

Answers: An Inspector Calls

Answers to the AQA exam-style and practice questions are indicative only and highlight the key things that should be included in your response. You may cover other points. It's how your answer is written and how it fits with the mark scheme that will determine the quality of your answer.

CHRONOLOGICAL SECTION

ACT 1

p.12 Stretch it!



- We learn that the characters are self-satisfied.
- The character descriptions show that things are not what they may seem on the surface.
- The house is designed for show rather than comfort.
- The seating arrangement shows the status of family members.

p.15 Do it!



Character	Key quotation	What this tells the audience
Mr Birling	'... and now you've brought us together...'	Birling sees the marriage of his daughter to Gerald Croft as a good business opportunity.
Mrs Birling	'Now Arthur, I don't think you ought to talk business on an occasion like this.'	Throughout this scene Mrs Birling corrects her husband's manners, showing her different social status and disapproval of him.
Sheila	'[<i>half serious, half playful</i>] Yes – except for all last summer, when you never came near me...'	The stage direction shows us that there are tensions between Sheila and Gerald. The words need to be spoken with an edge. This foreshadows Gerald's involvement in Eva/Daisy's suicide.
Eric	'Well don't do any. We'll drink their health and have done with it.'	Although the stage directions indicate that this isn't done, too rudely, tensions are signalled between Eric and his father.
Gerald	'And I think my father would agree to that.'	Gerald is quick to agree with Mr Birling's understanding of the marriage as a good business proposition. He is keen to flatter Mr Birling.

p.15 Stretch it!



The lighting moves from the cosy pink to a 'brighter' and 'harder' light. The Inspector has come to scrutinise each of them under this harsh spotlight.

p.16 Do it! (top)



Priestley is implying that Mr Birling's judgement cannot be trusted. The audience will begin to doubt him.

p.16 Do it! (bottom)



Your responses could include:

- 1 Mr Birling's talk of a knighthood unless there is a 'scandal' – the audience suspects, rightly, that this scandal will happen. References to 'blood and anguish' in the Inspector's speech – the audience would recognise that his warning will come to be in the Second World War.
- 2 Priestley would want the audience to understand that his views and attitudes towards society are equally false.

**p.17 AQA exam-style question**

- Overarching idea: Mr Birling represents the opposing viewpoint to Priestley's socialist viewpoint.
- Explore what Mr Birling's behaviour towards other characters shows us: the Inspector (Birling tries to intimidate him through his connections and social status); his family (he dismisses his children's opinions and standpoint, tries to protect Mrs Birling); and Eva Smith (saw her as a route to higher profits rather than as a person).
- Explore how Priestley portrays Mr Birling's opinions to be wrong through his speeches and contextual details (e.g. the 'unsinkable' *Titanic*).
- Explore how Mr Birling's refusal to accept responsibility for his actions represents the behaviour of his social class.
- Consider Mr Birling's use of the language of business.

p.17 Do it!

1 Social conventions were clear about what topics of conversation were acceptable and Mr Birling's topics would not be. It was also bad manners to dominate the conversation. Mrs Birling points these lapses out to Birling. Gerald Croft, as a member of the 'upper class', would recognise these lapses.

2 Your answers could include:

- Mr Birling: is used by Priestley to show the views of the wealthy, capitalist members of society.
- Dramatic irony: is used as a tool to deliver Priestley's message.
- Social snobbery: is used by Priestley to illustrate dangers linked to these social divisions.

p.18 Stretch it!

Both audiences would recognise that Mr Birling is complacent in his life. He has everything he needs. They would understand that this kind of complacency usually comes before a fall.

p.19 Do it! (top)

1 The Inspector means that it is his responsibility to ask questions to help the characters see the consequences of their actions.

2 Your paragraph could include: the tension between Mr Birling and Eric; the way Mr Birling talks about the advantages that Eric has had; the 'jokes' about misbehaviour that turn out to be correct.

p.19 Do it! (bottom)

The link with the setting of the play is interesting but the link with the working classes isn't convincing. A point would need to be added here. The seaside link shows a knowledge of the play but it is not a very convincing link.

- There is a theory that the Inspector can be seen as a supernatural creature. The point about ghouls preying

p.20 Do it!

The stage directions reveal the Inspector's solidity and determination to seek justice for Eva. His solemn behaviour shows his wisdom. He appears a powerful figure.

p.21 Do it!

1 Powerful, determined, composed.

2 Mr Birling is surprised by his questioning technique and so is the audience. These questions do not seem to be focusing on just facts. The Inspector is not intimidated by Mr Birling.

p.21 Stretch it!

Mr Birling uses 'duty' to save himself and his profits. The Inspector's use of 'duty' is linked to moral duty.

p.22 Do it!

**Mr Birling:**

- 'She was one of my employees and then I discharged her'
- 'It's my duty to keep labour costs down'
'I was quite justified'
- '... they'd soon be asking for the earth'

p.23 Do it!



- 1 Sheila's life is shown as comfortable in comparison to the young female workers. She is able to spend her time shopping and will go from the comfort of a home with her parents to the comfort of a life with Gerald. Priestley wants the audience to understand that Sheila's comfort is funded by her father's exploitation of desperate people. When she marries Gerald Croft, this exploitation will continue as he aligns himself with Birling on this issue. This socialist message asks the wealthy to empathise with the working classes and pay a living wage.
- 2 Sheila understands that the Inspector has more information than he is revealing. She is the first person in the play to do this.

p.24 Stretch it!



- The entrance of the Inspector – he is a mystery and changes the tone of the scene.
- Eric is called away from the dining room – so that Mr Birling and Gerald can talk privately and we see more of their views and concerns.
- The entrance of the Inspector at the end of Act 1 – leaving the audience in suspense to find out Gerald's role in Daisy's story.

p.24 Do it!

**Mrs Birling**

- a Basic facts: socially superior to her husband; corrects Mr Birling when he makes social mistakes; reacts when Sheila uses slang; refuses to acknowledge Eric's drinking.
- b What is important: she rates their social position highly; she wants to maintain social order.

Gerald

- a Basic facts: his family are part of the upper classes; he agrees with Mr Birling regarding workforce issues; he is good-looking and socially at ease; he is engaged to Sheila.
- b What is important: he plays a part in Eva Smith/Daisy Renton's downfall; he thinks he can escape judgement by the Inspector; at the end of Act 1, the audience is waiting to find out what this involvement means.

p.25 Do it!

**Secrets, lies and hypocrisy**

- Eric's drinking – Sheila knows more about this than she is telling.
- Eric's letting slip information when there is a discussion about women's clothes – but then he stops.
- Gerald's infidelity – and that Sheila suspects this.

Love

- An engagement suggests that the two people are in love – but there are underlying tensions about Gerald's whereabouts the previous summer.
- Family love – there are tensions between Eric and his father; Sheila and Eric; Mrs Birling is described as 'cold'.

p.25 REVIEW IT!



