

Hamlet's soliloquy in Act 1 Scene 2
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1. What does Hamlet wish to do?
2. Why do you think he compares the action to melting and becoming 'dew'?
3. What apparently prevents Hamlet from acting on his wishes?
4. What effect does repetition of the word 'God' have?
5. Why is there a list of adjectives to describe the 'uses of this world'?
6. Why does Hamlet compare life to an 'unweeded garden'? Why doesn't he just say, 'I hate life. It's boring'?
7. What is the effect of having short, incomplete sentences such as 'That it should come to this!' and pauses, 'But two months dead – nay not so much, not two –'?
8. Why does Shakespeare have Hamlet talk about his father's love for his mother and saying, 'so loving to my mother / That he might not beteem the winds of heaven / Visit her face too roughly'? Why doesn't he just say, 'He'd have done anything for her'?
9. Why does Hamlet ask, 'Must I remember'?
10. What do the lines, 'why, she would hang on him / As if increase of appetite had grown / By what it fed on' mean?
11. Which phrase shows that Hamlet thinks his mother is very weak?
12. Is the phrase 'A little month, or ere those shoes were old / With which she followed my poor father's body' effective and why? Think about the free will of someone who is able to walk.
13. How do you think Hamlet feels about his mother when he says 'a beast that wants discourse of reason / Would have mourned longer'?
14. Which phrase shows that Hamlet thinks his uncle is inferior to his father?
15. Why do you think the words 'She married' are on a separate line to the rest of the sentence on line 156?
16. Do you think it is idle misery that makes Hamlet say, 'It is not, nor it cannot come to good' or do you think it is a statement of intent?
17. What do you think Hamlet's emotions are at the end of the soliloquy: Sorrow? Anger? Bitterness? Grief? Bewilderment? Confusion?