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Introducing 'An Inspector Calls' and J.B. Priestley

An Inspector Calls is about society and class divides

- J.B. Priestley wrote *An Inspector Calls* in 1945, during the Second World War, but he set the play in 1912.
- In 1912, society wasn't equal — people with more money and from a higher class had more power.
- Priestley used the unequal society of 1912 as a setting to get people to think about inequality in 1945.

An Inspector Calls has a strong message...

- 1) The audience knows that the characters' world is going to go through terrible changes. 1912 was just before the First World War — which began in 1914 and killed millions of people.
- 2) Priestley wrote *An Inspector Calls* to challenge his audience to think about how many more disasters lay ahead for them if they didn't learn from past mistakes.

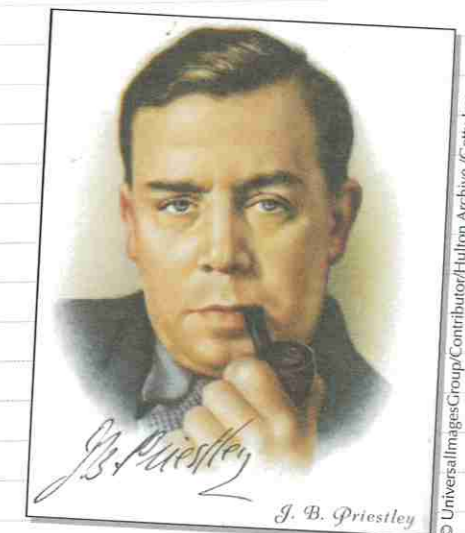
A wounded soldier receives first aid in a trench during the Battle of the Somme, 1916.



The war years affected J.B. Priestley's life and writing

- *An Inspector Calls* was written near the end of the Second World War, so the audience would have seen how war affected everyone. Soldiers were returning from the war and hoping for a better life.
- *An Inspector Calls* asks the audience to unite to improve society.

1894	Born in <u>Bradford</u>
1910	Left school and started work as a <u>clerk</u> at a wool firm.
1914-18	First World War. Priestley was <u>wounded</u> but survived.
1919-21	Studied for degree in modern history and politics at <u>Cambridge University</u> .
1922	Started work as a <u>journalist</u> in London.
1939	Second World War starts.
1940	Priestley presented a popular BBC <u>radio programme</u> , 'Postscripts', but his show was cancelled after members of the government decided Priestley's views were <u>too left-wing</u> (i.e. socialist).
1941-42	Priestley founded various <u>socialist organisations</u> .
1945	Second World War ends.
1984	Died, aged 89.



For more about socialism, see p.36.

'An Inspector Calls' — Plot Summary



'An Inspector Calls'... what happens when?

Here's a little recap of the main events of *An Inspector Calls*. It's a good idea to learn what happens when, so that you know exactly how the plot progresses and how all the important events fit together.

Act One — one spring evening in 1912...



Photo: An Inspector Calls, ©2010 Lamb's Players Theatre

- The Birling family are celebrating Sheila's engagement to Gerald. It all seems to be going well, but Sheila suspects that Gerald lost interest in her last summer.
- Arthur gives a speech to Eric and Gerald about business. He says that every man should look after himself.
- Inspector Goole arrives and says that a woman called Eva Smith has committed suicide by drinking disinfectant. He starts to question the family members, one by one.

- It turns out Arthur Birling sacked Eva Smith from his factory for striking in protest against low wages and that Sheila asked for Eva Smith to be sacked from a department store last year.
- The Inspector explains that Eva Smith then changed her name to Daisy Renton. Gerald appears shocked and Eric leaves.

Act Two — everyone's tangled up in the Inspector's investigation

- Although he wants to keep it a secret, Gerald eventually describes how he spent last summer with Daisy Renton — she was his mistress.
- Gerald is upset. Sheila returns his ring and Gerald leaves.
- The Inspector gets Sybil to confess that she persuaded the Women's Charity Organisation to reject Eva/Daisy's appeal for help. Eva/Daisy was pregnant at the time.
- Sybil blames the father of Eva/Daisy's child for her death.
- Sheila guesses that the father of the child is Eric.