- 1 The play is set during an evening in spring 1912.
- 2 The house is fashionable rather than cosy and homelike.
- 3 This is a formal celebration. Perhaps it could also suggest that the Birlings are trying hard to impress Gerald Croft.
- 4 To congratulate the cook would show that Mr Birling is of a lower class because it is not a socially acceptable thing to do.
- 5 The engagement of Sheila Birling and Gerald Croft.
- 6 They are both in the same business – so therefore rivals. ‘Friendly’ could suggest that they are supportive of each other, but Mr Birling’s focus on the advantages of the marriage suggest that they are more like rivals than friends.
- 7 Mr Birling believes (wrongly) that there is not a chance of war/war is ‘impossible’.
- 8 Gerald’s embarrassed. This is an awkward subject but Mr Birling blunders in.
- 9 Mr Birling says that he is going to receive a knighthood – as long as the family do not get into trouble. He says this as a joke.
- 10 Gerald picks up that there is something suspicious in something that was said by Eric – in this case, Eric not finishing what he was saying. The audience will pick up that there is a secret that Eric is hiding here.
- 11 Mr Birling is talking through his capitalist views: ‘a man has to look after his own business and look after himself’.
- 12 Your answer could include: The Inspector states that he will complete one line of inquiry at a time/not showing the photographs to everyone/questioning reasons rather than just facts.
- 13 Mr Birling felt that it was his ‘duty’ to keep costs down/if he gave in they would ask for the ‘earth’. He is focused on profits rather than the welfare of his workers.
- 14 Sheila states that she thought that Eva Smith was very pretty and looked as if she could take care of herself. This indicated how Sheila is shallow at this point in the play.
- 15 Sheila reports that the staff give her a ‘sort of look’. This could be true or it could indicate her guilt.
- 16 The mention of the name, Daisy Renton.
- 17 Gerald started seeing Daisy Renton the previous summer. It matches Sheila’s suspicions, confirming the audience’s suspicions too.
- 18 Sheila reiterates that ‘he knows’. She understands that the family cannot hide from the Inspector. She reminds other family members of this as they begin their questioning.
- 19 The Inspector exits so that Priestley can present Gerald and Sheila talking privately. Their conflict during this dialogue increases the tension.
- 20 ‘Well?’ It shows he knows about Gerald’s part in Eva’s downfall. It is an invitation for him to speak. It is also the word that begins Act 2.

CHRONOLOGICAL SECTION

ACT 2

p.26 Stretch it!



Priestley intends the audience to see how far how Sheila has developed as a character. They would remember her behaviour in the opening scene and would also begin to see the cracks in her relationship with Gerald. Priestley’s social message of morality would be in focus as the audience considers Gerald’s behaviour towards Sheila and how he protects her. Later in the play, Priestley would want the audience to remember this protection and contrast it with Gerald’s behaviour towards Daisy.

p.27 Do it! (top)



1	Quotation	What this tells the audience about their relationship
Gerald	'bitterly' 'now you want to see somebody else put through it'	Suggests that he is resentful towards Sheila. It is interesting that Sheila also replies in a bitter way. This is a very forceful response from Gerald who has been seen as relaxed and easy-going until this point in the play. It suggests that he sees Sheila as behaving in a petty and vindictive way. This would make the audience question the future of their relationship.
Sheila	'cutting in' '... this is just the wrong time not to believe me'	Sheila interrupts Gerald's defence, showing new-found assertiveness. She sums up in this response what the audience is thinking: that Gerald would not have said those words if he truly knew her or loved her. Sheila issues a warning to Gerald. She also warns other characters about their responses to the Inspector and how they cannot escape the Inspector's questions. This shows the audience Sheila's development during the play.

p.27 Do it! (middle)



Stage direction	What this shows the audience about Sheila's development
'Staring at him'	Sheila is shown here as looking intently at the Inspector. She has shifted her attention from Gerald, therefore revealing a crack in this relationship. Gerald no longer holds the focus of her attention.
'... she stares at him wonderingly and dubiously'	Again, Priestley repeats the stage direction ' <i>wonderingly</i> ', reinforcing the Inspector's god-like power and authority. ' <i>Dubiously</i> ' suggests uncertainty and hesitation and is linked to her statement that she doesn't 'understand' everything about the Inspector. This reinforces his mysterious nature.



p.27 AQA exam-style question

- Overarching idea: Sheila accepts her role in the fate of Eva Smith and can therefore develop as the play progresses.
- At the start of the play, Sheila is seen as '*very pleased with life*'; by the start of Act 2 she understands the 'misery and agony' of Eva Smith's death; Sheila behaves in a teasing way toward Gerald in Act 1, but by the start of Act 2 she responds '*bitterly*' and challenges him.
- Sheila faces responsibility towards Eva Smith's suicide '*miserably*' in Act 1, but by Act 2 faces responsibility '*eagerly*', showing understanding and acceptance of responsibility.
- In Act 1 Sheila reacts to the news of Eva's dismissal with, 'Perhaps that spoilt everything for her'; in Act 2 she empathises with the horror of Eva's suicide: '*distressed*'... 'I can't stop thinking about it'.
- At the start of Act 2, Sheila moves '*closer*' to the Inspector showing her allegiance with his views; Priestley presents her as accepting social responsibility.

p.28 Stretch it!



Sheila 'gives a short hysterical laugh' because Mrs Birling uses the word 'impertinent' to describe the way the Inspector responded. He agreed with Sheila — and contradicted Mrs Birling. The word 'impertinent', chosen by Mrs Birling, implies that the Inspector is being rude or disrespectful. However, Sheila understands that his behaviour is merely truthful rather than 'impertinent'. Mrs Birling lacks the personal insight to recognise this.

p.29 Do it!



1 Pretends that she doesn't know what Sheila is talking about	'[affecting great surprise]'
Refers to Sheila as a child in front of Gerald and Sheila herself	'You seem to have made a great impression on this child, Inspector'
Tries to send Sheila to bed	'I think you ought to go to bed'
Uses pet names without any warmth or love	'You're looking tired, dear'
Implies that Sheila's opinions have no value	'Nothing but morbid curiosity.'
Tells Sheila off for what she says	'Please don't contradict me like that.'
Tries to involve the Inspector in her view	'I don't understand you... Do you?'
Implies that her viewpoint is of more value than Sheila's	'I'm talking to the Inspector now'

2 Priestley shows Gerald cutting into the conversation 'rather impatiently' to signal to the audience that it is not only Sheila who sees this Mrs Birling's behaviour as unacceptable. Gerald has been portrayed as an easy-going character up to this point and this shows him as behaving in an impatient way. As someone outside the family, this is an important moment.

3 The word 'impertinent' means disrespectful and impolite.

p.31 Do it!



1 Your paragraph could be something like this:

Even though Sheila and Mrs Birling are mother and daughter, they seem quite disconnected. Mrs Birling treats her adult and soon-to-be-married daughter like a child, repeatedly rebuking her or trying to send her to bed. We learn that Sheila was angry in *Milwards* because she had disagreed with her mother about a dress, foreshadowing the disagreements that will happen later in the play. However, in the key disconnect between Mrs and Sheila, however, Priestley shows the audience the difference between Mrs Birling and Sheila's sense of social responsibility. Whereas Sheila can learn from the Inspector and accept her part in the blame, Mrs Birling only sees the 'offence' she feels the Inspector has given her and boldly states that she bears no responsibility for the death of Eva/Daisy. Truthful rather than 'impertinent'. Mrs Birling lacks the personal insight to recognise this.

2 Theme	Quotation	Explanation
Social responsibility	'Let's leave <i>offence</i> out of it'	Mrs Birling complains that she has reason to take offence at the Inspector. He twists this word to refer to the family's offence – their responsibility towards Eva Smith.
Social class and snobbery	'Girls of that class...'	Mrs Birling feels that she and her class are different to the likes of Eva Smith. She has no empathy or understanding of Eva's life or circumstances.
Differences between generations	'We often do on the young ones. They're more impressionable.'	This is a key message of the play so these words are given to the Inspector. It is the younger generation who are ready and willing to accept responsibility.
Secrets, lies, hypocrisy	'... we really must stop these silly pretences'	Eric's drinking is not spoken about within the family. Both Sheila and Gerald are aware of it, but Mr and Mrs Birling do not face up to it.
Love	'... I feel you're beginning all wrong'	Sheila tries to protect her mother as Sheila sees that Mrs Birling will try to use her social position to brush away the Inspector and his questions. Sheila understands that this will not work.

p.32 Stretch it!



