

An Inspector Calls- stage directions

- An Inspector Calls was written in 1945 by J.B Priestley
- However, An Inspector Calls was set in 1912
- This creates dramatic irony as by 1945, there had been two world wars and other events such as the sinking of the Titanic. 1945 was slowly adhering to more socialist views in society whereas in 1912, society was very capitalist and the class divide was rigid. Mr Birling states how “the Germans don’t want war”, and the Titanic is “unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable”. Yet when these claims do not happen and are in fact the opposite, it demonstrates Mr Birling as ignorant and stupid.

‘An Inspector Calls’ Setting and Stage Directions:

- Priestley promotes socialist views in ‘An Inspector Calls’ through demonising the Birling’s capitalist views and lack of social responsibility and encouraging those to take responsibility for their actions, especially in Mr and Mrs Birling who refuse to accept responsibility in their partaking of Eva Smith’s death
 - Priestley exposes the lack of responsibility in the older generation and how the Birling's treat those in the working class.
 - Priestley provokes the upper class into changing their ways by portraying them as greedy and selfish through the Birling family
 - Priestley articulates the Birling family as being selfish and greedy, through only caring for materialistic values, demonstrated through Sheila's response to her engagement ring, “Look mummy, isn’t it a beauty”.
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- 1) The champagne glasses, decanter of port and cigars are props that highlight they are affluent
 - 2) Through the initial stage directions, I can infer that although the family are wealthy and comfortable financially, they seem quite distant with each other in their seating and manner, where Mr and Mrs Birling sit away from each other.
 - 3) The light is pink and intimate which could suggest it is a special occasion. The fact the lighting is pink could represent the rose tinted glasses they, as a family may be looking in. Their life is seen how they want it to be. This change in lighting to a harsh bright light, highlights them being brought into harsh reality of society and exposure to the truth.

I think Priestley wants the audience's first impression of the characters to be quite pompous and spoilt, and despite being affluent, are not rich in their love for each other as they are more caring about materialistic items such as clothing.

How the characters are demonstrated through the initial stage directions.

Priestley uses the initial stage directions to present Mrs Birling as an unsympathetic character. This is reinforced as she is described as “about fifty; a rather cold woman and her husband’s social superior”. This highlights how she is typical of her time in her prejudiced and class conscious manner. Her and her family live in ‘a large suburban house’, which immediately implies that she is of an upper-middle class and lives comfortably, with a life of luxuries. As an audience, the initial impression of Mrs Birling is that she may also be vain and careless, further supported through how she is ‘a cold woman’, which may also foreshadow her being unsympathetic towards her partaking in the death of Eva Smith. In the opening stage directions, Sheila is illustrated as “pleased with life and rather excited”, implying a childish manner and one very different from her parents. Eric is portrayed as “half-shy half-assertive”, which may suggest he is quite naive but may have caused trouble before. He is demonstrated as different to Gerald, who can be seen as cunning and worldly.

Key context

The British government in 1912:

- In 1912, the Liberal Party was in power in Britain. This party supported laissez-faire economics, meaning the government wouldn’t intervene with the economy.
- Laissez-faire economics are ideal for capitalism because it gives power to the free market, enabling capitalists to make as much profit as possible despite the negative impact upon the lower and working class.
- The Labour Party was elected into government in 1945 and they aimed to bring about a more socialist society. This was a dramatic change of government, diluting the power of capitalism in Britain. Priestley believed strongly in the need for a social reform and therefore used the character of Mr Birling to make a mockery of capitalism.

The General Strike (1926)

- In 1926, Britain saw the largest strike on record when over a million miners downed their tools to fight for fairer wages and working conditions.
- In solidarity with them, many from other industries joined the strike such as bus drivers

- Birling states in Act One that the conflict between the workers and employers will amount to nothing. This creates dramatic irony as the audience of 1946 know how severe the strikes were and so immediately view Birling as foolish and naive.