© Alastair Muir/BBC, Evocative

Act Three — Eric brings shame to the family

- Eric returns. He knows that the Inspector has led everyone to the conclusion that he's the father of Eva/Daisy's unborn child.
- He describes how he met Eva Smith at a bar, and drunkenly forced her to have sex. He got her pregnant and then stole money from his father's office to support her.
- Eva/Daisy rejected the stolen money and turned to Sybil's charity for help. Eric says Sybil murdered her own grandchild by refusing to give her charity.
- The Inspector reminds the Birlings that we are all responsible for each other. He warns that unless everyone learns to look after each other, the lesson will have to be learnt later with greater suffering.



© Simon Cough Photography

Act Three — the final twist...

- Gerald returns, having spoken to a police officer who doesn't recognise the name 'Goole'. Birling calls the police station to confirm there is no inspector called 'Goole' in the area.
- Gerald calls the hospital and finds out that no one has committed suicide. Birling, Sybil and Gerald decide it's all been a hoax and start to relax.
- Sheila and Eric argue that they are all still guilty of treating someone badly.
- The phone rings. A young woman has just been found dead after drinking disinfectant, and the police are sending an inspector to question the Birling family...



© Francis Loney/Arena PAL, TopFoto.co.uk

Ring, ring — this is your future self calling...

...to say thanks for starting off your revision so well. Once you're confident you know what happens when in *An Inspector Calls*, turn over the page to start Section One for some cracking analysis of the plot. If you're still not 100% clear on the plot, turn to the back of the book for the cartoon...



Photo: An Inspector Calls, ©2010 Lamb's Players Theatre

Analysis of Act One — Arthur's Speech

After getting to know Priestley and pinning down the plot, it's about time to work out what's really going on. This section will analyse the play, act by act, pointing out key plot points and explaining the play's themes.

The Birlings are having an engagement party

- 1) Everyone is content and saying the right things.
- 2) The Birlings are Priestley's idea of a 'perfect' middle-class family:

- the father's a successful businessman
- the mother works hard to keep up the Birlings' reputation in the community
- the son works for the father in the family business
- the daughter's engaged to the son of their competitor — this should improve the business because the two companies could merge in the future



But there are hints of conflict under the surface

- 1) Gerald's family, the Crofts, are more established and socially superior. This makes Arthur Birling anxious.
- 2) Gerald says he was busy with work last summer. But Sheila's not really satisfied with this answer — "Yes, that's what you say."
- 3) There are big differences between what's expected of men and women. In this society, men are supposed to be busy with work and the world of public affairs. Women are supposed to be interested in family, clothes and social etiquette ('proper' behaviour).

Birling lectures the young men about war and business

- 1) Arthur Birling's confident about the future for his family and business. He gives a speech with his predictions for the future. But the audience of 1946 knows what's coming, and it's not what Birling thinks:

- He says conflicts between workers and bosses will come to nothing. But there were many strikes between 1912 and 1945, including the General Strike of 1926, which saw the country grind to a halt for nine days.
- He says technological progress will continue, and gives the recently completed Titanic as an example. He says it's "unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable".
- Eric asks whether there'll be a war with Germany. Arthur says no way. But two years later, along comes World War One — war with Germany.

- 2) Priestley uses dramatic irony to make Birling look overconfident. It makes the audience think that Birling might be wrong about lots of other things, such as his belief in the motto 'Every man for himself'.

Writer's Technique

When the audience know more about something than the character on stage, it's called dramatic irony (see page 50).



Analysis of Act One — The Inspector Begins

An inspector calls and says a girl has died

- 1) The Inspector gives a blunt account of Eva Smith's death.
- 2) The harsh language — "Burnt her inside out" — contrasts violently with the polite and playful atmosphere at the start. The Inspector catches the Birlings off-guard, which helps his investigation.
- 3) The Inspector shows a photograph to Birling but doesn't show it to either Gerald or Eric. This is important because Gerald later suspects that each person was shown a different photograph, believing it to be the same one.

Theme — Family Life

The Birlings' family life is held together by secrets and polite behaviour. The Inspector disrupts everything and lets the secrets out.

