

SHAKESPEARE: SONNET 116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds	a
Admit impediments. Love is not love	b
Which alters when it alteration finds	a
Or bends with the remover to remove.	b
O no, it is an ever-fixed mark	c
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;	d
It is the star to every wandering bark,	c
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.	d
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks	e
Within his bending sickle's compass come;	f
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,	e
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.	f
If this be error and upon me proved	g
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.	g

octet = first 8 lines {opening 2 quatrains}

sestet = last 6 lines {third quatrain + couplet}

usual rhythm is iambic pentameter although Shakespeare invariably alters opening foot of each sonnet and in sonnet above lines 5/9/14 will vary

marriage ceremony in BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER:

If any man know any impediment why these two  
should not be joined in holy matrimony, I charge  
you on the dreadful day of judgment that you  
speak your mind or else forever after hold your peace.

pronounce: ever-fixed with 4 syllables

compass will mean the sweep of father time's scythe, also navigational instrument

alters in line 11 will mean changes, also church altars where marriage takes place