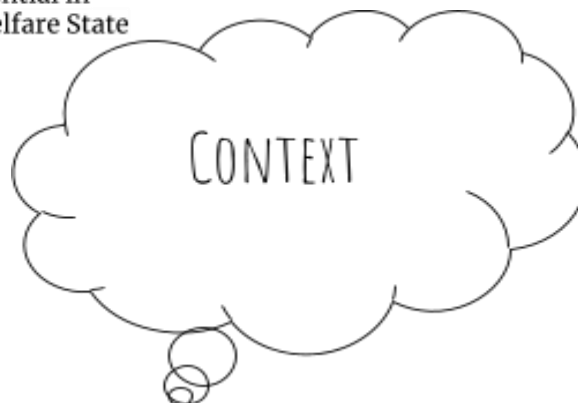
Birling's early speeches are important because they highlight his dangerous capitalist mindset. Mr Birling is a microcosm of upper class capitalism. And so Priestley uses Birling's initial speeches to make a mockery of this ideology. As the play develops the audience witnesses the moral implications of Birling's attitude. Like many capitalists Birling thinks that he can journey through life never caring about other people. Priestley exploits this mindset, showing that there are more limitations of such a philosophy. And this will result in his downfall in the play, and as a wider perspective, the downfall of capitalism in 1946.

Priestley uses the repetition of 'his/himself' to highlight Birling's self-centered, egotistical mindset and showcase his whole-hearted belief in capitalism.

Birling's phrase 'lower costs and higher prices' link to capitalism as it reveals the exploitation at the centre of capitalism. He shows no regard for the suffering this will cause to working class members of society, making it clear his only concern is prosperity.

- Priestley became very concerned about the consequences of social inequality.
- In 1942, he set up a new political party, (the Common Wealth Party), which argued for greater democracy, and a new 'morality' in politics.
- The party merged with the Labour Party in 1945, but Priestley was influential in developing the idea of the Welfare State

- An inspector calls, takes up some of the economic, political, and social issues that occurred in 1912, including socialism versus free-market capitalism, democracy versus fascism, and privileges.
- It is also a historical drama, as it is set in the run-up to the World War One. This produces instances of dramatic irony throughout the play, as the events Mr Birling assured wouldn't happen, do, which humiliates him and other ignorant capitalists of the period.



- Priestley deliberately set his play in 1912 because the date represented an era when all was very different from the time he was writing.
- In 1912, rigid class and gender boundaries seemed to ensure that nothing would change.
- By 1945, most of those class and gender divisions had been breached.
- Through this play, he encourages people to seize the opportunity to build a better, more caring society.

Oak Academy notes:

Class, capitalism and socialism:

Capitalism- a political, economic and social system which enables individuals to own and control areas and production and focuses on making as much capital gain.

Socialism- a political, economic and social system which states that all people are equal and should share equally in a country's wealth.

Key context

The class system and politics in 1912

- The class system in Edwardian society was very rigid
- Those from the upper class were forbidden to marry from the lower classes and if occurred it could destroy reputations
- The extent of your wealth and family name would determine your class and the lower class experienced many injustices.
- It was a society ruled by capitalism

The class system and politics in 1946:

- By 1946, the class system started to become less rigid
- During WW2, men from different classes fought alongside each other which diluted class divisions
- Socialism was on the rise as many wanted to rebuild a new society
- By 1928, all men and women over the age of 21 could vote, which gave all classes equal say and power.

Political changes in 1946:

- The labour party won the general election in 1946 and aimed to improve the welfare system and build a fairer society
- Socialist ideology was building momentum in Britain and around the world, such as in Russia

Class conflict in An Inspector Calls

The Birlings represented the upper classes in 1912. They lack social responsibility, promote capitalism and are fixated upon power and material wealth. Priestley highlights the injustices and suffering felt by the working classes

Class:

- The Birlings are a **microcosm (small example of a much wider problem in society)** of the upper classes in Edwardian society
- Class and reputation are vital to the Birlings and Priestley uses them as an example of ignorance that existed and how they often rejected social responsibility
- Class influences the Birling's behaviour and causes them to treat others appallingly

Opening stage directions- symbolism

- Priestley deliberately sets a scene of wealth in the opening stage directions , in order to showcase the Birling's capitalism and to highlight their gluttony and indulgence

Mrs Birling:

Haughty- blatantly and disdainfully proud : having or showing an attitude of superiority and contempt for people or things perceived to be inferior.

