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

KING: But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son –

HAMLET: A little more than kin, and less than kind,

KING: How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

HAMLET: Not so much, my lord, I am too much in the ‘son’.

QUEEN: Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off

 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

 Do not for ever with thy vailed lids

 Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

 Thou knowst ‘tis common all that lives must die

 Passing through nature to eternity.

HAMLET: Aye, Madam, it is common.

QUEEN: 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, cold mother,

 Nor customary spirits of solemn black,

 Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,

 Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,

 That can denote me truly. These indeed ‘seem’,

 For they are the actions that a man might play,

 But I have within which passes show,

 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

KING: ‘Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

 To give these mourning duties to your father,

 But you must know your father lost a father,

 That father lost lost his, and the survivor bound

 In filial obligation for some term

 To do obsequious sorrow; but to persevere

 In obstinate condolement is a course

 Of impious stubbornness, ‘tis unmanly grief,

 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,

 A heart unfortified, or mind impatient,

 An understanding simple and unschooled;

 For what we know must be, and is as common

 As any the most vulgar thing to sense –

 Why should we in our peevish opposition

 Take it to heart? Fie, ‘tis a fault to heaven,

 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,

 To reason most absurd, whose common theme

 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried

 From the first corpse til he that died today

 ‘This must be so.’ .