A scruple is a feeling that stops or makes you hesitate from doing something that is morally wrong. In *An Inspector Calls* we see the characters having no scruples in their behaviour towards Eva Smith/Daisy Renton. Each one could have hesitated or chosen a different path (e.g. Gerald could have helped Daisy find work in his factory; instead he set her up as his mistress).

p.32 Do it!



The stage directions explicitly tell us that Gerald is '*distressed*'.

- The use of dashes to break up his statement shows his thoughts to be unclear.
- 'Sorry – I well, – , as a false start, this shows us that he is gathering his thoughts, which is a contrast to his confident demeanour earlier in the play.

p.33 Do it!



1 Gerald is evasive in his response to Sheila. He does not confirm or deny loving Daisy Renton. Perhaps at this point he is trying to shield Sheila from the truth that he did love Daisy. Remember that her parents are also in the room.

2 Hero: rescues Daisy from Alderman Meggarty; takes her to the County Hotel, talks to her and feeds her; tells Sheila that he did love Daisy for a time; shows his distress when Daisy didn't blame him for the end of the affair.

Cad: finding that Daisy was penniless and homeless, installs her in rooms; keeps his affair secret without telling Sheila that he had met someone else; ends the affair when he needed to go away on business; does not see her after that point.

Both: gave her money to last until the end of the year. (However, he made no attempt to ensure that she was in a position to look after herself once the money ran out.)

3 Your answer will probably depend on how far you think Gerald is being truthful when he says he loved Daisy. It could be argued that he used her, discarding her when he didn't need her any more. He certainly didn't make any attempt to ensure that she could make a living independently after he had moved on. However, his distress and behaviour during the questioning do seem to suggest that he cared for her in some way.

p.34 Do it!



1 Sheila realises that their relationship had been built on secrets and lies. She had suspected that something was wrong the previous summer and now she knows the truth. She respects Gerald's honesty and likes him more for that.

2 Mr and Mrs Birling are shocked when the Inspector first asks Gerald when he got to know Daisy Renton. They are also shocked by the news about Alderman Meggarty. This shows the audience how they are shocked by the initial link between Gerald and Daisy but not shocked that he set her up as his mistress. They are shocked that an important member of the community should be known for this type of behaviour. Priestley intends the audience to understand that although the Birlings would consider themselves people of high moral standing, their morals do not include Gerald taking a mistress and the lecherous behaviour of an important member of the community.



p.35 AQA exam-style question

- Overarching idea: Priestley uses the Inspector as a dramatic device to enable characters to learn about morality.
- Explore: reactions to the Inspector in terms of how he makes the characters face up to their personal morality and offers an opportunity to learn/change; presentation of anger/bluster/defensiveness; use and effects of pauses, hesitancy, dashes to suggest discomfort.
- Explore different characters' attitudes towards morality, such as Mrs Birling's hypocrisy and Gerald's treatment of Daisy Renton.
- Show how Sheila develops and is more aware of the idea of morality.
- Explore the historical context: class differences and morality; treatment of idea of morality as a social issue (e.g. middle class acceptance of having a mistress; turning a 'blind eye' to prostitution).

p.36 Do it!



1 Impertinence means showing a lack of respect.

2 What Sheila does	Quotation
She recaps events so far to get her mother realise that she may play a part.	'Father threw this girl out...'
She tries to coax her mother to begin responding to the questions.	'You might as well admit it...'
She reassures her mother when Eric leaves to get her back on track answering the Inspector's questions.	'He's probably just gone to cool off'.
She gives an honest reaction to her mother's refusal of assistance.	'... I think it was cruel and vile'
She begs her mother to stop in her condemnation of the baby's father.	'Mother – stop – stop!'
She tries to get her mother to realise what she has said.	'Now, Mother – don't you see?'

p.37 Do it!



- **'... she called herself Mrs Birling'** Mrs Birling feels that Eva/Daisy was being rude – rather than desperate by choosing the name 'Mrs Birling'.
- **'she had only herself to blame'** Mrs Birling has no empathy for Eva/Daisy and the young women she represents.
- **'I did nothing I'm ashamed of'** Mrs Birling does not see that through her 'prejudice' towards Eva/Daisy she played a role in her death.
- **'I used my influence to have it refused'** As a prominent member of the community (her husband was a former Lord Mayor) and of the charity, she was able to influence the views of the committee.
- **'Go and look for the father of the child'** Mrs Birling will not accept personal responsibility and instead tries to focus the blame elsewhere.
- **'As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money!'** Mrs Birling has entrenched views about the working classes, therefore does not believe that working class girls would have moral scruples.
- **'he shouldn't escape'** Mrs Birling shows her hypocrisy when she asserts that the father of the child should be held responsible and dealt with severely until she realises that the culprit is her son.

2 The audience realises that the father of the baby is Eric – Gerald has already been eliminated and we know the Inspector wishes to speak with Eric. Each time Mrs Birling condemns the father of the child, it increases the tension.

p.37 Stretch it!



- AO1 Response to the task and text – 1, 2
- AO2 Identification of writer's methods – 4, 5
- AO3 understanding of ideas/perspectives/context – 3, 6

Sybil Birling (1) is a headstrong, confident and defensive woman: 'If you think you can bring any pressure to bear upon me, Inspector, you're quite mistaken.' She feels able to judge and criticise the Inspector (2) ('mistaken') and this belief makes her similar to Mr Birling. Both of these characters (3), as members of the older generation, show that they are inflexible in their values and beliefs. Priestley creates her sharp tone with short direct sentences, such as (4) 'I consider I did my duty', to emphasise her self-assurance and self-importance. These characteristics, (5) coupled with her volatile nature, are reinforced in Priestley's stage directions: '*stung*', '*astounded*', '*angrily*'. Mrs Birling embodies the theme of social class and snobbery. (6) When the Inspector questions her, she reveals her beliefs about class.

p.38 Do it!



1 During her questioning, Mrs Birling shows herself to be narrow-minded regarding working class girls and is judgemental when Eva/Daisy calls herself Mrs Birling in front of the charity committee. Despite being a prominent member of a charity committee, she is uncharitable in her behaviour, showing no remorse when she confesses that she was 'prejudiced' against Eva/Daisy because of this. She is obstructive when the Inspector begins to question her and Sheila has to work with the Inspector to get her to answer.

2 Eric

- Both Sheila and Gerald know about Eric's drinking.
- Sheila says that Eric has been drinking steadily for the past two years.
- Mr Birling realises at the end of the act that Eric is 'mixed up' in Daisy's story.

Mr Birling

- Birling is shocked that Sheila knows about Alderman Meggarty's behaviour.
- He is shocked when he hears that Eva/Daisy uses the name Mrs Birling.
- He tries to protect his wife from the Inspector's questions.

p.39 Do it!



Social responsibility

- Gerald feels no responsibility towards Daisy Renton once he has broken off the affair and paid her money to the end of the year.
- Mrs Birling talks about doing her duty but is happy to admit that she was prejudiced against Eva/Daisy.
- The Inspector tells Mr Birling that 'Public men...have responsibilities as well as privileges.'

Younger versus older generations

- Mrs Birling, as the older generation, states that she doesn't want to hear details about Gerald's affair – Sheila contradicts her. This is also the case when the older members of the family are blind to Eric's drinking.
- The Inspector states that the younger generation is more impressionable, turning Mrs Birling's words against her.

p.39 REVIEW IT!



