, fisher, centre/center, meter/metre, tower, calendar, sugar, liar, mirror, pallor, survivor, odo(u)r, flavo(u)r, martyr, pressure, measure, failure.*
- comma:** RP [ə]; GenAm [ə]; *pajama, drama, sofa, quota, vodka, panda, saga.*

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## *Comma Gets a Cure*

A Diagnostic Passage for Dialect and Accent Study

by Jill McCullough & Barbara Somerville

Edited by Douglas N. Honorof

Incorporating the standard lexical set words of J.C. Wells.

Well, here's a story for you: Sarah Perry was a veterinary *nurse* who had been working daily at an old zoo in a deserted district of the territory, so she was very happy to *start* a new job at a superb private practice in *North Square* near the Duke Street Tower. That area was much *nearer* for her and more to her liking. Even so, on her first morning, she felt stressed. She ate a bowl of porridge, checked herself in the mirror and washed her *face* in a hurry. Then she put on a plain yellow dress and a *fleece* jacket, picked up her *kit* and headed for work. When she got there, there was a woman with a *goose* waiting for her. The woman gave Sarah an official lett**ER** from the vet. The letter implied that the animal could be suffering from a rare form of *foot* and *mouth* disease, which was surprising, because normally you would only expect to see it in a dog or a *goat*. Sarah was sentimental, so this made her feel sorry for the beautiful bird.

Before long, that itchy goose began to *strut* around the office like a lunatic, which made an unsanitary mess. The goose's owner, Mary Harrison, kept calling, "*Comma*, Comma," which Sarah *thought* was an odd *choice* for a name. Comma was strong and huge, so it would take some *force* to *trap* her, but Sarah had a different idea. First, she tried gently stroking the goose's lower back with her *palm*, then singing a tune to her. Finally, she administered ether. Her efforts were not futile. In no time, the goose began to tire, so Sarah was able to hold onto Comma and give her a relaxing *bath*.

Once Sarah had managed to bathe the goose, she wiped her off with a *cloth* and laid her on her right side. Then Sarah confirmed the vet's diagnosis. Almost immediately, she remembered an effective treatment that required her to measure out a *lot* of medicine. Sarah warned that this course of treatment might be expensive – either five or six times the cost of penicillin. I can't imagine paying so much, but Mrs. Harrison – a millionaire lawyer – thought it was a fair *price* for a *cure*.

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## THE ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION (OP) DIALECT

### INTRODUCTION

Based entirely on David Crystal's analysis, this is how the best scholars on the topic consider the Early Modern English (EME) of Shakespeare's own day to have been spoken. Read Crystal's full account of the fascinating experiment in OP performance at Shakespeare's Globe in England in his book, *Pronouncing Shakespeare*, and at his [Website](#), where you may also hear him demonstrate the dialect.

The question everyone asks: How do we know how people pronounced English in Shakespeare's day? Crystal answers this in full in his book, citing a combination of evidence based on (a) the rhymes and puns which work in OP but not in modern English, (b) the idiosyncratic spellings in the First Folio and Quarto, and (c) the descriptions of contemporary orthoepists, who often give real detail about how pronunciations were in those days.

(To play the accompanying sound track, click the following link.)

### [SOUND TRACK 1](#)

### SIGNATURE SOUNDS

1. Use of /r/. What surprises many is that Early Modern English (EME) was a *rhotic* dialect, with heavy *r-coloration* of vowels that are followed by /r/. The silent /r/ of today's Received Pronunciation (Standard British English) is a more recent development.

**EXAMPLES:** *nurse, start, north, force, letter, air, flower, Orsino, Ferdinand*

2. The *mouth* lexical set. This diphthong had a centered onset and started with the schwa, or neutral vowel, [ə], resulting in [əʊ].

**EXAMPLES:** *out, loud, noun, count, crowd, bough*

3. The *price* and *choice* lexical sets. This diphthong, too, had a centered onset and started with the *schwa*, or neutral vowel, [ə], resulting in [əɪ].

**EXAMPLES:** *price, tribe, time, Friday, isle, eider, fight, Viola; AND choice, point, boil, toy, ahoy, royal*



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4. The *goat*, *near*, *square*, *face*, and *cure* sets. These vowels, *diphthongs* (two-stage vowels) in RP and GenAm, were more *monophthongal* in EME. We would have heard [gɔ:t, fɪː, skɛː, fɛ:s, kɜː].

