Vocab gloss

‘rub’ impediment

Mortal coil – like a snake shedding its skin

Contumely – insolence/ insulting behaviour or treatment

The spurns etc - often substituted by translators with ‘red tape’ ‘foul mouthed petty officials’

Quietus est – phrase used to confirm a bill/debt has been paid

Bodkin – dagger

Fardels – burdens

Bourn – boundary

Conscience – introspection rather than inbuilt morality – fear of life after death/ possible punishment

Native hue – natural colour – personification

Sicklied over – unhealthily covered

Pitch – height/scope – sometimes ‘pith’ – importance or gravity

Hamlet is considering whether life is worth living – should he commit suicide or not?

He first asks whether or not he should commit suicide

He weighs up considerations – ‘whether’ ‘or’

He wonders whether the most noble thing to do is to is to suffer hardships or to fight against them

He sees death as a sleep ut is troubled by what may happen in that sleep of death- he reflects that what stops people committing suicide, in spite of all life’s injustices and oppressions, is fear of the terrors that await the dead.

He concludes that thinking prevents decisive action

Overall dramatic effect – soliloquy has a reflective tone, heightens sense of delay

Sombre, reflective – like a developing argument

Dejected, pessimistic – despair and disillusion

Uncertainty/ questioning – what to do?

Language

Pre-occupation with death – not to be/ suffer/ die/ heart ache/ shocks

Different ways of expressing death – not to be/ sleep/ shuffled off this mortal coil/ quietus/ undiscovered country – euphemistic

‘slings and arrows of outrageous fortune’ – life as an assault course

‘take arms against a sea of troubles’ – confused metaphor – how can you fight the sea?

Whips and scorns of time – time personified as the enemy or does he mean the ‘time’ we live in?

Antithesis – balancing of alternatives/ weighing up options.. opposition of life versus death; action versus passivity. Internal debate/ workings of the mind

Repetition – rhythm as if building up to something but then getting nowhere… rising waves washing on shore; slows pace, reflective tone. Repeated words include – sleep, thus, bear, who would bear, to be to die to sleep

Lists – seven items cumulatively build up a sense of humanity’s burdens (asyndeton) Could refer to H’s own situation