Patronising- to speak or behave towards you in a way that seems friendly, but which shows that they think they are superior to you.

Disdainful- showing contempt or lack of respect.

Elitist - a person who believes that a society or system should be led by an elite.

Stubborn- having or showing dogged determination not to change one's attitude or position on something, especially in spite of good arguments or reasons to do so.

Hypocritical- behaving in a way that suggests one has higher standards or more noble beliefs than is the case.

In denial- refusing to admit the truth or reality of something unpleasant

Mrs Birling frequently engages in a superior, haughty tone that seems to communicate that she feels disappointed in her children and contempt towards Eva Smith.

Priestley highlights how Mrs Birling is presented as a narrow-minded, patronising character through her views and responses to Eva's suicide. In doing so, Priestley's wider points about the unfair distribution of power, and the corrupting influence it has upon society emerge.

Mrs Birling can be perceived as disdainful in her response to the death of Eva Smith.

Mrs Birling expresses elitist views as she cares hugely about social superiority in society.

Priestley illustrates the character of Mrs Birling as extremely stubborn, as she refuses to accept any responsibility for Eva's death and sticks with her same perception throughout.

Mrs Birling is demonstrated as hypocritical through her charity work at the Brumley's women organisation, as she expresses her desire to help everyone in need yet turns away Eva Smith who was pregnant and in need of help.

When Mrs Birling hears about her family's partaking in the death of Eva Smith, she remains in denial throughout and doesn't believe she is at all in the wrong.

Brumley Women's organisation:

- 1) Mrs Birling may have wanted to assist the organisation to create a charitable and social image of herself, a scheme that she could later boast about in social situations to build a strong reputation.
- 2) Her treatment of Eva Smith is particularly cruel to Eva because she is unmarried and pregnant, which displays Mrs Birling very cold and ignorant opinion, especially as a charity assistant whose role is to give provisional help to women in need.
- 3) Mrs Birling can be seen as a hypocrite for refusing to help Eva Smith because the whole veneer of the organisation is to provide aid to those in need and by refusing to do that just because Eva is pregnant, unmarried and financially unstable highlights this hypocritical nature.

Stubborn and obstinate:

- 1) The first stage directions of Mrs Birling such as 'with dignity' emphasise her arrogance: she feels she should be treated with decorum and is very proud of her work, despite her reasons for helping. However, she then becomes 'alarmed' when they discuss Eric as she may feel him walking out and acting in this manner ruins her reputable exterior.
- 2) Mrs Birling talks in a sophisticated manner to the Inspector to emphasise her superiority in comparison to the rest of her family
- 3) I think that Mrs Birling is in denial about the man Eric has become because she is ashamed of his actions and so blames it on his apparent youth when in turn it's her disappointment in the way Eric acts in comparison to Gerald.

Haughty, disdainful and prejudiced:

Mrs Birling may have been upset at Eva Smith using her name because she may think that the girl is making fun of her, she is embarrassed about sharing a name with a working class girl or because she likes to 'build a wall' between the social classes.

I think the main reason is because she doesn't want the name to be associated with the working class because it suggests that the Birlings are the same as them. She likes to 'build a wall' between the social classes.

Foreshadowing is used in the extract as the Inspector exclaims how Mrs Birling is going to regret not providing help for Eva because that was her grandchild and Mrs Birling's decision ultimately led to her death

Dramatic irony is created in this extract because Mrs Birling states how Eva should've "looked for the father of the child. It's his responsibility." This is ironic because we have an idea that Eric is the father of the child which demonises Mrs Birling for sending away her future grandchild and then pointing the blame indirectly towards her own son.