**EXAMPLES:** *goat, home, near, beer, square, bare, bear, face, stay, fatal, cure, tour, poor*

5. The *happy* lexical set. Crystal tells us that this unstressed syllable also had a neutral onset, like *price*, *choice*, and *mouth*. The result: [ə]

**EXAMPLES:** *happy, lovely, city, baby, money, Feste, valley*

6. The *strut* lexical set. Crystal suggests that the close-mid, back, unrounded vowel [ʊ] captures the likely quality of this vowel.

**EXAMPLES:** *cup, rub, butter, love, monk, blood, hum, summer*

7. The *trap* lexical set. Crystal suggests a more open, front vowel than today's [æ], similar to the [a] vowel we hear in the dialects of Northern England. He includes *any* and *many* in this, although they fall into the RP *dress* set today. *Any* and *many* are still pronounced today in much Irish English as they were in OP.

**EXAMPLES:** *trap, ham, scalp, arrow, Capulet, Malvolio, Andrew, battery, action*

8. Since the *lot* and *thought* lexical sets were pronounced without the lip-rounding of today's RP, Crystal directs us to the less rounded version spoken in mainstream American English. [ɑ] is the vowel he suggests.

**EXAMPLES:** *lot, stop, rob, profit, honest, swan, knowledge, want, watch AND daughter, awkward, ought, call, stalk*

9. Crystal cautions us to retain the lip-rounding of conservative RP [ʊ] in the *goose* lexical set, though he lists several words like *fool*, *conclude*, *tooth*, *proof* (today part of the *goose* set) for which he recommends [ʊ], which allows puns such as



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that in *thou full dish of fool* [ðəʊ fʊl dɪʃ əv fʊl]. This creates some difficulty over words like *blood* and other double-o words that are today part of *strut*. Confusion with words in the *foot* set (like *put, full, cuckoo, good, woman, could*) is also possible. Proceed with caution! It is probable that both pronunciations would have been current in Shakespeare's time.

**EXAMPLES:** *loop, mood, dupe, Juliet, funeral, duty, fruit, beauty*

10. Crystal addresses the *bath* and *start* sets together, telling us that [a] is the target (though r-colored [ɑ] in the case of *start* words, of course). Interestingly, words like *warm, war, quarter, and warn* – today members of the *north/force* set – were pronounced in EME identically to *start* words, which are all spelled with the letter /a/. He also lists *daughter* (now a *thought*-set word, and suggests [dɑ:tə].

**EXAMPLES:** *staff, path, brass, blast, ask, master, basket, AND start, heart, barn, sergeant*

11. Although we covered the heavy r-coloration of this dialect in signature sound #1, Crystal additionally asks for a slightly different vowel shape for the *nurse* set – slightly more open. [ɚ] is his suggested target.

**EXAMPLES:** *usurp, turn, mercy, shirt, assert, earth, worst, scourge*

12. The *fleece* lexical set (whose spelling nearly always involves the letter /e/) calls for the slightly more open vowel [e] or one even closer [ɛ].

**EXAMPLES:** *see, field, be, people, breathe, complete, Caesar, Phoenix*

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(To play the accompanying sound track, click the following link.)

### [SOUND TRACK 2](#)

#### ADDITIONAL FEATURES

- a. Crystal encourages us to be more casual in our diction than is the fashion in today's British stage speech, using lots of *elision*, *weak forms*, etc. For examples, the following words in unstressed positions should involve the weakest form possible (as indicated): *and* [ən], *as* [əz], *being* [bɪn, bən], *for* [fə], *he* [ə], *I* [a], *my* [mɪ], *mine* [mɪn], *thine* [ðɪn], *must* [məs], *of* [ə], *or* [ə], *them* [əm], *thou* [ðə], *thee* [ði], *thy* [ði], *to* [tə]. The speech is generally rapid – “trippingly upon the tongue,” as Hamlet counsels.
- b. Initial /h/ on *he*, *he's*, *him*, *his*, *him*, *her*, *her's*, in unstressed positions will be dropped. Hence: *what's his name* [wʌts ɪz ne:m], *who's her best friend* [huz ə bɛs frɛnd]. Crystal recommends /h/ dropping on more substantial words too, on occasion. He tells us that /h/ was very variable: It would be dropped by lower-class speakers generally, but upper-class speakers might drop it too without being penalized; everything would depend on the extent to which they had learned to pronounce following the spelling, as Holofernes<sup>1</sup> recommends.
- c. Medial /v/ and voiced /th/ [ð] consonants in some common words will be *elided*. Hence: *heaven* [hɛə̃n], *even* [iə̃n], *seven* [sɛə̃m], *eleven* [əlɛə̃m], *devil* [di:ə̃l], *hither* [hiə̃], *thither* [ðiə̃].
- d. Abundant *elision* of vowels. Crystal cites the following examples: *the unworthiest* [ðʌnwɜ:ðjəst], *delivery* [dəli:vɪəi], *leavening* [lɛvniŋ], *venomous* [venməs], *everybody* [ɛvɪbɔdi]. Often scansion of the verse line will alert you to a likely elision.
- e. *-ing* suffixes should be reduced to [ɪŋ]. No connotation of reduced social status attaches to this, as is often the case today. Hence: *calling* [kɑliŋ], *singing* [siŋiŋ], *praying* [prei:ŋ].
- f. /wh/ should be aspirated in words like *which* [mɪtʃ̥], *when* [mɛn], *why* [maɪ], *whither* [miðə̃], *whence* [mɛns], etc., where today's dominant pronunciation is [w]. (*Who* [hu], *whom* [hʊm], *whole* [hoʊ], etc., today pronounced with [h] do not get this treatment, of course.)
- g. Many polysyllabic words have a different stress pattern today than in EME. Particularly when these words are part of a verse line, the OP rhythm becomes important. Consider the three examples Crystal cites: *canonize*, *advertize*,