- 1 Act 2 begins from exactly the moment that Act 1 ended.
- 2 Sheila is angry and replies bitterly. She also interrupts.
- 3 Mrs Birling enters briskly and self-confidently. Sheila is gazing at the Inspector '*wonderingly*' as she realises she has changed. The Inspector is looking at her '*calmly*'. This entrance breaks the mood.
- 4 Mrs Birling says it is 'Nothing but morbid curiosity'.
- 5 Mrs Birling uses it in terms of being affronted or offended by the Inspector's behaviour. The Inspector uses it in terms of crimes or misdemeanours that the Birlings and Gerald Croft may have committed.
- 6 Mrs Birling says, 'He's only a boy'.
- 7 Sheila means that as they each relate their association with Eva/Daisy by answering the Inspector's questions, their guilt becomes clear to everyone.
- 8 Gerald met Daisy in March the previous year.
- 9 Gerald describes Meggarty as a: 'womanizer', 'rogue', 'sot', having a 'fat carcass'. These words all suggest Gerald's disgust with Meggarty's behaviour and also it shows that he felt protective towards Daisy.
- 10 'Public men... have responsibilities as well as privileges' is a key message of the play. Priestley wants the audience to understand that people with money and status have responsibilities towards the rest of society, so the Birling family should have helped Eva/Daisy.

p.39 REVIEW IT!



- 11 The audience would question why Eva/Daisy was turned down and would understand that Eva/Daisy was a deserving case as she had been treated so badly by the Birling family and Gerald Croft. This statement would make the audience dislike her.
- 12 Eva lies out of desperation because she understands that she needs to appear as deserving of their charity. She invents a husband. Other characters lie to make themselves appear blameless or avoid taking responsibility.
- 13 That Mrs Birling will spend the rest of her life regretting what she did wrong.
- 14 The Inspector says: 1 that Mrs Birling refused help and influenced others not to help; 2 she refused Eva/Daisy money and advice; 3 as a mother she should have known what Eva/Daisy was feeling.
- 15 Mr Birling is afraid it will appear in the press.
- 16 Eva herself and the father of the child.
- 17 He agrees that the father is the culprit; he agrees that he will do 'his duty' after Mrs Birling says that he should be making the culprit confess in public; he agrees that the young man should be made an example of. When she tries to send him away to do his duty, he tells her that he is waiting to do his duty.
- 18 Mr Birling realises that Eric is involved and he is terrified.
- 19 Eric enters the room.
- 20 The audience realises that each member of the family will be questioned in turn. Priestley uses dramatic irony to lay the trap for Mrs Birling, as the audience realises that Eric is the father of Eva/Daisy's child before she does.

CHRONOLOGICAL SECTION

ACT 3

p.40 Do it!



- 1 a 'squiffy'
- b 'I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty'
- c 'And that was when it happened'

p.41 Do it!



Your response could be that Eric's behaviour falls somewhere between these two statements. Eric does seem to feel responsibility towards Eva/Daisy. However, the way he obtains the money is morally questionable.

p.41 Stretch it!



Eva/Daisy shows her moral code as she shows no desire to marry Eric because she knows he does not love her. She also refuses to accept the money once she realises that he has stolen it. In this way she can be seen to have more of a moral code than the Birling family, represented here by Eric.

p.42 Do it!



In your paragraph you may have included: details of the stage direction '*nearly at breaking point*'; details that Eva/Daisy had gone to the committee to try to protect Eric; repetition of 'you killed her'; three-part structure of 'my child–your own grandchild–you killed them both'; he damns his mother twice – in Christian beliefs he is condemning Mrs Birling to suffer eternal punishment in hell; how Eric makes the death personal to Mrs Birling.

p.42 Stretch it!



The Inspector suggests that Mrs Birling will live the rest of her life in torment because of her actions. By damning her, Eric condemns her to feel this torment for the rest of eternity. The audience would recognise that this would be a terrible, never-ending torment. To wish this on anyone is shocking but to wish it on his own mother shows the audience the depth of Eric's anger towards his mother's actions.



p.43 AQA exam-style question

- Overarching idea: Eric is used as a symbol to show the abuse of power over the working classes, especially young, wealthy men and working class girls.
- Explore how Eric is presented at the start of the play – how he is seen in the stage directions and the opening scenes.
- Explore the presentation of Eric's anger/threatening behaviour in Act 3 and Priestley's message – why he does this; use and effects of pauses, hesitancy, dashes to suggest discomfort.
- Explore the presentation of Eric at the end of the play: Eric has changed and is willing to accept responsibility; he represents the hope for society if we take responsibility for our actions.
- Explore thematic links with the older versus younger generations: his relationship with his parents; his capacity to change and accept responsibility.

You may have included:

- AO1 (Response to task and text) By the end of the play Eric has changed and is willing to accept responsibility
- AO2 (Identification of writer's methods) Represents the hope for society if we take responsibility for our actions
- AO3 (Understanding of ideas/perspectives/contexts) Thematic links to social responsibility and love

p.45 Do it!



Commentary	Quotation
Mrs Birling	'You turned her away when she most needed help'
Eric	'Just used her at the end of a stupid drunken evening as if she was an animal, a thing, not a person.'
Sheila	'You helped – but didn't start it'
Mr Birling	'You made her pay a heavy price for that. And now she'll make you pay a heavier price still.'
Gerald Croft	'... he at least had some affection for her and made her happy for a time'

p.47 Do it!



- Use of inclusive language (e.g. 'us', 'we'): '... millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us' (makes the audience identify with what is being said)
- Use of 'I': 'And I tell you' (makes the audience think that the speaker is honest and truthful)
- Listing ideas in groups of three: 'fire and blood and anguish' (makes the phrase poetic and memorable)
- Use of emotive language or memorable phrases: 'suffering', 'happiness' (grabs attention – manipulates the emotional response)
- Use of contrasting pairs of words or phrases: 'hopes and fears' (like listing in threes, this language device makes the pairs memorable and poetic)
- Rhythm of the language by the length of the sentences or the use of pauses: '... what we think and say and do' (the rhythm here is authoritative – the Inspector drives his message home)

p.47 Stretch it!



Useful rhetorical devices may include: anhypophora – posing a rhetorical question and then immediately answering it; asyndeton – missing out conjunctions between clauses that follow each other to give a dynamic feel to the speech; congruity – use of repetition of words or phrases that mean the same thing.

p.48 Stretch it!



Eric is reflecting on Sheila's words as she sums up each of their roles in the death of Eva Smith. He is commenting on how each was 'inspected', showing his self-knowledge and understanding of the parts they played in Eva's suicide. To 'police' also means to maintain law and order and this is what the Inspector is trying to do.

p.48 Do it!