Sheila is naive to the hardships faced by unmarried mothers because she questions why Eva would've wanted to kill herself and doesn't comprehend the difficulties she faced and that she had nowhere to go and no help. This contrasts to Mrs Birling who could've provided aid to Eva but refused, highlighting her lack of care to those in need,

Mrs Birling is presented as very unlikeable here as she is acting evasive and arrogant which may anger an audience who feels she doesn't deserve to act in shock and disbelief when she previously stated her opinion of who should be blamed. She then acts hypocritically when she learns the father of the child was Eric and is in denial, stating 'I don't believe it, I won't believe it'.

After reading the play, a student said, "I feel sorry for Mrs Birling. She is out of touch with the real world, but that doesn't make her a bad person."

I do not agree with this statement as it counteracts the main purpose of the character of Mrs Birling, and the core message from Priestley behind this character. Throughout the play, Mrs Birling is continuously presented as a 'cold' and egocentric member of the wealthier proportion of society whose capitalist ideals and ignorant attitude causes her to be disliked by the audience. To a large extent, Priestley presents Mrs Birling as an unlikeable character and her failure to accept responsibility and habit to redirect the blame shows that her fixed mindset is almost impossible to amend. It is apparent that she is unaware of her family's actions and during the Inspectors talk with the family, Mrs Birling makes it obvious that the 'father of the child' should be punished. The irony of this being her own son is later revealed yet her previous, certain-tone highlights her attempt to push the blame away from herself. This links to how she refused to help Eva when she came to her charity for help and alludes to the fact that she did not only assist in killing the girl, but her 'own grandchild' as well. However, even after finding this alarming information out, she refuses to believe this, emphasising her hypocritical nature by acting in denial, how "(I) don't believe it, (I) won't believe it". Mrs Birling's patronising and egocentric attitude remains until the end of the play

and that her character embodies the upper class women of society that Priestley ostracised, with her being unable to accept any responsibility for her actions by the end of the play.

Gerald Croft:

Facts about Gerald Croft:

- Gerald is of the upper class and his family own Croft Ltd
- Gerald is described as 'an attractive chap about thirty, rather too manly to be a dandy but very much the easy well-bred young man-about-town'
- He is getting engaged to Sheila Birling
- He had an affair with Eva Smith/Daisy Renton
- He is demonstrated as confident and charming

Priestley may want the audience to perceive Gerald as the selfish aspects of Capitalists in 1912 society. The audience may feel ashamed or disappointed in Gerald as he had the opportunity to change his ways but didn't. This highlights that even the younger generations were still reluctant to accept responsibility and it may be too late for some individuals, especially those of the upper class like Gerald.

Sheila: But you're forgetting I'm supposed to be engaged to the hero of it. Go on, Gerald. You went down into the bar, which is a favourite haunt of the women of the town.

Gerald: I'm glad I amuse you.

Inspector: (sharply) Come along, Mr Croft. What happened?

Gerald: I didn't propose to stay long down there. **I hate those hard-eyed dough-faced women.** (*His description of women is very patronising and aggressive*) But then I noticed a girl who looked quite different. **She was very pretty – soft brown hair and big dark eyes- (breaks off.)**

My god! (*The break in description may demonstrate how Gerald was thinking back to the time he met her as if he tried to suppress what happened before- the use of the exclamation mark in 'my god!', indicates his genuine shock and realisation that she is gone*) Inspector:

What's the matter?

Gerald: **(distressed)** Sorry **– I – well, I've suddenly realized – taken it in properly –** that she's dead-- (*this constant use of fragmented speech from Gerald whilst the Inspector speaks 'harshly' and 'sharply' emphasises Gerald's shock and distress from his realisation. This reaction does suggest he was attached to Eva in some factor and did care about her*)

Inspector: (harshly) Yes, she's dead.