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<sup>1</sup> Holofernes is the pedantic schoolmaster that Shakespeare satirizes so cleverly in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

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gallantry. There's a very full list of such polysyllabic words in *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*<sup>2</sup>.

- h. Fuller soundings of *-sion* and *-tion* spellings [sɪən] instead of [ʃən].

(To play the accompanying sound track, click the following link.)

### [SOUND TRACK 3](#)

#### **SIGNATURE SOUNDS IN SENTENCE CONTEXT**

(Each sentence corresponds to the number of the signature sound on Track 1.)

1. Her father burned the letters in the barn on Saturday.
2. How now? Down in the mouth?
3. Annoying flies might fly noisily at night.
4. No fear where faint heart endures.
5. Silly Wally dallied near happy Sally.
6. Much luck becomes the one who loves.
7. Clarence married Anne and had a happy family.
8. I thought I'd stop at lots of naughty chocolate shops.
9. Whose new blue shoes do you view on Tuesday.
10. The master started asking his heart to dance.
11. Wordy Bert burned the dirty shirts on purpose.
12. He seemed deceived by brief dreams at sea.

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<sup>2</sup> *Shakespeare's Pronunciation* is the seminal work by Helge Kökeritz.

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(To play the accompanying sound track, click the following link.)

## SOUND TRACK 4

### COORDINATION EXERCISES

(The numbers under the text refer to the signature sounds needed.)

1. Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

7 3 4 a 6 1 4

ʃal əɪ kəmpeɪə ði tʊ ə sʌməɹz deɪ

2. But soft, what light through yonder window breaks?

6 8 f 3 9 8 1 a 4

bʌt sɔft wʌt laɪt θruː jʌndə wɪndə breɪks

3. If music be the food of love, play on.

9 a 9 a 6 4 8

ɪf mjʊzɪk bi ðə fuːd ə lʌv pleɪ ɒn

4. How happy some o'er other some can be.

b 2 b 7 5 6 1 6 1 6 a 12

əʊ ɹəʊi sʌm ɔː ɹðə sʌm kən beɪ

5. Now all the youth of England are on fire.

2 8 9 10 8 3/1

nəʊ ɔːl ðə juθ əv ɪŋɡlənd ɑː ɒn faɪə

6. Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

6 12 5 3 a b a 4 2

ʌneɪziːliːz lɪz ðæd ðæt weɪz ə kraʊn

7. Love looks not with the eyes but with the mind.

6 8 a 3 a a 3

lʌv lʊks nɒt wɪθ ði aɪz bʌt wɪθ ðə maɪnd

8. The quality of mercy is not strained.

8 5 a 11 5 8 4

ðə kwɒlɪtɪ ə məːsɪ ɪz nɒt streɪnd

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9. The man that hath no music in himself ... Is fit for treasons, strategems and spoils.  
7 a b a 4 9 b a/1 12 7 a 3  
ðə man ðæt aθ no: mjuzɪk ɪn ɪmsɛlf ɪz fɪt fə tɹe:zənz strætədʒəmz ɪ spəʊls
10. How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is / To have a thankless child.  
b 2 10 1 a 11 9 a b 7 7 3  
əʊ ʃɑ:pə ðən ə səpənts tu:θ ɪt ɪz tə av ə θæŋkləs tʃɪld

(To play the accompanying sound track, click the following link.)

