MODULE 4: POETRY

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6. Advanced Encoding

6.1 Components of the Verse Line

It is often convenient for various kinds of analysis to encode further subdivisions of verse lines. This can be done using the `<seg>` element which contains any arbitrary phrase-level unit of text (including other `<seg>` elements).

The third and the fourth stanzas of our poem, for instance, contain lines which include two items each, except for line 13. The appropriate encoding could be the following:

```
<lg xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0" type="stanza" n="3">
  <l>
    <seg type="item">Paper towels</seg> / <seg type="item">garbage bags</seg>
  </l>
  <l>
    <seg type="item">Pasta sauce</seg> and <seg type="item">Parmesan</seg>
  </l>
  <l>
    <seg type="item">Pumpkin seed</seg> and <seg type="item">olive oil</seg>
  </l>
</lg>

<lg xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0" type="stanza" n="4">
  <l>
    <seg type="item">Cheesy crisps</seg> and <seg type="item">favourite mags</seg>
  </l>
  <l>
    <seg type="item">Kidney beans (1 large can)</seg>
  </l>
  <l>
    <seg type="item">Cling film</seg> and <seg type="item">kitchen foil</seg>
  </l>
</lg>
```

Example 30. Identifying low-level structures with `<seg>`.

6.2 Dedications

If the poem is encoded as an `<lg>`, the TEI doesn’t have an “out of the box” solution to deal with dedications which appear under the title of the poem. In the case a dedication needs to be encoded, there are two viable options. The first one is to consider the dedication as a `<head>` and use its `@type` attribute for specifying its function as a “dedication”:

```
<lg xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0" type="poem">
  <head>Shopping</head>
  <head type="dedication">To my sweetest son</head>
</lg>
```
Example 31. Encoding a dedication following a heading as a special <head>.

The second option is to encode the poem as a <div type="poem"> instead of an <lg type="poem">, and consider the title as an anonymous block <ab> with a value of "dedication" for its @type attribute.
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Example 32. Encoding a dedication after a heading as `<ab>` inside `<div>`.

6.3 Acrostics

One example of the use of the `<seg>` element for further advanced analysis is the following proposal to signal the presence of an acrostic in a poem. In this poem by Edgar Allan Poe, entitled “An Acrostic,” the first letters of each line of verse together form the first word of the first line: “Elizabeth.”
Breath it less gently forth - and veil thine eyes.

Endymion, recollect, when Luna tried

To cure his love - was cured of all beside -

His follie - pride - and passion - for he died.