Sheila: And probably between us we killed her.

Mrs Birling: (sharply) Sheila, don't talk nonsense.

Sheila: You wait, mother.

Inspector: (to Gerald) Go on.

Gerald: **She looked young and fresh and charming** - (*He describes her features in a gentle manner, doesn't objectify her*) and altogether out of place down here. And obviously she wasn't enjoying herself. **Old Joe Meggarty, half-drunk and goggle-eyed, had wedged her into a corner with that obscene fat carcass of his--** (*this vivid description of Meggarty highlights he acted heroically in some form, that he was perhaps 'saving' her from him*)

The extract reveals how Gerald acts like a hero, but only to cover up his lies so he doesn't have to face the consequences. He is used to getting whatever he would like which insinuates the lack of compassion he may have in his partaking of Eva's death.

There is a significant difference between the Birlings stage directions, which are 'uneasily' and 'emphatically', in comparison to Gerald, who speaks 'decisively'. This implies that Gerald may be a regular liar due to his composure in the situation, and his heroic idealisation may just be another act.

Priestley may be trying to convey Gerald as the arrogance of a patriarchal society and how he views himself as untouchable.

I do not agree with the interpretation of Gerald I do not feel that privilege equals an opportunity to act like he did and support his actions to not accept responsibility. (3/10) I do somewhat agree with this interpretation as I feel Priestley is criticising the actions of the upper class through Gerald and how his status and wealth shouldn't allow his mistakes to be overlooked. (8/10)

I do not fully agree with the interpretation of Gerald as I do not think it's fair to label Gerald as a rescuer or a 'hero' (5/10)

Gerald represents the selfish attitudes of the upper class and highlights how the capitalist attitudes in society are ingrained; how these attitudes in the upper class were so difficult to change. Priestley may want the audience to perceive Gerald as the selfish aspects of Capitalists in 1912 society. The audience may feel ashamed or disappointed in Gerald as he had the opportunity to change his ways but didn't. This highlights that even the younger generations were still reluctant to accept responsibility and it may be too late for some individuals, especially those of the upper class like Gerald. Although on one hand he acts like a hero and demonstrates a genuine attachment to Eva Smith, as he states 'My god!' after realising she really is dead, his actions in act 3 counteract this said compassion. He acts quickly to cover his actions by blatantly lying to members of authority. He can be seen as an avid liar as he acts 'decisively' whereas the Birlings are 'uneasy' by the spiral of lies. Priestley may be insinuating how easy it is for the upper class to lie so that they do not have to accept any responsibility for their actions, viewing themselves as untouchable.

Eric Birling:

Write down three reasons why Eric has an easy and privileged life:

1. He's been spoilt his whole life
2. He hasn't had to work hard to provide financially for himself
3. He got a good education at a public school

Write down two reasons why Eric's life is difficult:

1. He has been overlooked by his parents and referred to as a 'silly boy'/treated as a child
2. His opinion doesn't really matter to his parents/ has a lack of respect
3. No strong family connections

Young and reckless or lonely and misunderstood?

- 1) The opening of act 3 implies that young Edwardian men
- 2) Eric may have bought drinks for Eva to seem flirtatious and charming, so perhaps he had more of a chance with her if he could get her attention amongst other men by showing he has money.
- 3) The fact that Eric says she was not the usual sort implies that he visits the palace bar a lot, and was used to the type of girls that were typically in there. There is a glimpse of snobbery due to the fact he may look down on prostitutes.

Aggressive and entitled

- 1) The language Priestley used demonstrates how he wants the audience to see Eric as using alcohol as an excuse for his later actions with Eva Smith, stating when he was "in that state when a chap easily turns nasty". Eric does accept responsibility towards the end of the play which is shown through the use of hyphens/ fragmented speech "And I don't even remember- that's the hellish thing."
- 2) Mr Birling doesn't want his wife to hear about Eric's involvement with Eva in order to protect Mrs Birling from hearing what happened, especially as it was a patriarchal society
- 3) The dialogue implies that men had much more freedom in society and were not ridiculed for the choices as much as women were. He didn't know her name or where she lived but had the choice to see her again and it doesn't matter to him that he is not married. It was acceptable for men to do as they please yet Eva Smith was heavily condemned for being pregnant out of marriage.
- 4) Mr Birling and Eric's relationship can be seen as distant and strained.