Birling sacked Eva Smith to protect his business

- 1) The Inspector gets Birling to tell the story of why he sacked Eva Smith. This gives Birling a false sense of being in charge for a bit.
- 2) The workers at the Birling factory went on strike after Birling refused a pay rise. He wanted to protect his profits and prevent another strike, so he sacked the "ring-leaders", including Eva Smith.
- 3) This story gives the play a political element. Priestley's positioning the rights of the workers against the interests of the businessman.
- 4) Eva's described as a "lively good-looking girl". She's remembered as an attractive hero — this makes Birling look worse.



Theme — Social Responsibility

Birling sees employees as "cheap labour". If he can get them to work for less, he will do. He wants the opposite of 'social responsibility' — maximum profit for the individual.

Then Sheila got her sacked from her next job

- 1) Sheila's shown a photograph — possibly not the same one that Birling saw. She recognises the woman she got sacked from Milwards last year.
- 2) Sheila's insecurity and jealousy made her think that Eva Smith was laughing at her at Milwards.
- 3) As a regular customer from a good family she had the power to demand that Eva Smith be sacked from her job. Sheila abused her influence.
- 4) But Sheila also says she "felt rotten about it at the time", and her reaction to the Inspector's news shows that she knew she behaved badly and that she's grown up a bit since then. Priestley portrays Sheila as a forgivable character.



Photo: An Inspector Calls, ©2010 Lamb's Players Theatre



Talk about the change of mood once the Inspector arrives...

It'll impress the examiner if you mention that the play's mood dips after the doorbell rings. Priestley sets things up nicely for the arrival of the Inspector — things can't get any better, so they must get worse.

Analysis of Act One — Eva Smith is Daisy Renton

Priestley ends Act One with the Inspector's reappearance because it makes the audience wonder how much the Inspector already knows, and how much there is yet to find out. Priestley's keeping his audience alert.

Sheila and Eric are sympathetic

- 1) Eric points out the **hypocrisy** of sacking Eva Smith for asking for higher wages because the Birling company "try for the highest possible prices."
- 2) Eric and Sheila give **emotional responses** to the Inspector's story, while their parents show **no sympathy**.
- 3) Sheila's repeatedly told to leave the room by both her parents — she stays because she feels it's her **duty** to stay to hear the **whole story** and to find out who's **responsible**.

Hypocrisy is when someone's actions don't match what they claim to believe.

Theme — Young and Old

The Birlings don't think a young woman should hear this grim story. However, Sheila's a **young woman** who **thinks for herself** and **breaks away** from her parents' **traditional** views.

Eva Smith changes her name to Daisy Renton

- 1) The Inspector explains that after being sacked from Milwards Eva Smith decided to **change** her name.

- Perhaps Eva Smith needed a **dramatic change** to **escape** her past.
- Or maybe this is just the Inspector spinning a tale to **link** two separate women.
- Either way, the name Daisy Renton's a **fresh** sounding name for a fresh start. But 'under the daisies' was a **euphemism** for being **dead** (see p.50). And 'renting' suggests **prostitution**. Maybe the name isn't so fresh after all.



- 2) Gerald is "**startled**" — he recognises the name.

Gerald confesses to Sheila

- 1) Eric and the Inspector leave to find Birling, giving Sheila the opportunity to **question Gerald**.
- 2) Gerald says his affair with Daisy was "**over** and done with last summer". He suggests that they should **keep it secret** so that it doesn't become a scandal.
- 3) Sheila's sure that the Inspector **knows everything** already — she's worried about "how much he knows that we don't know yet". Gerald and Sheila get more **anxious** and **suspicious**, which heightens the **tension**.
- 4) The Inspector **slowly opens** the door and looks "**searchingly**" as if he can read their expressions. He says only **one word** but it confirms that he's in **control** and **expects** something from them: "Well?"

Theme — Men and Women

It was **considered okay** for men to have affairs and mistresses. It wouldn't have been **acceptable** for Sheila to have a lover.

Analysis of Act Two — Gerald's Affair

The Inspector is piecing together the events of the final couple of years of Eva/Daisy's life. Act Two starts with the Inspector questioning Gerald about how he came to know Daisy.

