Latin Scansion: Dactylic Hexameter

Quantitative Verse: based on syllable length: long or short

A syllable can be long in two ways:

- **Long by nature**: a syllable that contains a long vowel or diphthong

- **Long by position**: a syllable that contains a vowel followed by two

    consonants is said to be long by position.

    Notes: x = two consonants (/ks/)

                  qu = one consonant and no vowel

        When the two consonants are a mute (*p, b, t, d, c, g*) followed

                  by a liquid (*l, r*) the preceding vowel may be long **or**

                  short

Elision: when a word ends in a vowel or *m* and the next word begins with a

    vowel or *h*, the syllables elide, and only the second syllable is

    pronounced; the resultant syllable may be long or short (based on

    second syllable)

The two most important "feet":

    dactyl ‾ ˘ ˘

    spondee ‾ ‾

Dactylic Hexameter:

$$\overline{}\,\overline{\smile\smile}\,|\,\overline{}\,\overline{\smile\smile}\,|\,\overline{}\,\overline{\smile\smile}\,|\,\overline{}\,\overline{\smile\smile}\,|\,\overline{}\,\smile\smile\,|\,\overline{}\,X$$

           1   2   3   4   5   6

Example: from Vergil's *Eclogues*

Nōn equidem inuideō, mīror magis: undique tōtis

ūsque adeō turbātur agrīs. ēn ipse capellas

prōtinus aeger ago; hanc etiam uix, Tītyre, dūco.

hīc inter dēnsās corylōs modo namque gemellos,

spem gregis, ā! silice in nūdā cōnīxa relīquit.