Immature and Irresponsible

Priestley shows that young men like Eric have the wealth and freedom to enjoy themselves and the power to make their mistakes disappear.

The women, on the other hand, are left with the consequences of this reckless behaviour.

How are Eric and his father similar? - They both seem short tempered and are both very opinionated. They both use money to try and solve their problems

How are Eric and his father different? - They are different in the way they see the world: Eric is willing to accept responsibility whereas Mr Birling doesn't. Eric shows compassion, Mr birling is cold. Eric doesn't show signs of wanting to climb the social ladder for more prominence.

Why do you think Priestley presents them in this way? - They stand in opposition with each other at the end of Act 3 to highlight how the generation gap affects social responsibility and to show that despite the fact Eric was brought up by Mr Birling and shares his characteristics it is possible for him to change.

Paternal relationship:

Eric: "Because you're not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble – that's why."

Birling: (angrily) Don't talk to me like that. Your trouble is – you've been spoilt--

Priestley may be articulating the symbolism of Eric's drinking habit as to why many capitalist individuals refuse to accept responsibility and how that is no excuse for their actions, the drunken state, referring to the current state of the Birling's and how they do not see their mistakes as fallacious. He may further be perceived as insecure due to his mistreatment and lack of parental affection from his parents, as he even highlights how he finds it difficult to communicate with his father because of their relationship being often distant and strained, leaving Eric unsure of who he can confide in about his issues and perhaps why he turns to alcohol.

Maternal relationship:

When Eric and Mrs.Birling have a breakdown of relationships they are both at breaking points because they are both finding out the truth about each other. They have both lost each other's trust. Eric finds out that Mrs.Birling has blamed everything on the young man and Eric is horrified.

He accuses her of killing her own Grandchild: 'Your own Grandchild-You killed them both.'
Eric is blaming his mum for everything that has happened and has known made her feel

guilty. He even swears at her: 'Damn you,Damn you.' In the early 1900s, it was rude to speak to your parents like that and 'Damn' was a horrific word to use. Mrs Birling may show a glimpse of emotion because she realises the impact her actions have had on Eric and doesn't want him to get angry and act irrationally. It takes for her to have killed her own grandchild for her to have shown any emotion.

Eric has changed from the start of the play as he has recognised the severity of his actions and accepted responsibility for his mistakes.

Eva Smith:

The girl who committed suicide uses three names:

Eva Smith - original name (used mainly throughout- the surname 'Smith' was commonly used as a name of working class men/women, showing that these injustices happen to several working class people and not just Eva. The name 'Eva' can be related to Eve, the first woman and 'life giving')

Daisy Renton - after she is fired from Milwards, and meets Gerald

Mrs Birling - when she is appealing to the charity, for money, after she discovers she is pregnant with Eric's child. The name insults Mrs Birling and is a married name, to imply she isn't unmarried (can suggest it is Eric's child).

Context: Eva working in a factory

Industrialisation in the 1900s meant more movement from the country to the city.

Women were used particularly for cheap labour - this kept labour costs down.

Rise of the Suffragette movement was a threat to male patriarchy.

How does Priestley present her at the beginning of the play? *At the beginning of the play, Eva is presented as the victim of Edwardian double standards: she had the opportunity to have a "nice promising life" but this was destroyed by the ignorance of wealthy capitalists in society and is forced to live a financially strained life as a worker. She was illustrated as being hardworking and confident, being the ringleader of the movement in the factory to raise workers wages. She is presented as diligent, hardworking, confident and determined.*

What does this help us to understand about how he wants the audience to view working class women? *Priestley wants the audience to view working class women vulnerable in a capitalist society where inequality between classes is so prominent. The treatment of working class women is degrading and Priestley wants to challenge the audience about this and the future without drastic change.*

How does Priestley use language to make the audience sympathise with Eva Smith?

