

Linear Prosody Assignment

1. Analyze the excerpt from *Now* (Excerpt #10) from *A Little Night Music*, marking where Sondheim has stops. Where does the first phrase drive to? Where does the second phrase drive to? Mark each of the stopping points, and note the three separate structures (Hint: the middle section begins with the word “Say”.).
2. That’s the easy part. Now the hard part. Duplicate the length of the entire excerpt with a lyric of your own, in which a character is deciding between two options, imitating the drive of EACH of the phrases. Match your phrases to Sondheim’s phrases: wherever you marked a driving point in #1, above, make sure your lyric drives to there, without any stops along the way, and without barreling through the stop. Use Sondheim’s phrases in length and meter *exactly*. If he has nine stops, so should you have nine stops. (Hint: he does have nine.) You should be able to lay a transparency of your lyric directly on top of his, and you will have no more or fewer stops than he does. The trick is not to ignore the little stops along the way...drive to the end of each phrase, and no further.

The topic can be anything, but keep the word *Now* where it appears, and keep the options *A* and *B* where they appear. So that, you should have something which could be sung to Sondheim’s music, and also resembles the “A, I could _____, B, I could _____” structure of the lyric.

Hit all and only the points you identified in part #1.

A worksheet is provided, attached.

Now

Now, as the sweet imbecilities

Tumble so lavishly

Onto her lap,

Now, there are two possibilities:

A, I could ravish her,

B, I could nap.

Say

It's the ravishment, then we see

The option

That follows, of course:

A,

The deployment of charm, or B,

The adoption

Of physical force.

Now, B might arouse her,

But if I assume

I trip on my trouser

Leg crossing the room...

Her hair getting tangled,

Her stays getting snapped,

My nerves would be jangled,

My energy sapped...

Removing her clothing

Would take me all day,

And her subsequent loathing

Would turn me away,

Which eliminates B

And which leaves us with A.