- **Mr Birling:** excited when he thinks that the Inspector isn't real; describes the Inspector as 'a crank'; ridicules Eric and Sheila for confessing
- **Mrs Birling:** tells Sheila off as if she were a child; questions the Inspector's behaviour towards her; denies any blame – insists she did her 'duty'; looks to Mr Birling to sort the situation
- **Sheila:** is scornful of her parents; admits her actions and her shame; challenges her parents for not learning from the Inspector; notices how the Inspector is different from usual police officers; challenges her parents' denial of their actions



p.49 AQA exam-style question

- Overarching idea: Priestley presents the younger generation as being able to change and accept social responsibility.
- The young people show themselves as being open to socialist ideas; in Act 1 Eric and Sheila show sympathy for the strikers; Mr Birling does not consider the impact on the worker's lives.
- The older generation constantly try to protect themselves and their social standing: Mrs Birling denies knowing Eva/Daisy when he first shows her the photograph; Mr Birling repeatedly considers how to cover up any imminent scandals; at the end of the play, Mr and Mrs Birling see themselves as right and ridicule their children as being young and foolish until the telephone rings.
- Gerald falls between the generations; he starts off enthusiastically agreeing with Mr Birling's business practices; he reveals Eric's drinking to support Sheila; he shows remorse for his treatment of Daisy and her death; at the end of the play he moves back to his original position trying to discredit the Inspector and not understanding the lessons learned.
- Explore how the younger generation accept responsibility for their actions: Eric states, 'the fact remains that I did what I did'; historical context of how society was changing in 1945; Priestley's socialist ideas and how the reactions of the characters fit into these ideas.

p.49 Do it!



- 1 Gerald falls between the generations. He starts off enthusiastically agreeing with Mr Birling's business practices. He reveals Eric's drinking to support Sheila, but shows genuine remorse for his treatment of Daisy and her death. At the end of the play he moves back to his original position, trying to discredit the Inspector and not understanding the lessons learned.
- 2 AO1 (Response to task and text) – this is covered
AO2 (Identification of writer's methods) – this needs strengthening. Needs to include analysis of the stage directions to show how the characters react.

p.50 Do it!



Character	New insights	Links to themes/ideas
Mrs Birling	Mrs Birling is shown as reacting 'triumphantly' to Gerald's news. She warns Mr Birling not to push Eric too far. She is pleased with herself for not, as she sees it, giving in to the Inspector.	Mrs Birling is shown to be unchanged by the Inspector's message, so part of a generation that refuses to change.
Sheila	Sheila shows that she has taken on the Inspector's message: 'I suppose we're all nice people now.' She agrees with Eric when he says that they all did what they did, calling it a 'rotten story' and says that she feels 'a bit less ashamed' of them because of Eric's response.	Sheila and Eric agree with each other throughout this section, showing how the younger generation will unite and offer hope for the future.
Gerald	Gerald brings news about the Inspector. He challenges Eric when Eric says that his news doesn't 'alter the fact' that Eva/Daisy is dead. He carefully puts forward reasons for why the Inspector is a hoax.	When Gerald brings the news, the family can either accept the Inspector's message about social responsibility or turn away from it. Gerald is shown as the son that Mr Birling wanted – Mr Birling calls him a 'Good lad' as if he is part of the family.
Eric	Eric clearly shows that he has taken on the Inspector's message. He moves closer to Sheila in this section.	Eric and Sheila agree with each other throughout this section, showing how the younger generations will unite and offer hope for the future.

p.51 Do it!



The key emotions range from angry responses to each other, e.g. Gerald and Sheila; Eric and Mr Birling; triumph when Mr Birling thinks he has worked out that the Inspector used a different photograph each time; tension as the characters wait for Gerald to make the call.

p.52 Do it!



- 1 During this exchange, Eric shows that he is in agreement with Sheila. Mrs Birling tries to belittle both Eric and Sheila, describing them as 'overtired' as if they were small children.
- 2 Priestley is showing the audience that all of the characters have had a chance for redemption. Sheila and Eric have taken that opportunity but Gerald and Mr and Mrs Birling have not.

p.53 Do it!



- 1 Your questions could include: Who is the girl? Who is the inspector who is arriving? How will the family react to the new inspector? Will the charges be the same? How did the original inspector know?
- 2 The Inspector manages to convince both Eric and Sheila that they are responsible and has caused them to change. The Inspector will probably also have had that effect on the audience. The audience also sees that the older generation and old ways of thinking are unable to move forward and redeem themselves. Therefore it could be argued that the Inspector does succeed in his task.

p.54 Do it!



- 1 **Sheila:** accepts responsibility; challenges her parents; refuses the engagement ring
Mr Birling: immediately focuses on a cover-up; reacts angrily to Eric; shocked by the theft; welcomes Gerald back; does not take on responsibility or learn from the experience
The Inspector: in his final speech he assumes the voice of Priestley to put forward a socialist agenda; is scathing in his summation of the Birling family; exits halfway through the act and is not seen again on stage
- 2 The differences between the generations: the acceptance of responsibility is split between the generations, with Sheila and Eric accepting responsibility and Mr and Mrs Birling and Gerald showing no understanding of their role in the death.
 Social class and snobbery: Mrs Birling's snobbery is revealed when she talks about the Inspector and how he treated her. Presumably she felt that he was not respectful enough of her social position.

p.55 REVIEW IT!



- 1 There is a general mood of shock, agitation and alarm in the dining room: agitation and distress from Mrs Birling; alarm from Sheila; shock from Birling and grim determination from the Inspector. As Eric enters he is shown as '*pale and distressed*'.
- 2 Mr Birling reacts explosively and says no. The Inspector overrides this, telling Mr Birling that Eric needs a drink to help him through the process. This shows that the Inspector is in charge now, not Mr Birling.
- 3 When Birling asks Sheila to take her mother out of the room, it is showing that he thinks women need to be protected from certain types of knowledge. In this case, both Sheila and Mrs Birling need to be protected from the knowledge of Eric's sexual activity.
- 4 It is ironic, of course, that Eva/Daisy was not protected from Eric's actions. This is not even suggested by Mr Birling. Only the Inspector talks of this.
- 5 Eric says he wasn't in love with Daisy. She was 'a good sport'. She treated him as if he 'were a kid'.
- 6 Priestley is showing the audience that these young men felt that working-class girls could be used as playthings. They did not feel responsible for these young women.
- 7 The fact that Eric stole money.
- 8 Eric is at breaking point, as shown in the stage directions. This is supported by Priestley's use of dashes to break up the speech, suggesting his mental unrest.
- 9 There are many key quotations that you could include, e.g.: 'there are millions...of Eva Smiths and John Smiths left with us'; 'We don't live alone'; 'We are responsible for each other'.
- 10 The stage directions tell us that the characters are left '*staring, subdued and wondering*'; Sheila is crying, Mrs Birling slumps into a chair, Eric is '*brooding desperately*' and Birling pours himself a drink.
- 11 You could include: Mr Birling wants to cover up any scandal; Sheila is scornful of her parents' attitudes; Eric is angry with his parents' attitudes; Mrs Birling focuses on how the Inspector behaved towards her.
- 12 There is no one called Inspector Goole in the Brumley police force.
- 13 Eric and Sheila both focus on the lessons that should have been learned – not whether the Inspector was real or not. Eric says, 'This girl's still dead'.
- 14 'I did keep a girl last summer. I've admitted it. And I'm sorry Sheila.' This three-part list suggests that Gerald feels that it is all over and done with and he – and Sheila – can move on.
- 15 That the photographs were not the same girl.
- 16 Eric means that they all helped to lead her to suicide through their dealings with her.
- 17 That there was no suicide case at the Infirmary that evening.
- 18 Mr Birling says, 'You all helped to kill her.'
- 19 Points you could include: Sheila says it is 'too soon', but she has also repeatedly said that things cannot return to how they were before. She cannot easily slot into the role of a dutiful wife following her knowledge of Gerald's deceit.
- 20 Points you could include: the audience should be shocked; the audience should consider how far each of the characters had assumed responsibility at this point in the play; the audience could wonder if it will be the same inspector and the same girl; the audience should contemplate their own moral responsibility.

CHARACTERS SECTION

p.57 Do it!