- “She wanted to end her life. She felt she couldn’t go on any longer.”- Eva represents ordinary people who can be destroyed by indifference when society fails to grant them the right of basic human dignity
- “Her position now is that she lies with a burnt-out inside on a slab.” Imagery of insides suggests that the abuse Eva experienced was not physical (exception of Eric) but more emotional – a reminder to the audience that the damage we do to people is not always seen at first and she has become emotionally damaged from the ignorance of capitalists in society.
- Emotive language used to describe Eva’s death – creates sympathy for her from the audience
- Repetition of "she" shows the weight she carried on her shoulders was never ending and this led to her taking her own life. This makes us sympathise with her as she had no way out .

Circular Structure:

Priestley chose the same bar for Eric and Gerald to go to; both Eric and Gerald refer to her as 'not the usual sort'; she hasn’t eaten much either time; the bar was her last resort (she had nowhere else to go)

This implies that, once a woman has become a man’s mistress, the man has control over when to see her and on what terms. They were stuck in a vicious cycle, there was no escape into married life.

Priestley tries to suggest rich capitalists see no issue with stealing and cheating to get their way, whereas the working class seem to be much more moral and consider their conscience. Eva doesn't accept the money even though she is desperately in need of it.

“Just used her for the end of a stupid, drunken evening, as if she was an animal”- The simile used by the Inspector referring to Eric’s mistakes highlights how easy it is for rich capitalists to exploit the working class with no remorse. They use them for their own needs yet are ignorant to the struggles of the working class in society. The noun ‘animal’ emphasises how badly Eva was treated by Eric and how he had no care for her welfare and needs, implying that he is acting as a predator.

“I couldn’t remember her name, or where she lived”- Eric is oblivious to who Eva is, and perceives her as insignificant in comparison to him, who is said to be ‘superior’. This allows Eric to control and patronise her without even truly knowing who Eva is

“I became at once the most important person in her life”- The fact that Gerald didn’t even know Eva that well after he met her yet instantly became the most important person in her life highlights the loneliness and solitary state of the working class, who have no one to turn to in a state of crisis.

“She wouldn’t take any money” (when she found out it was stolen)- Highlights how the working class seem to be much more moral and consider their conscience. Eva doesn't accept the money even though she is desperately in need of it.

“One Eva Smith has gone - but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths still left with us”- The fact that the dead girl has many names creates the effect that it is not just one person who is affected by the irresponsible upper class but many different people, possibly the whole of the working class and is underlined by the use of the surname "smith" which is very common in Britain. All the characters have done something weak or wicked which some accept and others fail to. But the play is overall showing Priestley's views on society and airing his vast dislike of the snobbery in the upper and middle classes.

The Inspector’s final speech:

Starter:

The word didactic links to the lesson as it represents the Inspector's final speech where he intends to educate the Birling's on accepting responsibility through having good moral instruction.

Look at pages (49-51). How is tension created?

- Act two finishes with a cliffhanger as the audience are left wondering whether or not Eric was the “drunken young idler” that got Eva/Daisy pregnant.
- Eric enters looking ‘pale and distressed’ which suggests he is guilty and ashamed.
- Eric has already figured that everyone knows what happened, questioning ‘you know don’t you?’
- At this moment, Priestley has left the Inspector out of this and the Birling family begin to self destruct and create turmoil

The Birlings arguing and blaming one another: Eric stating “you haven’t made it any easier for me, have you Mother?”, creates anticipation and contributes to the building tension of revealing what happened as he is suggesting something awful happened.

Stage directions: “He meets their inquiring stares. The curtain falls quickly”- Ending the act on a cliffhanger creates tension as it heightens the authoritative nature of Priestley and how he is controlling the revelation.

