

The American poet Gelett Burgess,
who was born in 1863,
is remembered for one poem.
Look at the stressed syllables, in
purple, and notice how he arranged
the patterns of stress into a regular meter:

I **never** **saw** a **purple** **cow**,
I **never** **hope** to **see** one;
But **I** can **tell** you, **anyhow**,
I'd **rather** **see** than **be** one.

Did you notice the way Burgess alternated between unstressed and stressed syllables? Every other syllable is stressed. We could say that the pattern in this poem is a two-syllable pattern, with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.

A two-syllable foot with the stress on the second syllable is called an **iamb**.