- 1 Critics have argued that the Inspector is the voice of Priestley/socialism/God/our moral conscience/a ghost 'ghoul'/someone out of time, e.g. a time traveller.
- 2 The Inspector does not develop as a character but he does increase in his impact on the characters. You could include details from the stage directions at the start and how characters try to dismiss him, and contrast this with the power of his final speech.

p.58 Do it!



This could be the moment the Inspector shows Sheila the photograph and she recognises Eva Smith as the girl she had sacked from Milwards. We learn about her actions in this scene but also that she shows shame and upset because of those actions. She accepts responsibility.

p.59 Do it!



- 1 *'very pleased with life'*
- 2 *'I wish you hadn't told me'*
- 3 *'But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people'*
- 4 *'So I'm really responsible?'*
- 5 *'It's no use, Gerald'*
- 6 *'You might as well admit it.'*
- 7 *'... what he said, how he looked, and what he made me feel'*
- 8 *'Fire and blood and anguish'*

p.60 Do it!



- 1 Mr Birling – your points could include:
 - Priestley presents Mr Birling as a wealthy factory owner.
 - He does not change at the end of the play and shows no remorse.
 - He focuses on his reputation and status at all times.
 - He faces scandal and a loss of reputation at the end of the play.
 - Priestley shows his opinions to be false through his use of dramatic irony.
- 2
 - Quotation 1 'a man has to mind his own business and look after himself.' Priestley is playing on the meaning of the word 'business' here. It could mean his company and factory or it could mean not interfering with anyone else. Either way, this shows a capitalist mindset.
 - Quotation 2 'I was an alderman for years – and Lord Mayor two years ago – and I'm still on the Bench – so I know the Brumley officers pretty well'. Here Priestley presents Mr Birling using a list of people who would have power over the Inspector to intimidate him.
 - Quotation 3: 'I can't accept any responsibility.' This word echoes through the play and represents the Inspector's message (and therefore Priestley's message). Unlike the younger generation, Mr Birling cannot accept responsibility.
- 3 Mr Birling is symbolically presented as representing capitalism and wealthy employers who exploit their workforce.

p.61 Do it!



1 Gerald Croft – your points could include:

- He is a confident man about town – engaged to Sheila.
- He agrees with Mr Birling's business opinions at the start of the play.
- He sets Daisy Renton up as his mistress but seems to care for her.
- He discovers there is no Inspector Goole on the police force.
- He does not change at the end of the play – thinks that everything can return to normality.

2

- Quotation 1: 'I don't come into this suicide business.' Priestley shows Gerald as immediately distancing himself from the death of Eva Smith/Daisy Renton by the dismissive tone of the noun 'business'.
- Quotation 2: 'I'm rather more – upset – by this business than I probably appear to be –'. Gerald's speech is broken by dashes to show his emotional reaction to the death of Daisy Renton.
- Quotation 3: 'Everything's all right now, Sheila.' Priestley presents Gerald's lack of responsibility with the adverb 'now', suggesting that he has not learned anything from the Inspector and that it is possible for everything to return to normal.

3 Gerald Croft is symbolically presented as representing the selfish, wealthy landowning aristocracy.

p.62 Do it!



1 Mrs Birling – your points could include:

- She is of higher social status than her husband – and points out his social errors.
- She presents herself as charitable but is snobbish and judgemental of the working classes.
- She tells off her adult offspring as if they were children.
- She refuses to help Eva/Daisy through her prejudice and spite.
- She boasts about how she was the only one who was not afraid of the Inspector and does not repent at the end of the play.

2

- Quotation 1: 'Please don't contradict me like that'; the imperative use here shows how Mrs Birling feels that she is of higher status than all other cast members.
- Quotation 2: 'Well, really! Alderman Meggarty! I must say, we are learning something tonight'; the exclamation marks here show Mrs Birling's shock that someone with his status in society should behave so badly.
- Quotation 3: 'Go and look for the father of the child. It's his responsibility.' Mrs Birling's overbearing tone is once again reinforced with her use of the imperative, 'Go'. She uses the word 'responsibility' as she tries to shift the responsibility away from herself (and her family) and onto the unknown father of the child. The audience would understand the irony of this.

3 Mrs Birling is symbolically presented as representing the unfeeling and unsympathetic capitalist classes.

p.63 Do it!



1 Eric Birling – your points could include:

- Eric is shown to be not quite 'easy' in his behaviour, socially opposite to the confident Gerald.
- He is depicted treating Eva/Daisy 'as if she was an animal, a thing, not a person'.
- He is shown as morally corrupt when he steals the money, despite his good intentions.
- He shows shame and remorse for his actions and does not accept his parents' point of view, therefore moving closer to Sheila.
- He offers the audience hope for future generations as he accepts responsibility for his actions.

2

- Quotation 1: 'Unless Eric's been up to something.' Gerald hints in a jokey fashion that Eric may be in trouble. This foreshadows what will happen later in the play.
- Quotation 2: 'as if she was an animal, a thing, not a person.' The Inspector lists Eric's actions. Priestley is commenting on how the wealthy abused their power over the vulnerable.
- Quotation 3: 'I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty.' The colloquialism, 'chap', seeks to hide the seriousness of his action by suggesting he behaved as those of his age group would do. 'Nasty' is a euphemism to hide his actions.

3 Eric Birling represents young wealthy privileged classes who use the working classes for their own pleasure.

p.64 Do it!



1 Eva Smith/Daisy Renton – your points could include:

- She does not appear on stage but the events all link to her life and death.
- She has higher moral standards than the Birling family and Gerald Croft.
- She is a hard worker, unlike Eric and Sheila.
- She can be compared with Sheila as a young woman of the time.
- She represents the theme of social responsibility.

2 Priestley presents Eva Smith/Daisy Renton as a symbol of all working-class men and women.

p.65 REVIEW IT!



- 1 Mr Birling is a capitalist.
- 2 Birling is established as opposite to Priestley in his political viewpoints – by Mr Birling making statements that are wrong or untrue, Priestley shows him to be a character who is foolish or wrong in his thinking.
- 3 'If we were all responsible for everything that happened to everybody, it would be very awkward'
- 4 Sheila is still focused on Gerald and teases him that she was there earlier for his benefit.
- 5 Sheila recognises Eva Smith from the photograph and realises her part in the chain of events.
- 6 Sheila becomes impatient with her family's refusal to either work with the Inspector or face up to their responsibilities. She interrupts to try to move things along.
- 7 Gerald has just used this phrase to try to get Sheila to leave the room as he answers his questions. The Inspector turns this on him questioning, why he didn't protect Daisy in the same way.
- 8 Gerald describes Daisy Renton as 'young and fresh and charming and altogether out of place.'
- 9 Gerald's main preoccupation is to work out the identity of the Inspector, rather than focus on his own responsibility.
- 10 Alderman Meggarty is a prominent person in Brumley. Mrs Birling does not believe that someone of his status could behave in this way.
- 11 Priestley is showing how the working classes, and women in particular, are used and exploited by those with status, wealth and power in society.
- 12 Mrs Birling said that the child was the father's responsibility.
- 13 Mrs Birling means a member of the working class, suggesting that Eva/Daisy would not be morally robust enough to refuse stolen money.
- 14 Priestley presents Mrs Birling as a member of the wealthy capitalist elite, callous and unsympathetic to the working classes. Her prejudice ensures that she will not accept responsibility for her actions.
- 15 Mrs Birling focuses on appearances.
- 16 Eva Smith and John Smith.
- 17 Social responsibility
- 18 Your answer could include: the Inspector keeps everyone on track. He looks hard at a character before speaking. His questions are direct and to the point. He re-states the question if the character tries to evade it. He presents each character with a piece of information then compels the characters to talk.
- 19 Priestley/socialism
- 20 Your answer could include: The Inspector is the voice of socialism and represents Priestley's views. He challenges the characters and their moral standpoint and therefore challenges the audience too. His moral standpoint places him above all of the other characters so gives the audience members a measure for their own moral standpoint. He controls the action and the pace of the plot.