Sudden minor sentence: “why you little sneak”- Eric is becoming annoyed with his family which suggests he may blame them and reveal the reasoning for his actions, creating suspense for an audience as the play comes to an end.

“We are members of one body.
We are responsible for each other”

What does the Inspector mean by this?

ANSWER: The Inspector means that everyone in society is responsible for each other as we are all part of one world; not different worlds depending on class or gender and how everyone should be treated the same and be aware of your actions and their consequences.

What language devices are used and what do they suggest?

ANSWER: Priestley uses anaphora to highlight the word ‘we’ which is a plural pronoun and that indicates that the inspector is grouping the whole society and informing the audience that our actions (no matter how small or unseemingly they are,) will always affect the entire humanity.

How do these words link to Priestley’s own political views?

ANSWER: These words promote very socialist views and highlight how we can be independent but only to a certain extent and we are collectively responsible for each other.

Which words should you pick out and analyse?

ANSWER: A body needs to function so that a human can survive. To function, the body has organs that make up different systems, each having a specific function. Priestley is describing us as if we are these organs and that our actions will have certain consequences no matter if they are intended or unintended.

‘But just remember this. One Eva Smith has gone – but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, with what we think and say and do. We don’t live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible

for each other. And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it **in fire and blood and anguish**. Good night.'

"We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other." Priestley is criticising capitalists by juxtaposing their views on individuality by highlighting community and inclusiveness through the collective pronoun "we". The noun "members" exemplifies the inclusiveness and permanence whilst the word choice of 'responsible' highlights the Birling's lack of responsibility in their involvement in Eva Smith's death. At the time the play was written, the capitalist ideology and class divisions were fading which emphasises how Priestley was correct.

"In fire, and blood and anguish"- The use of triple metaphorically symbolises the war. At this time, Britain had just experienced World War 2 which may be hinting how the ruling class didn't learn their lesson from WW1, much like the Birling's didn't learn their lesson in regards to Eva Smith/Daisy Renton.

"There are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smith's and John Smith's"- The repetition of 'millions' implies the large extent of the working class and the lack of recognition for the poor.

"Their suffering and chance of happiness"- The emotive language is used as a persuasive technique that emphasises the need for a change.

Task:

Listing things in threes (e.g. 'Government of the people, by the people, for the people.' Gettysburg Address, 1863)- "in fire and blood and anguish"

The use of contrastive pairs (e.g. 'That's one small step for man. One giant leap for mankind.'

Moon landing broadcast, 1969) - "We don't live alone. We are members of one body"

That talking positively about 'us' or 'we' makes the audience identify with what is being said.- "We are responsible for each other"

That talking negatively about 'them' makes for a strong speech.- "their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness"

The use of the first person singular 'I' to make the audience feel the speaker is sincere.- "And I tell you that the time will soon come"

The use of powerful or memorable words and phrases.- “taught in fire and blood and anguish”

The rhythm of the language (e.g. the length of sentences, the effect of pauses.)- there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths”.

There are many references to hell and the bible in this speech such as “and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood”; “we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all others”

What different interpretations might the metaphor ‘we are members of one body’ have? What could it symbolise? The metaphor may symbolise the need for collective responsibility or inclusiveness in society.

What different interpretations might the list ‘fire and blood and anguish’ have? What could it symbolise? - The list may be used to emphasise the extent of Priestley’s views through a brutal description. It could be an allusion to hell if people do not learn their lesson or signify the mistakes made by ruling classes after the end of two world wars, highlighting how they didn’t learn from their mistakes.

Priestley uses the Inspector’s chillingly prophetic final speech to forcefully present his powerful socialist message to the audience that a social and political shift may take Britain forward to a society based on equality and community. The speech could also be to criticise capitalists by juxtaposing their view on individuality by emphasising the opposite: inclusiveness and a collective representation of responsibility.

