**Discuss the following passage from Act 1, scene 2, exploring Shakespeare’s use of language and dramatic effect.**

HAMLET: O that this too too solid flesh would melt,

Thaw and resolve itself into a dew,

Or that the Everlasting had not fixed

His canon ‘gainst self-slaughter. O God, God,

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable

Seems to me all the uses of this world!

Fie on’t, ah, fie, ‘tis an unweeded garden

That grows to seed, things rank and gross in nature

Possess it merely. That it should come to thus;

But two months dead – nay, not so much, not two –

So excellent a king, that was to this

Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to my mother

That he might not beteem the winds of heaven

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth,

Must I remember? Why, she should hang on him

As if increase of appetite had grown

By what it fed on. And yet within a month

(Let me not think on’t – Frailty – thy name is Woman)

A little month, or o’er those shoes were old

With which she followed my poor father’s body,

Like Niobe, all tears. Why she –

O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason

Would have mourned longer – married with my uncle,

My father’s brother (but no more like my father

Than I to Hercules). Within a month,

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears

Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,

She married. O most wicked speed! To post

With such dexterity to incestuous sheets,

It is not, nor cannot come to good;

But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

**Section 1: Shakespeare – the extract question**

1. **Discuss the following passage …use of language and dramatic effects /15**
2. Statement on the play or character and ‘how far do you agree?’ /15

**AO2 – 75% - analysis**

**AO1 -25% - written skills**

* Worth 15 marks
* Detailed exploration of language, form and structure
* Use of terminology
* Line of argument

How does language shape meaning?

**Exam board advice:**

* Contextualising the extract in terms of AO2 is not necessary but recommended e.g. dramatic structure/ where it appears in the play/ what we know of characters so far/ ref to lang
* AO2 key focus so although AO1 is assessed, they don't expect to see an argument. Examiners asking how far is it detailed and developed AND how well have candidates used quotations?
* Candidates can take any approach they want - chronological is fine but suggestion that a more organised response is more likely to demonstrate conceptual understanding (as opposed to narrative)
* Links to elsewhere in the play will be credited if they illuminate aspects of language in the extract (e.g. patterns of corruption in Hamlet)

**Approach to the extract question:**

**Stage 1: Break it down**

Annotate the extract, first understanding what the scene is about, where it falls in the play, points of interest and gaining an overview of the structure – split it into sections.

**Stage 2: Zoom in**

Start to dig a little deeper, exploring **language, structure and form**

Begin to make **connections**, seek **patterns**

**Stage 3: Select**

Line of argument/thesis– 3-5 IDEAS THAT STAND OUT.

These will form your **points or topic sentences**, giving your analysis structure

**Stage 4: Zoom out**

This will form your **conclusion** – think of your essay as equivalent to a scientific experiment.

You should **weigh up** the key arguments you’ve put forward…

You can then confidently either confirm the hypothesis, or put forward a refinement of it in light of the evidence you’ve analysed. In either case, make sure you **make your position clear** to the reader.

Some people like to end their essay with a neat quotation – at the very least, you should **step back a little** from the question/issue at hand and look at it from a wider perspective.