### [SOUND TRACK 5](#)

#### MONOLOGUE ONE

From *King Lear*, Act 1, Scene 2

#### EDMUND

Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law

2 4 1 10 a 8 3 8

ðəʊ nəɪtʰə ɑ:t mi gədəs tʰə ðəɪ lɑ:

My services are bound. Wherefore should I

a 11 a 2 f 4 1 2

mi səvɪsɪz ə baʊnd ˌmɛfɔː ʃʊd əɪ

Stand in the plague of custom, and permit

7 a 4 6 7 a 11

stænd ɪ ðə pʰleɪg ə kʰʌstəm ən pʰɛmɪtʰ

The curiosity of nations to deprive me,

4 8 5 4 h 3 a

ðə kʰjʊrɪəsɪtʰəɪ ə nə:sjənz tʰə dɪpʰrɪv mi

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For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines

<sup>1 7 3 7 6 a/1 1 12 9 3</sup>  
fə ðat<sup>h</sup> əi am sʊm t<sup>h</sup>meɪv ə foʊt<sup>h</sup>e:n mʊnʃaɪnz

Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?

<sup>7 6 1 f 3 7 1 f 4 1 4</sup>  
lag əv ə brʌðə<sup>v</sup> məi bastəd məfə<sup>v</sup> beɪs

When my dimensions are as well compact,

<sup>f 3 h 10 g 7</sup>  
wɛn maɪ dɛmɛnsjənz ə əz wɛl k<sup>h</sup>əmp<sup>h</sup>akt<sup>h</sup>

My mind as generous, and my shape as true,

<sup>a 3 d 7 a 4 9</sup>  
maɪ məɪnd əz dʒɛnərəs and maɪ ʃe:p əz tru:

As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us

<sup>a 8 7 a f 3 7 4 6</sup>  
əz ʌnɪst madəmz ɪʃə məi brænd ðe ʌs

With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?

<sup>a 4 a 4 7 1 5 4 4</sup>  
wɪ beɪs wɪ beɪsnəs bast<sup>h</sup>ədəi beɪs beɪs

## ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION

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(To play the accompanying sound track, click the following link)

### [SOUND TRACK 6](#)

#### MONOLOGUE TWO

From *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act 2, Scene 1<sup>3</sup>

#### TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy:

<sup>12 10 1 5 a 5</sup>  
ðe:z æ ðə fɔ:ˈdʒəəri:z ə ˈdʒeləsəri

And never, since the middle summer's spring,

<sup>7 a 1 6 1</sup>  
æn nəvə sɪnz ðə mɪdl̩ sʌməːz sprɪŋ

Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,

<sup>12 8 b 4 8 a/1 12</sup>  
mɛt we: ən ɪl̩ ɪn deɪl̩ fɔ:ɪst ə meɪd

By paved fountain or by rushy brook,

<sup>a 4 2 a/1 a 6 5</sup>  
bɪ peɪvɪd fəʊntən ɔː bɪ rʌʃəri brʊk

Or in the beached margent of the sea,

<sup>1/a 12 10 a 12</sup>  
ə ɪn ðə beɪtʃɪd mɑ:ˈdʒənt ə ðə si:

To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,

<sup>a 10 2/1 a a f e</sup>  
tə dɑ:ns ɔː rɪŋləts tə ðə wɪslɪŋ wɪnd

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<sup>3</sup> spoken by Amy Virginia Buchanan.



## ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION

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But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

a a a 8 2 b 7 11 2/1 1  
bət wɪ ði bra:lz ðəʊ ast dɪstəbd ɔ spɔt

Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,

4 1 3 e a 6 4  
ðe:fɔ ðə wɪnz pəɪpɪn tə ʊs ɪn veɪn

As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea

a b a 6 6 8 12  
əz ɪn ɪvɛndʒ əv sʌkt ʊp frəm ðə se:

Contagious fogs; which falling in the land

4 8 f 8 e 7  
kəntɛ:dʒɪəs fəgz mɪtʃ fəlɪn ɪn ðə land

Have every pelting river made so proud

b a 5 e 1 4 a 2  
əv ɛvrɪ pɛlɪŋ ɪvə meɪd sə prəʊd

That they have overborne their continents.

a 4 b a 4 1 1 4 8  
ðæt ðe: əv ɔ:vəbo:n ðe kantɪnənts

### WHAT NEXT?

For deeper work in acting Shakespeare, and to hear further speeches in OP, Paul's eBook, *Voicing Shakespeare*, is available at:

<http://www.paulmeier.com/shakespeare.html>