

## MY MISTRESS' EYES (W. Shakespeare)

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head;

- 5 I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks;

- I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
10 That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go.  
(My mistress when she walks treads on the ground).

And yet by heaven I think my love as rare  
As any she belied with false compare.



Image: <https://www.pexels.com>

(Text: Spiazzi, Tavella, Layton (2012). *Performer. Culture and Literature 1*. Zanichelli)

### ACTIVITIES

1. Find the following words. What do you think they mean? Use a dictionary when necessary.
  - a. Dun
  - b. Wire
  - c. Delight
  - d. Reek
  - e. Tread
2. What comparisons does the writer make? What structures does Shakespeare use to compare things?
3. How is the sonnet divided?
4. Underline the words that rhyme and write the rhyme scheme of this sonnet.
5. This is an unusual way of describing someone; why do you think Shakespeare uses it?
6. Write a sonnet describing someone from your class.



Esta obra está bajo una [Licencia Creative Commons Atribución-NoComercial-CompartirIgual 4.0 Internacional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

## KEY

**1. Find the following words. What do you think they mean? Use a dictionary when necessary.**

- a. Dun
- b. Wire
- c. Delight
- d. Reek
- e. Tread

**2. What comparisons does the writer make? What structures does Shakespeare use to compare things?**

Shakespeare compares (in a negative way): her eyes and the sun; coral and her lips; snow and her breasts; her hair and wires; roses and her cheeks; perfumes and her breath; her voice and music; her ("my love") and other women.

He uses: like / more than / if ... be ... / no such.

**3. How is the sonnet divided?**

It's written using the iambic pentameter. It has four stanzas, comprised of three quatrains (four-line stanzas) and one couplet (two-line stanza).

**4. Underline the words that rhyme and write the rhyme scheme of this sonnet.**

Its rhyme scheme is: A B A B C D C D E F E F G G.

**5. This is an unusual way of describing someone; why do you think Shakespeare uses it?**

The author wants to convey that love and beauty are different things. It is unusual because he says what his lover is not, instead of describing the way she looks.

**6. Write a sonnet describing someone from your class.**

Students' own answers.