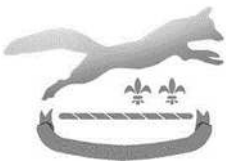


# Year 10 Knowledge Organiser – An Inspector Calls



## Context:

J.B. Priestley

- 1914-18: WW1, Aged 20, Priestley serves on the front line in France and is wounded.
- 1919: awarded place at Trinity Hall, Cambridge to study Literature, History and Politics.
- 1922: begins to work as a journalist in London.
- 1934: writes 'English Journey' about the poorer parts on Britain.
- 1939-45: makes regular wartime radio broadcasts called 'Britain Speaks'.
- 1945: writes An Inspector Calls.

1912 England

- Work strikes
- Workers' rights
- Pre WW1
- Suffragette movement
- Class system

1945 England

- Post WW1 and WW2
- Social levelling
- Women's rights
- Workers' rights
- Trade unions
- National Insurance
- Welfare system
- NHS

## PLOT STRUCTURE

### Act One

- The Birling family and Gerald Croft are celebrating Sheila's engagement to Gerald.
- Mr B makes pompous speeches outlining his political and social views. He says we should ignore the 'cranks' talking about socialism.
- The evening is interrupted by the arrive of Inspector Goole making enquiries about the suicide of Eva Smith.
- Mr B is questioned and admits sacking her for leading strike action for higher wages.
- Sheila is questioned and admits having Eva sacked from Milwards due to her jealousy.
- Gerald reacts to the news that she changed her name to Daisy Renton.

### Act Two

- Gerald is questioned and admits keeping Daisy as his mistress for six months.
- Mrs B tries to bully the Inspector and to control events.
- Sheila starts to realise that the Inspector's enquiries are well founded, and that her mother might have had some dealings with the girl.
- While Eric is out of the room, Mrs B is forced to admit that the girl asked for help from her charity, and she refused help.
- It is revealed that the girl was pregnant. Mrs B lays the blame on the father of he unborn child.
- Suspicion grows that Eric is the father of the unborn child.

### Act Three

- Eric returns and confesses that he got a girl pregnant. He also confesses to stealing money from his father's office.
- Eric blames his mother for the girl's death.
- The Inspector makes a dramatic speech about the consequences of selfish behaviour and social irresponsibility.
- The Inspector, having shows that each had a part in ruining the girl's life, leaves.
- Between them, Gerald and Mr B gradually prove that the man was not a real police inspector.
- A telephone call to the Chief Constable establishes that there is no Inspector Goole on the police force.
- A telephone to the Infirmary reveals that there has been no recent suicide.
- Eric and Sheila continue to feel guilty about their own, and their family's, behaviour whilst the others shrug it off.
- Mr B answers the telephone: a young woman has just died on the way to the Infirmary. An Inspector is on his way to make enquiries.

Characterisation	Key Quotes
<b>Mr Arthur Birling</b> ✓ Capitalist ✓ Arrogant ✓ Verbose ✓ Stubborn ✓ Industrialist	"Heavy looking, rather portentous man" "A hard-headed practical man of business" "Just a knighthood, of course." "A man has to mind his own business and look after himself...." "Look - there's nothing mysterious – or scandalous – about this business..."
<b>Mrs Sybil Birling</b> ✓ Judgemental ✓ Old money ✓ Traditional ✓ Insincere ✓ Controlling	"Rather cold woman... her husband's social superior." "Please don't contradict me like that" "It's disgusting to me." "Unlike the other three, I did nothing I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation." "He didn't make me confess – as you call it."
<b>Miss Sheila Birling</b> ✓ Intelligent ✓ Feminine ✓ Emotional ✓ Transformative ✓ Empowered	"But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people" "I had her turned out of a job" "At least I'm trying to tell the truth. I expect you've done things you're ashamed of." "Why – you fool – he knows!" "The point is, you don't seem to have learnt anything."
<b>Master Eric Birling</b> ✓ Irresponsible ✓ Spoilt ✓ Reckless ✓ Immature ✓ Transformative	"Not quite at ease half shy, half assertive." "I wasn't in love with her or anything – but I liked her – she was pretty and a good sport –" "In a way, she treated me – as if I were a kid" "You're not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble." "You're beginning to pretend that nothing's really happed at all. And I can't see it like that."
<b>Mr Gerald Croft</b> ✓ Aristocratic ✓ Secretive ✓ Traditional ✓ Privileged ✓ Evasive	"Easy, well-bred young man-about-town." "You seem to be a nice well-behaved family" "You're just the kind of son-in-law I always wanted." "The hero... the wonderful Fairy prince." "I'm rather more upset – by this business than I probably appear to be –"
<b>Miss Eva Smith</b> ✓ Working class ✓ Determined ✓ Vulnerable ✓ Emblematic ✓ Allegorical	"A lively good-looking girl – country bred... and a good worker too." "She had a lot to say – far too much – so she had to go." "She was very pretty and looked as if she could take care of herself." "Now she had to try something else." She went away "to be alone, to be quiet, to remember all that had happened."
<b>Inspector Goole</b> ✓ Priestley's mouthpiece ✓ Impressive ✓ Commanding ✓ Social justice ✓ Omnipotent	"Massiveness, solidity and purposefulness." "But after all it's better to ask for the earth than to take it." "It's my duty to ask questions." "A nice promising life there, I thought, and a nasty mess somebody's made of it." "You see, we have to share something. If there's nothing else, we'll have to share our guilt." "One Eva Smith has gone – but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us." "Fire and blood and anguish"