Gerald kept Daisy as his mistress

- 1) Gerald **ignores** the Inspector's question, "Well?", and **excuses** Sheila for being "**hysterical**". He's trying to get Sheila to **leave** so he doesn't have to tell her more details about his **affair**.
- 2) The Inspector points out Gerald's **hypocrisy** in thinking that women should be "**protected**" when it's men like him that took advantage of Daisy Renton — "one young woman who wasn't" protected.
- 3) Gerald tells the others about his affair with Daisy. He defends the relationship — "You know, it wasn't **disgusting**", but Mrs Birling is **shocked**. She doesn't understand the term "**women of the town**" (prostitutes) and is upset to learn that Gerald's been seeing them.

Theme — Men and Women

If the Palace stalls are well known for being a place to pick up **prostitutes**, it's likely Gerald went there to find a prostitute himself.

Daisy fell in love with Gerald out of gratitude

- 1) Sheila suggests that Daisy loved Gerald as her "**wonderful Fairy Prince**". Gerald doesn't say he loved Daisy, but agrees that he "**adored**" being **loved** by her.
- 2) Gerald **finished** with Eva/Daisy just before he went on a business trip. Although he gave her some money, he effectively made her **homeless**.
- 3) Eva/Daisy went to a "seaside place" to remember their time together "just to make it **last longer**". For Gerald, it was a summer fling, but for Eva/Daisy "there'd **never** be anything as good **again**".

Gerald is shamed and Sheila breaks off the engagement

KEY EVENT



Theme — Learning about Life

Although she's dazzled by the ring at first, Sheila's **mature** enough to realise the **consequences** of marrying a man who has **lied** to her.

- 1) Gerald should have confessed all this **months ago**. Less than an hour ago he said he hadn't seen Sheila much last summer because he was too busy at work. He **lied**.
- 2) Sheila says they'd "have to start **all over again**, getting to know each other".
- 3) Birling **defends** Gerald, saying, "you must understand that a lot of young men —". He implies that **lots of men** have mistresses.
- 4) Gerald doesn't ask Birling for permission to leave. He **asks** the Inspector. This shows that the Inspector's in **control** now, and not Birling.



Mention the different characters' opinions of the affair...

Gerald's revelation doesn't shock Birling — he thinks it's OK for a man to have a mistress — but Sybil thinks it's "disgusting". Men and women in the play seem to have different opinions on what's acceptable.

Analysis of Act Two — Sybil Refused to Help

Priestley wants to show how lies underpin this family's life. Gerald's been lying about last summer, and Sybil's trying to avoid telling the truth. The fact that they're lying shows they know they've done wrong.

Sybil Birling is a hard nut to crack

- 1) The Inspector presents Sybil with the photograph. She pretends she doesn't **recognise** it.
- 2) Even when the Inspector manages to press the story out of her, Sybil won't accept **responsibility** for her actions.
- 3) Sybil can't **imagine** herself in a **similar situation** to Eva/Daisy — she can't **empathise**. Sybil is so obsessed with social class and reputation that she can't recognise **connections** between her life and anyone else's.

Theme — Young and Old

The Inspector increases the **tension** between the **parents** and **children** by using Sheila's help to get Sybil to tell the whole story.

Sybil had the last chance to help but she refused

- 1) Mrs Birling persuaded the committee to **turn down** Eva/Daisy's request because:

- Eva/Daisy said her name was "Birling". Mrs Birling thought it was a "piece of **gross impertinence**" (rude) for Eva/Daisy to dare to associate her own scandal with the Birling family name.
- She changed her story. At first she said her husband had **left her** and she was **pregnant**, but later admitted she **wasn't married**.

- 2) Priestley contrasts Sybil Birling's attempts to preserve her reputation with Eva/Daisy's moral standards. Eva/Daisy **wouldn't marry** the father of her child and wouldn't take any more money from him because:

- He was a "youngster — **silly and wild** and **drinking too much**".
- The money he'd been giving to her was **stolen**.
- He didn't **love** her.



Theme — Social Class

Mrs Birling dismissed Eva/Daisy's story as "**ridiculous**" because she couldn't believe that a girl of "**that sort**" (working class) would ever refuse money. She based her refusal on **class prejudice**.

Sybil won't take responsibility

- 1) After trying to **resist** all the Inspector's questions, Mrs Birling realises that she can **blame** the father of the child instead of **admitting** her own guilt.
- 2) Sybil starts to tell everyone what she thinks should happen to **punish** this "**young man**".
- 3) Sybil blames the father for getting involved with a girl from a **different class**. She assumes she wouldn't know a man who **drinks** and **steals**.
- 4) She says that the Inspector should punish the man "**very severely**" before making him "confess in public his **responsibility**".



Analysis of Act Two — Sybil Blames the Father

Mrs Birling really puts her foot in it

- 1) While Sybil is blaming the father of the child, the Inspector **doesn't intervene**, but instead lets her walk straight into a **trap** — demanding that he punish **her own son**.
- 2) This is the most **dramatic** result of questioning each person separately — Sybil answers the Inspector's questions, totally **unaware** of what Eric is going to say.
- 3) But Sheila is **open to the idea** that her family are **guilty** and guesses that Eric might well be the "young man" that Sybil's determined to **blame**.



© Simon Gough Photography

Sheila quickly sees what's going on

- 1) If the audience already think that Sheila has matured since the incident at Milwards, they realise that she's now a **very different Sheila** from the well-behaved and blushing bride-to-be of Act One.
- 2) Sheila can be **determined** and **stubborn** like her parents. But while her parents use their stubbornness to **resist** the Inspector, Sheila's **stubbornness** leads her to seek out the **truth**.
- 3) Sheila **demands** that Gerald and Sybil answer the Inspector's questions and tells Birling not to **interfere** when he's defending the behaviour of young men sleeping around.

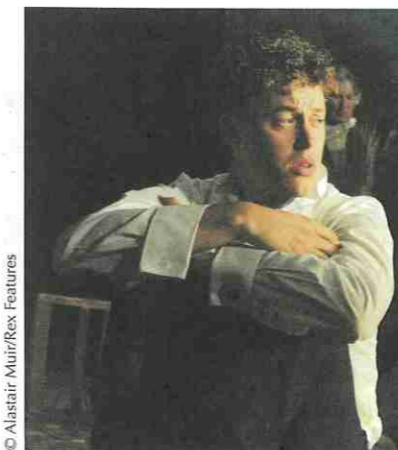
Themes — Learning about Life

She recognised that she'd **changed** when she **handed** the ring back to Gerald, saying that they weren't "**the same people** who sat down to dinner".

Perfectly on cue — Eric walks in



Turning point in the action
All the major characters (except Gerald) are now on stage. Eric is forced to give a public confession.



© Alastair Muir/Rex Features

- 1) Eric walks in, looking "**extremely pale and distressed**". It's as if he has been summoned to the dock, and his mother's already declared him guilty without knowing.
- 2) Eric's been **absent** for much of the play. He left the dining room in Act One and even left the house earlier in Act Two. Eric is always **running away** from his family and their **expectations** of him.
- 3) Act Two finishes with a **cliffhanger**. The audience is left wondering whether or not Eric was the "**drunken young idler**" that got Eva/Daisy **pregnant**.



"No, he's giving us rope — so that we'll hang ourselves."

Sheila's smart — she realises pretty quickly that the Birlings are all going to walk straight into the Inspector's trap. Mrs Birling dismisses her as over-excited, but she soon regrets not listening to what Sheila's saying...

Analysis of Act Three — Eric Confesses

The Inspector just had to open the cracks in the Birling family, and it's broken apart. Priestley carefully engineered the plot so that once the ball got rolling, the family just started to self-destruct.

Eric confesses all — and it's a bit of a mess



- 1) Eric's ready to confess. He's guessed that the Inspector's helped everyone realise he's the father of Eva/Daisy's child — "You know, don't you?".
- 2) Eric explains that he forced Eva/Daisy to have sex with him, and got her pregnant — he was so drunk he threatened to cause a "row" if she didn't let him in to her flat.
- 3) He regrets his actions, but his language shows his immaturity. Eric calls Eva/Daisy "a good sport" and "pretty" — this sounds insensitive given how badly he treated her. Eric says that she treated him as a "kid".
- 4) Eric doesn't understand how middle-class men are supposed to behave. His parents think he's acted worse than Gerald, who knew how to have an affair without creating a scandal — but it makes the audience start blaming his parents for his upbringing.