THEMES AND CONTEXTS SECTION

p.66 Do it!

**Your answers could include:**

- Mr Birling says that each individual must look after themselves and their family. It would be 'awkward' to be responsible for everyone else.
- The Inspector says we are all connected and that we are all responsible for each other. He warns that it will end in 'fire and blood and anguish' if we don't take responsibility. Mr Birling is used by Priestley to convey his views on class, social responsibility and capitalism. Through his other speeches about the future of the country and society, the audience is expected to discount his views.
- The Inspector is used by Priestley to convey his views on class, social responsibility and socialism. He is Priestley's mouthpiece and the audience is expected to learn from him.

p.67 Do it!



If you ask for the earth, it means that you want everything you can possibly possess. If you take the earth, it means that you disrespectfully strip or take everything from someone. The Inspector means that Eva Smith may have asked for everything, but Mr Birling destroyed her by taking everything, for example, her livelihood, from her.

p.67 Stretch it!



This statement made by Margaret Thatcher in 1987 reflects the ideals seen in Mr Birling's speech in Act 1 where he tells Gerald and Eric that a man should 'mind his own business' and look after himself. Margaret Thatcher was leader of the Conservative party. Some people argue that what she meant here is that we all are part of the problem, so why not look to ourselves first and the government second? Other people argue that this statement represented the selfish attitude of people who have money and are only willing to look after themselves and their families.

p.68 Do it!



'She was giving herself ridiculous airs' – Mrs Birling does not believe that the working classes would have any principles or a moral code. The adjective 'ridiculous' suggests that Eva/Daisy's claims were silly and out of character for someone of her class. The noun 'airs' links to her manner and way of thinking. Again, Mrs Birling's prejudices are revealed here.

'If he refused to marry her – and in my opinion he ought to be compelled to –' Mrs Birling declares that the young man should be made to marry Eva/Daisy. Priestley uses dashes to insert her opinion – almost as an aside – to replicate the patterns of natural speech. The audience recognises that Mrs Birling would speak like this. She would also compel the young man to take responsibility, unless that young man was her son, of course. If she knew that it was her son she would not allow such a marriage, out of class, to take place.

p.69 Do it!



	Older generation: Mr and Mrs Birling	Younger generation: Sheila and Eric
Reactions to the workers on strike at Birling's factory	Mr Birling puts profit before his workers. He says it was his duty 'to keep labour costs down'. Gerald agrees with this by saying 'You couldn't have done anything else.'	Eric states that the working classes can't go and work elsewhere if they don't accept the working conditions – directly contradicting his father. He also says that he would have let Eva Smith stay at the factory.
Reactions to Eva/Daisy's death	Both react to the death of Eva Smith/Daisy Renton in terms of the public scandal it could cause and the impact the news would have on their lives. They do not react to how she died and the circumstances that led to her death.	Sheila is horrified by the details of the death and tells the Inspector 'I can't stop thinking about it'. Eric damns his mother for her part in Eva/Daisy's death.
Reactions to the Inspector during questioning	Both try to intimidate the Inspector, Mrs Birling with haughty responses and Mr Birling talking about his social connections	Both Eric and Sheila accept their part in Eva/Daisy's suicide, displaying shame and accepting responsibility.
Reactions to the Inspector after his exit	Both show their outrage by the way they felt the Inspector behaved towards them. Mrs Birling says he was 'so rude – and assertive', and Mr Birling focuses on the fact that as an ex-Lord Mayor (his status in society), he was told to 'shut up'.	Eric is equally outraged about his parents' behaviour after the Inspector exits. He tells them, 'This girl's still dead.' He understands that the facts remain about their behaviour. Sheila challenges them, telling them they 'began to learn something' but now they are 'ready to go on in the same old way'.

p.69 Stretch it!



In line with the younger generation: takes a cigarette when talking to Mr Birling instead of a cigar – symbolic of modern times; backs up Sheila to confirm Eric's drinking.

In line with the older generation: agrees with Mr Birling on the treatment of his workforce in Act 1, keen to discredit the Inspector at the end of Act 3.

p.70 Do it!



Secrets and lies

- 1 'I was awfully busy at the works' [lie]
- 2 'Old Joe Meggarty... had wedged her into a corner' [secret]
- 3 'No. Why should I?' [lie]
- 4 'she had no claim to the name, that she wasn't married...' [lie]

Hypocrisy

- 1 'it's bound to be unpleasant and disturbing'
- 2 'I didn't like her manner'.
- 3 'he ought to be dealt with very severely –'
- 4 'But that won't bring Eva Smith back to life will it?'
- 5 'we are learning something tonight.'

p.70 Stretch it!



Eva's lie is a different type of lie. She does not try to hide her actions or blame others. She tries to protect Eric. Her lies are brought on by the hypocrisy of 'respectable people'.

p.71 Stretch it!



Eva shows gratitude and loyalty to both Gerald and Eric. They are forms of love in that they show that she cares for them both.

p.71 Do it!



1 Romantic love: Daisy Renton feels romantic love for Gerald. [genuine]; Sheila feels this for Gerald.

Love to gain social status: Mr Birling wants his daughter to marry Gerald for status. [not genuine] Mr Birling probably married his wife for status but he does show affection for her in the play.

Family love: Eric and Sheila are closer by the end of the play – but their relationship with their parents has broken down. [not genuine]

Love for people in society – the Inspector. [genuine]

Love of power and status in society – Mr Birling. [not genuine]

Sexual love – Eric and possibly Gerald. [not genuine]

2 Priestley uses the Inspector to voice his views on how the rich and wealthy use the poor and have no consideration of them as people. We see this when the Inspector accuses Eric of just using Eva at the end of the evening ‘as if she was an animal, a thing not a person’. This type of love is merely sexual. Eric claims that he liked her but he tells the Inspector that he didn’t love her. Priestley is showing the audience through this theme of love that wealthy, powerful people will exploit the working classes. They will irresponsibly use young women like Eva Smith for their own pleasure before discarding them.

p.72 Do it!



A Socialism (The Inspector) Priestley’s social message throughout the play is that we must be responsible for each other. Priestley’s message is that we are all part of a larger community ‘one body’ and our actions, no matter how small or insignificant, will always have an impact on other people’s lives. This is a socialist message.

B Capitalism (Mr Birling) Priestley presents Mr Birling describing socialists as ‘cranks’ and dismissing talk of community as ‘nonsense’. A hive of bees is well organised, supportive and productive. Mr Birling rejects this. Priestley presents Mr Birling as the opposite to socialism – and of course he shows Mr Birling’s opinions as wrong in the opening of Act 1.

p.72 Stretch it!



The impact of this policy on working classes would be that wages would be lowered. This is a simple way to reduce costs for the wealthy factory owners. This would impact on the working classes as they would have less money and wages, therefore there would be more poverty. They would face all of the consequences of lower prices whereas the wealthy would benefit from the higher prices. This would impact on the working classes.



p.72 AQA exam-style question

- Overarching idea: Priestley, as a socialist, uses the Inspector as his mouthpiece for his socialist viewpoint; Mr Birling represents the opposing viewpoint: capitalism.
- Mr Birling’s viewpoint is shown to be wrong by Priestley in the opening scene through use of dramatic irony; he is the mouthpiece for capitalism and wealthy employers; use of business language in his speech.
- Explore the presentation of the Inspector’s views: he is the mouthpiece for social responsibility and socialism; he is an archetype/symbol rather than a realistic character; the Inspector is presented as god-like in his knowledge and actions.
- The cyclical structure of the plot shows that Mr Birling must repeat the events of the evening until he learns the Inspector’s lessons and accepts social responsibility.
- Priestley uses the Inspector’s message to teach the audience, in the aftermath of the Second World War, that they must accept social responsibility.

p.73 Do it!



