

An Inspector Calls

Essay Questions

Act I

1. The mood in this act changes from relaxed to tense. Explore the ways Priestley transforms the tone throughout the Act.
2. How does Priestley hint at the tensions within the group that later become more clear?
3. How does Priestley present the Inspector as an unusual policeman in this Act?

Act II

4. What do we learn about Eva Smith from Act II? How does Priestley contrast her behaviour with that of the Birling family and Gerald Croft?
5. Act II ends with Mrs. Birling finally weakening. What is the cause of this? How does the Inspector trap her into condemning her own son?
6. Compare and contrast the reaction of Gerald Croft and Mrs. Birling to interrogation by the inspector.
7. How has Eric's guilt been suggested by Priestley in Acts I and II?

The whole play

8. Write about Inspector Goole's role in the play. How far is he a believable policeman? How does Priestley use the inspector in the play?
9. Write about the way the relationship between Gerald and Sheila develops during the play.
10. *An Inspector Calls* is full of lies and deceit. Write fully about the way Priestley exposes weakness and wickedness, not only in the characters on stage, but also in society.
11. Write fully about ONE of the characters in the play. Take into account what they have done before the play begins as well as their actions, words and attitudes during the course of the play. Write about the way attitudes, moods and opinions change and develop during the course of the action on stage.
12. The Inspector's inquiries make the Birlings quarrel among themselves. How does Priestley develop these internal conflicts during the play?
13. Compare and contrast the attitudes of Birling and the inspector throughout the play.
14. How does Priestley show the confidence of the Birlings in their position?
15. Compare and contrast the reaction of Arthur Birling and Sheila Birling to interrogation by the Inspector.