

















‘An Inspector Calls’

Key Characters		Priestley’s Methods		Key Quotations	
Inspector Goole	Interrogates the Birlings/Priestley’s mouthpiece	Dramatic Devices			“Is it the one you wanted me to have?” 1
		Dramatic irony	When the audience knows more than the character (or characters) on stage		
Mr Arthur Birling	Local businessman/represents irresponsible capitalists	Cyclical structure			“The Titanic...unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable” 1
		The play starts and ends in the same position			
Mrs Sybil Birling	Represents the ignorance and apathy of the aristocracy	Mirroring of language	Different characters repeat others’ phrases and mannerisms		“Hard-headed practical man of business” 1
Sheila Birling	Transforms from saccharine girl to representing responsible younger generation	Juxtaposition / contrast	Oppositions in views, classes, ages to highlight the differences		“all mixed up together like bees in a hive” 1
Eric Birling	Acts irresponsibly but, unlike older generation, accepts responsibility and feels guilt	Entrances and exits	Where characters enter the dramatic space to heighten tension		“He creates at once an impression of massiveness, solidity and purposefulness”
Gerald Croft	Gerald is caught between the generations and accepts some responsibility but also reverts	Listing (polysyndeton/asyndetic)	‘fire and blood and anguish’ / ‘alone, friendless, almost penniless’		“But these girls aren’t cheap labour - they’re people” 1
Eva Smith/ Daisy Renton	Represents the working class (women)	Vocabulary			“he’s giving us the rope – so that we’ll hang ourselves” 2
		Hierarchy	Ranking of people according to status		
Plot Summary		Capitalism	Individual profit and inequality in society		“Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges” 2
Act One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birlings celebrating Sheila’s engagement to Gerald. • Inspector Goole arrives – a girl has committed suicide. • Inspector Goole interrogates Mr Birling about his factory and how he treats his workers. • Inspector Goole interrogates Sheila about her behaviour at Milwards – a clothing shop. • Gerald’s affair with Eva is exposed; Sheila won’t protect him. 	Socialism	Equality and distribution of wealth; caring for others’ welfare		
		Iniquity	Immoral or grossly unfair behaviour		“Go and look for the father of the child. It’s his responsibility” 2
		Political diatribe	A forceful attack in favour of one’s political ideas		
		Embodiment	When an idea is represented by a person/character		“alone, friendless, almost penniless, desperate” 2
		Context			
1912	When the play is set; Titanic sunk		“As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money” 2		
1945/1946	When the play is written/performed. End of WW2				
Act Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerald is interrogated about being the ‘fairy tale Prince’ and enjoying his doomed affair with Eva. • Sybil is interrogated – Brumley Women’s Charity turned Eva/Daisy away when she was pregnant and desperate. • Sybil blames the father of the child, not realising it is Eric. 	Industrial revolution	Development of industry/machinery/factories and mass migration to cities		“I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty” 3
		Suffragettes	Women seeking the right to vote through organised protest		“I liked her – she was pretty and a good sport” 3
		Atlee’s landslide election (1945)	Socialist government/welfare state elected into power		“used her [...] as if she were an animal, a thing, not a person”
Act Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric returns and we discover he is the father of Eva’s child. • The Inspector leaves with a foreboding message about the future if men do not change their ways. • Sheila and Eric begin to take responsibility; the others celebrate in their view that the Inspector was a ‘hoax’. 	Themes			“They will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish”
		Class	Inequality between those of different social standings		
		Gender	Patriarchal society causing mistreatment of women		
		Age	Younger generation’s potential vs the older generation		

• The phone rings again...	Social responsibility	Taking care of others and having an investment in their welfare		<i>"The girl's dead and we all helped to kill her" 3</i>
	Guilt	Feeling negative emotions as a result of one's actions		