Birling's appalled — not by suicide, but by theft and shame



© Simon Gough Photography

- 1) Arthur Birling starts to take the situation seriously for the first time. His son's stolen money from the company to help support Eva/Daisy.
- 2) In the middle of Eric's story Arthur orders the women to leave.
- 3) Eric's involvement has gone too far for the Birling family. He'd have had an illegitimate child with a prostitute. This would have brought shame on the family.

Sybil returns and brings Eric bad news

- 1) Sybil and Sheila return to the dining room because Sybil "had to know what's happening" — she disobeys her husband now she realises how involved she is in the story.
- 2) Because Eric's been outside, he hasn't heard that Sybil was involved in Eva/Daisy's and his child's death. When he finds out he's furious, and links her failure to "understand" to his own childhood — "You don't understand anything. You never did."

Themes — Family Life

Sybil's kept a polite household and a perfect reputation for the family, but at the cost of a close and understanding relationship with her children.



Some productions, such as Stephen Daldry's (as seen above), emphasise Sybil's reaction to discovering her role in her grandchild's death.

Turning point in the action

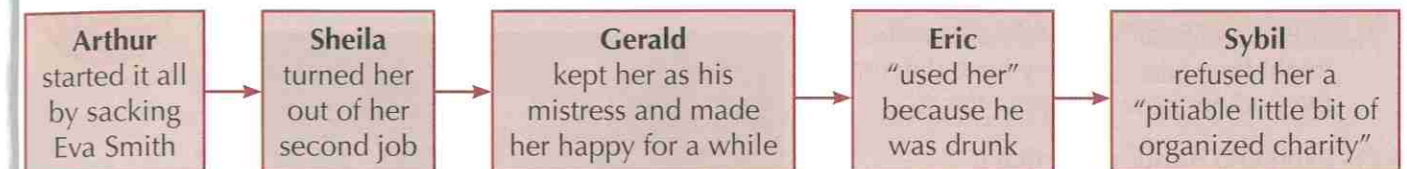
Every member of the family has let down their defences. They're primed and ready for the Inspector's speech...

Analysis of Act Three — The Inspector's Speech

The Inspector has his say



- 1) First, the Inspector sums up how each person at the dinner party played their part in Eva/Daisy's short life:



- 2) Now that the Inspector has broken through their defences, they're ready to hear his message.

- He links Eva/Daisy to the "millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths" — the rest of society, or even the rest of humanity.
- He says everyone is "intertwined" and "members of one body" — everyone shares "their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness" because everyone's affected.
- He warns that if people don't learn to be more responsible, they'll be forced to understand their mistakes through "fire and blood and anguish". The Inspector's foreseeing all the suffering that will result from selfishness, including the world wars.

The Birling family structure collapses

- 1) The Inspector tells them at the start of Act Three that they'll have plenty of time to "adjust" their family relationships.
- 2) The first words after the Inspector's exit are Birling blaming Eric for their problems. This signals a decline from the Inspector's moral speech into petty squabbling.
- 3) Arthur Birling doesn't want anything to change. He's desperate to get things back to how they were — with him in charge.



© Simon Gough Photography

Everyone's ashamed — but not necessarily of themselves

Themes — Learning about Life

Birling says he's "learnt plenty", but not about how and why he's been wrong. He's learnt how Sheila and Eric really behave and think, and he's not impressed.

- 1) The word "ashamed" is passed between the family members. First Sybil tells Eric she's "absolutely ashamed" of his drinking.
- 2) Eric then says he's ashamed of his parents' actions.
- 3) Finally, Sheila says that she's ashamed of her own actions. She shoulders the blame, and asks everyone else to do the same.
- 4) The parents haven't learnt anything. They're more focused on trying to keep all the revelations in the family. The only thing they'd feel ashamed of is a scandal.



"We don't live alone. We are members of one body."

