

**Using evidence to answer the following essay question:**

**How does Shakespeare reveal Hamlet's state of mind, character and problems to the audience, with particular reference to the soliloquies we have studied?**

1. Look again at Hamlet's first words in the play and write them down. What do these immediately reveal to the audience?
2. Remind yourself of the first soliloquy (Act 1 Scene 2). What does Hamlet want to do?
3. What sort of language does Hamlet use to describe his feelings about life? What do they suggest about how he feels?
4. How do we know that Hamlet thinks his uncle does not even compare to his father?
5. How do we know that Hamlet feels great disgust at his mother's marriage so soon after his father's death?
6. In Act 1 Scene 2 when Horatio tells Hamlet about the ghost of his father, how do we (the audience) know that Hamlet is immediately interested in the news and seems ready to believe it is true?
7. In Act 1 Scene 4 how do we know that Hamlet does not value his life when he sees the ghost?
8. In Act 1 Scene 5 what lines suggest Hamlet will revenge his father's death quickly? Which words imply that he will act quickly and decisively?
9. At the end of Act 1 Scene 5 Hamlet does suggest that he is anguished that he has to take action to put matters right in Denmark. Which lines are these?
10. Hamlet has said he intends to pretend to be mad and he certainly seems it when he speaks to Polonius in Act 2 Scene 2. Which lines suggest that, although the scene is humorous for an audience, Hamlet is very depressed with life?
11. What might Hamlet's insults to Polonius and Ophelia suggest about his character?
12. In Hamlet's soliloquy in Act 2 Scene 2 pick out some of the derogatory words Hamlet uses against himself and explain what they suggest about how he feels about himself.
13. Why does Hamlet feel this way?
14. At what point in the soliloquy does Hamlet seem calmer and more determined? How is this shown to the audience?
15. In Hamlet's soliloquy in Act 3 Scene 1, in what way does he refer to death? How might this suggest that he is overwhelmed by the idea of taking action to revenge his father's murder?
16. When Hamlet says, 'shuffled off this mortal coil' what does the word 'shuffled' imply about the person's achievements in life? Why might Hamlet use this word?
17. How many questions does Hamlet ask in this soliloquy and how many exclamations does he make? What sort of mood does his poetic and fluent speech create?