## Key Terms:

- ✓ Stage directions
- ✓ Dialogue
- ✓ Monologue
- ✓ Didactic
- ✓ Polemic
- ✓ Dramatic irony
- ✓ Foreshadowing
- ✓ Entrances and exits
- ✓ Props
- ✓ Sentence moods
- ✓ Social expectations
- ✓ Cliff-hanger
- ✓ Characterisation
- ✓ Dramatic device
- ✓ Timings
- ✓ Interruptions
- ✓ Tone
- ✓ Irony
- ✓ Imagery
- ✓ Symbolism
- ✓ Euphemism



"All mixed up like bees in a hive"

## Key Concepts and Themes:

- ✓ Mystery
- ✓ Social responsibility
- ✓ Truth and lies
- ✓ Hypocrisy
- ✓ Wealth, power and influence
- ✓ Rights and responsibilities
- ✓ Public versus private
- ✓ Morality versus legality
- ✓ Young versus old
- ✓ Capitalisation versus socialism
- ✓ Individual and collective responsibility
- ✓ Love, sex and consent

# KS4 Independent Study Tasks

## Task 1: Context Timeline

An Inspector Calls is set in the fictional industrial city of Brumley in 1912. The action takes place on one evening just before the First World War. But, the play was first performed to an audience in 1945, after the Second World War had devastated Britain, its infrastructure and its families.

Use the context section on the Knowledge Organiser to start your research into the two key time periods. Think about the key events that happened in Britain and how they changed society.

Research and then create a timeline that shows the historical events and social changes in Britain between the Edwardian period of 1912 and the post war time of 1945 e.g. the Titanic, the Suffragettes, the start of the Welfare State and the NHS.

### Grade 7-9 enrichment:

Research some of the 'cranks' that Mr Birling mentions in his line: "We can't let all these Bernard Shaws and H. G. Wellses do all the talking." Who were these people? What did they write, think, say, do? How are they linked to JB Priestley in their political stances?

Deadline:

## Task 2: Stage Craft

Choose 2 tasks to complete.

1. Explore the **stage directions** that tell us how each character speaks, feels and behaves. Find two key stage directions for each character. Analyse how they develop character for the audience.
2. Look at the **description of the Inspector** when he arrives. Find 4 key points about him, his appearance, his personality or his role. Analyse what the clues tell you about him and his role in the rest of the play.
3. Explore the **stage directions** that tell us how the Inspector speaks, behaves and feels. Choose 4 key stage directions and analyse what they tell us about his sense of purpose and his personality.

### Grade 7-9 enrichment:

Explore the dramatic devices of the photograph, the telephone, the doorbell, the timings, the entrances and exits... How do they add to the dramatic impact of the play?

Deadline:

## Task 3: Eva Smith

Track information about the character **Eva Smith** through the play. Find details about her life, experiences and her personality. Explore what they tell the audience, and how her character compares to the Birling and Croft families.

Create a **character profile** which includes dates, quotes, details, images, arrows...

Explore the idea that she is one girl, or maybe multiple girls. Add your own ideas about who she really was.

### Grade 7-9 enrichment:

Consider the Inspector's line: "A nice little promising life there... and a nasty mess somebody's made of it." How does JB Priestley construct Eva Smith to represent a wider issue in society?

Deadline:



### AO1: What?

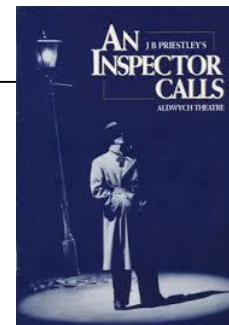
Details and evidence

### AO2: How?

Methods and effects

### AO3: Why?

Contexts and meanings



## Task 5: Extended Writing

Choose 1 task to complete; **Read and plan** then **write** for 30 minutes

**Foreshadowing.** Find a range of clues that you feel foreshadow events that happen later in the play. Include quotes and your interpretations of their meaning or symbolism.

**Context.** Explore how the context of this play is essential in creating meaning and drama. You could explore class distinctions, gender roles, workers' rights, the upcoming war, the links to Titanic...

**Language.** Think about how the language of different characters helps to represent them. You could look at who speaks in confident statements, who asks questions, who uses exclamative language, who talks about emotions, who interrupts... Find quotes and explore what they tell us about characters.

### Grade 7-9 enrichment:

**Meaning.** An Inspector Calls is a didactic play. Write about what you think the message is. What did Priestley want his audience to think about and why? How did he use characters, language, plot and structure to convey this meaning?

Deadline:

## Task 6: Timed essay

In your exam you will have 45 minutes to write an essay about the play. You will get two choices. Remember to plan and write by making points, providing evidence, exploring language and structure and discussing context.

Choose 1 essay, plan for 15 minutes and write for 45 minutes.

**How does Priestley** use the character of the Inspector to suggest ways that society could be improved?

OR,

**How does Priestley** present Eric as a character who changes his attitudes towards himself and others during the play?

### Grade 7-9 enrichment:

**Dramatic Irony.** Think about how the audience of 1945 would react to the characters of 1912. Find examples of when Priestley includes details that would be considered ironic to the audience. Analyse why Priestley would include such details.

Deadline:

## Task 4: The Birling Family and Gerald Croft

Write about how each character has been affected by the events of the evening. What did they do? How did they react? How did they feel? How did they show it? How did they change? Write for 45 minutes.

### Grade 7-9 enrichment:

Explore in more detail, what each character represents e.g. Sheila might represent the possibility of change for women in society. What is Priestley showing us through the range of characters he constructs?

Deadline: