

Independent Study Knowledge Organiser

'An Inspector Calls' by J.B. Priestley

Keywords	Key quotes		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Socialism 2. Capitalism 3. Hierarchy 4. Libertarian 5. Omniscient 6. Didactic 7. Microcosm 8. Misogynist 9. Patriarchy 10. Conscience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Act1: "By the way some of these cranks talk and write now, you'd think everybody has to look after everybody else, as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive – community and all that nonsense." 2. Act 1: "If you don't come down sharply on some of these people, they'd soon be asking for the earth." 3. Act 1: "But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people." 4. Act 2: "You mustn't try to build a wall between us and that girl." 5. Act 2: "when this comes out at the inquest, it isn't going to do us much good. The press might easily take it up –" 6. Act 2: "As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money." 7. Act 3: "I wasn't in love with her or anything – but I liked her – she was pretty and a good sport –" 8. Act 3: "We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other." 9. Act 3: "if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish." 10. Act 3: Everything we said had happened really had happened. If it didn't end tragically, then that's lucky for us. But it might have" 11. Act 3: "Now look at the pair of them – the famous younger generation who know it all. And they can't even take a joke –" 		
<p>Plot tracking</p> <p>Act 1: The Birling's are celebrating the engagement of S to G. An Inspector arrives to investigate the suicide of Eva. It is revealed that both Mr B and S were responsible for E losing two jobs.</p> <p>Act 2: G admits that he had an affair with E and leaves upset. Mrs B refused to give Eva any money when she came to beg for charity. Mrs B says that the father of the child should take responsibility.</p> <p>Act 3: E admits that he is the father of E's child. He feels terrible for what he has done. The Inspector leaves. G returns and informs the B's that there is no Inspector Goole. A phone call confirms this. However, a phone call reveals that an Inspector is on his way to question the Birlings.</p>	<p>Characters</p> <p>Mr Birling: pompous, overconfident, stubborn, a social climber,</p> <p>Mrs Birling: cold, supercilious, prejudiced.</p> <p>Sheila: naïve, perceptive, curious, compassionate.</p> <p>Eric: Irresponsible, reckless, frustrated, repentant.</p> <p>Gerald: aristocratic, self-assured, thoughtless.</p> <p>Eva Smith: warm-hearted, moralistic, representative.</p> <p>Inspector Goole: classless, resolute, moralistic, other-worldly.</p> <p>Edna: representative of the working class.</p>	<p>Context / Intertextuality</p> <p>AIC is set in 1912, a time of immense inequality and there were no rights for workers, such as Eva Smith.</p> <p>The play was first performed in 1945, just after a sweeping Labour election victory.</p> <p>The Labour victory used the Beveridge Report as its core message for a better world post WW2, "everyone regardless of class should be looked after by the state from the cradle to the grave."</p> <p>The Beveridge Report called for a Nationalised Health Service, benefits for those poor who needed it and good housing for all as a basis for a moral society.</p> <p>Priestley's play was a call to his audience to believe in this new society as a better way to protect the poor and vulnerable.</p>	<p>Themes</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Class</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>Age</p> <p>Rights of workers</p> <p>Poverty and wealth</p> <p>Individual vs state</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Honesty and truth</p> <p>Prejudice</p> <p>Hypocrisy</p>

Key word tasks

1. Learn the definition of each word.
2. Learn how to spell each word.
3. Use each word accurately in a sentence.
4. Write 5 sentences about 'An Inspector Calls' using these words.

Key quotes

Write and memorise your answers.

1. What does this quotation reveal about Mr Birling's attitude?
2. How does this quote show Mr B's prejudices?
3. How does Sheila's attitude differ to Mr Birling's?
4. What is Sheila warning her mother about?
5. What does this quote reveal as Mr B's real concern?
6. Explain what this quote reveals about Mrs B's view of Eva Smith?
7. What does this quote reveal about attitudes to women?
8. Explain the Inspector's meaning and Priestley's use of metaphor.
9. What is the Inspector warning the Birlings of?
10. What does this quote reveal about the family's different attitudes to responsibility?
11. Explain the differences between the generations.

Plot tracking

Write and memorise your answers.

1. Write a detailed paragraph summarising each act.
2. Prepare a 6 box BRIEF storyboard of the events from the whole play (each act should have two boxes).
3. In your opinion, what are the three most important moments in the play?
4. The play ends on a cliff-hanger. What do you think happens next and why?

Characters

Write and memorise your answers.

1. Write a paragraph describing each of the characters and how they change and develop throughout the play.
2. For each character, identify 3 key quotations and explain what they reveal about the character and why you think you these quotations are so important.

Context / intertextuality

Write and memorise your answers

1. Watch the following clips and make notes on the context of the play:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zk7b4wx>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/z82g9j6>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zdmrkq>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zgdfb9q>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00sf0tg>

2. Research the following topics and make notes on –

- Britain in 1912 and 1945
- The social class structure in 1912 and 1945
- Gender roles in 1912 and 1945
- The Beveridge Report

Themes

Write and memorise your answers

Responsibility

Who was responsible for the death of Eva Smith and why? Write a detailed paragraph explaining your answer.

Do you agree that we are all responsible for each other? Write a paragraph explaining your view.

Prejudice

Which character is the most prejudiced towards Eva Smith? Write a detailed paragraph explaining your answer.

The Inspector is prejudiced against the Birlings. Agree or disagree. Write a paragraph in relation to this statement.

Social Class

How are the different classes presented in the play? Write a detailed paragraph explaining your answer.

What do you think Priestley's message is to the audience regarding class? Write a detailed paragraph and try to refer to the context.

Gender

How are women portrayed in the novel? Why did Priestley choose to make his victim a woman? Write a detailed paragraph and try to refer to the context.