

Hamlet: Answer both parts (a) and (b).

- (a) Discuss the following passage from Act 1 Scene 2, exploring Shakespeare's use of language and its dramatic effects

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:  
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity.

HAMLET

Ay, madam, it is common.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

If it be,  
Why seems it so particular with thee?

HAMLET

Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'  
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,  
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,  
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play:  
But I have that within which passeth show;  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

**(b) 'The inevitability of death is a source of comfort and strength for Hamlet, rather than the source of his lamentation.'**

**Using your knowledge of the play as a whole, show how far you agree with this view of the character Hamlet. Remember to support your answer with reference to different interpretations.**