The play's coming to a close — it's usually time for the characters to learn their lessons. The Inspector does his best to make this happen, but not all of the Birlings are prepared to take responsibility for their actions.

Analysis of Act Three — Was it a Hoax?

Just when you think you've got it all worked out, there's a big twist. Apparently, Inspector Goole doesn't even exist — how do you explain that one? Then a final phone call tells us that there'll be no neat, happy ending..

The Inspector might not have been a real inspector

- 1) Sheila and Sybil realise the Inspector might be a fake, but they have different ideas about how important this is.
- 2) Sybil and Arthur agree that it makes "all the difference" if it wasn't a real police visit.
- 3) Sheila and Eric disagree — "He was our police inspector all right". It doesn't matter if the Inspector was fake if what he's shown them is true.



Photo: An Inspector Calls, ©2010 Lamb's Players Theatre



Gerald's return splits the family further

- 1) Gerald returns and says that he's found out there's no Inspector Goole on the force. Birling calls the police station to confirm that Goole wasn't a real inspector, and starts to think of the night's events as a hoax, with himself as the victim.
- 2) Sybil starts to rewrite her role in the evening — she says she's proud that she "didn't give in to him".
- 3) Gerald points out that the photograph might have been different photographs of different girls. Gerald calls the hospital and confirms that there's been no suicide — Birling is very relieved and considers himself guilt-free.
- 4) Gerald tells Sheila "Everything's all right now" while offering her the ring. She says it's "too soon" to be thinking about that and forgetting all she learnt this evening.
- 5) Gerald and Mr and Mrs Birling are relaxed and joking. The atmosphere seems just like it did at the start of the play — it's almost like a happy ending.

Writer's Technique

Priestley gives Gerald the role of a detective at the end of a murder mystery — he pieces together the events and summarises it for the others. But instead of solving the crime, Gerald makes it seem as if there was no crime at all.

A phone call... a girl has died, and an inspector will call

This news arrives with the same spooky accuracy as the Inspector's first arrival:

- 1) The Inspector first arrived just after Birling had said that "a man has to mind his own business". The Inspector's message was all about social responsibility.
- 2) And at the end of the play the phone rings just after Birling has laughed at "the famous younger generation who know it all". Birling still thinks he knows it all — he's not learnt the Inspector's lesson.



Mention the way different characters react...

There's a split in the way the characters react to the news that the Inspector isn't who he seemed. Mention that the elder Birlings and Gerald are relieved to get off scot-free — but Sheila and Eric still feel guilty.

Practice Questions

So, by now you should know 'An Inspector Calls' pretty well, and be able to pick out important moments and details to help you analyse the plot. Try answering these quick questions in a line or two to make sure.

Quick Questions

Act One

- 1) How does the opening scene suggest that the Birlings are the 'perfect' family?
- 2) Before the Inspector arrives, Arthur Birling makes a speech about the state of the world. Name one event that the audience know will happen after 1912 which prove he's wrong.
- 3) Explain in your own words why Arthur Birling sacked Eva Smith.
- 4) Why does Eric disagree with his father's decision to sack Eva Smith?
- 5) Explain in your own words why Sheila Birling got Eva Smith sacked.
- 6) Give two reasons why Priestley would have Eva Smith change her name to Daisy Renton.

Act Two

- 1) What word finishes Act One and begins Act Two?
- 2) How does Sheila react towards Gerald once he has finished telling his story?
- 3) Give one piece of evidence which suggests that Gerald's bad behaviour was quite common among middle-class men of the time.
- 4) Give two reasons why Sybil refused to help Eva/Daisy.
- 5) Who does Sybil say is ultimately the one responsible for Eva/Daisy's death?
- 6) Why does Sheila suspect that Eric might be the "young man" who got Eva/Daisy pregnant?

Act Three

- 1) Give two examples of language that Eric uses which suggests he's immature.
- 2) What piece of news makes Eric turn on his mother?
- 3) Summarise the Inspector's final speech in three main points.
- 4) Explain how each of the four family members react to his speech.
- 5) Why do the characters start to think that the Inspector might have been a fake?
- 6) Three telephone calls are made in Act Three. Say who makes each call, and what is revealed.