Priestley presents Mr Birling as being wrong in all of his opinions and predictions. He does this to discredit any of his opinions throughout the play which the audience would understand and would be amused by his confidence in such wrong predictions! Mr Birling is shown to be a capitalist in his thinking – opposite to Priestley. Priestley intends the audience to understand that Mr Birling's capitalist views are as wrong as his predictions.

p.75 Do it!



Relevant today	Not relevant today
Funding issues in schools and the NHS mean that there are still inequalities in our society.	We have the welfare state: everyone has access to schools and the NHS.
There has been a rise in poverty in recent years.	Benefits are available to support families in need.
People are having to use food banks to ensure that they eat.	People can support food banks by donating but they should not be compelled to do so as they already pay tax to support the needy.

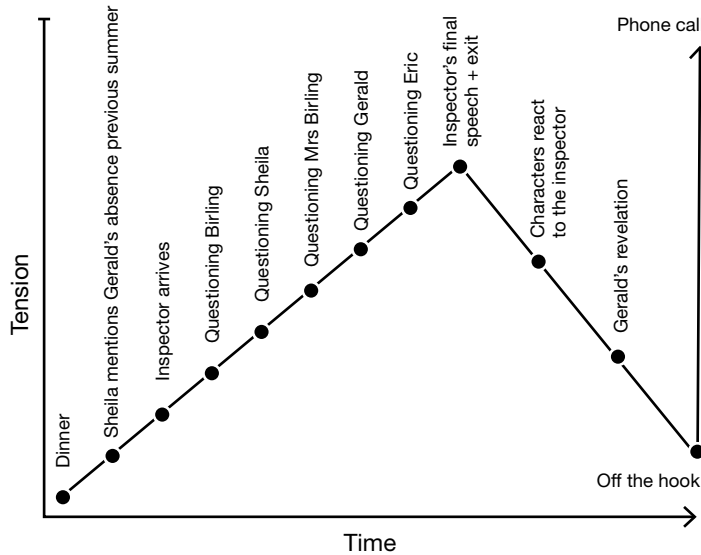
p.75 REVIEW IT!



- 1 Social responsibility; social class and snobbery; differences between generations; secrets, lies and hypocrisy; love.
- 2 In terms of his age, Gerald could be seen to sit between the generations. He is older than Sheila and Eric but younger than Mr and Mrs Birling. Ultimately, because he doesn't accept responsibility for his actions, he is aligned with the older generation.
- 3 The play was written in 1945 and set in 1912.
- 4 You could include: the unsinkable *Titanic*; no threat of war; this was a good time for Gerald and Sheila to be getting married.
- 5 Socialism: industry and services owned by the state. Capitalism: industry and services owned by individuals. Birling represented capitalism, the Inspector socialism. Priestley was a socialist.
- 6 Birling family (upper middle class); Gerald Croft (upper class); Eva Smith (working class).
- 7 Daisy has no work so she hadn't eaten that day.
- 8 Mrs Birling does not think that a working-class girl would have the morals to refuse stolen money.
- 9 The Inspector warns that things will end in 'Fire and blood and anguish'.
- 10 The audience will have lived through the Second World War. They would understand the need to support each other and take responsibility.
- 11 You could include: 'We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other.'
- 12 Your answer could include: Sheila is infatuated with him. She is caught up with the romance of engagement rings and shopping for clothes.
- 13 Mr Birling sees marriage as a business merger. He is happy that his daughter is securing a link with a rival company. Mrs Birling sees the status of Gerald's family. She also tells Sheila that she will have to accept that her husband will be busy and more important than her.
- 14 The way the two generations respond to the Inspector and his message tells the audience that the younger generation will change their futures.
- 15 Priestley uses dramatic irony here – the audience realise that it is Eric that Mrs Birling is condemning.
- 16 The welfare state would have provided education, unemployment benefit, housing benefit and maternity care. She would have been able to make choices about her life.
- 17 Mr Birling congratulates the cook on dinner. This was a social mistake.
- 18 Gerald does not want Sheila to hear the details of how he took a mistress. He is keen to protect himself. We see this behaviour later in the play when he tries to discredit the Inspector, rather than facing up to his responsibilities.
- 19 Sheila, in response to her father.
- 20 Your answer could include: the play offers hope to the audience that the younger generation are capable of change. The audience will see that the acceptance of social responsibility can change lives for the better.

LANGUAGE, STRUCTURE AND FORM SECTION

p.76 Do it!



p.77 Do it!



Stage directions	Priestley is very precise about the use of stage directions to set the atmosphere of the scene (e.g. <i>'with a hysterical laugh, to Gerald'</i>).
Use of shock or surprise	We are shocked by Mrs Birling's prejudice (and lack of shame over this) when she refuses to help Eva/Daisy. We are shocked by her attitude when she calls for the father of the child to face his responsibility.
Use of pauses and silence	The Inspector pauses to look at each character before he begins to question them. This makes the audience hold their breath before he begins to dismantle the character with his questions.
Use of mystery	The character of the Inspector is mysterious. He seems to work outside of time and also as he cannot be identified at the end of the play, this increases his mystery.
Use of confrontation	There are a number of confrontations in the play, which increase the tension. Sheila's reactions to Gerald just before he begins his questioning; Eric and Mr Birling throughout the play.

p.77 Stretch it!



Key to this task is that you need to remember that Priestley intended the Inspector to act as a guide for the characters to ensure that they could accept their collective responsibility. He is not a 'real' person. You could argue any of these positions, but in an examination answer you must ensure that you discuss his function in the play and support your ideas with quotations. 1 and 2 are linked in that they present a more 'realistic' view of the Inspector. In these responses his view of time is one that any person might share. We all get annoyed when people waste our time. 3 and 4 are linked in that they present the Inspector as a supernatural being or out of our time. For this reason, he would know what was going to happen in the future so would be aware of time running out.

p.78 Do it!



Younger generation's use of slang: 'squiffy' (Sheila and Eric); 'a good sport' (Eric)
 Mrs Birling's snobbery: 'a girl of that sort', 'the girl', 'She was claiming elaborate fine feelings and scruples that were simply absurd in a girl in her position.'
 Mr Birling's use of the language of business: 'your father and I have been friendly rivals', 'no longer competing'; 'lower costs and higher prices'

p.78 Stretch it!



Mrs Birling: 'apologise for what – doing my duty?' (Inspector): 'public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges'; (Inspector): 'We are responsible for each other.' Perhaps the most interesting difference in the use of the word 'duty' is the difference between Mrs Birling's – it was her duty to punish Eva/Daisy, and the Inspector's – sees it as his duty to help Eva/Daisy.

p.79 Do it!



Champagne glasses – symbolic of a celebration; also symbolic of wealth.
 Decanter of port – symbolic of Mr Birling's aspirations to keep up socially with the Croft family.
 Mr Birling remarks that this is the same port that Gerald's father drinks.
 Cigar box and cigarettes – cigars were associated with the older generation and symbolise wealth and luxury. Cigarettes are associated with the younger generation – Gerald refuses a cigar and takes a cigarette.

p.79 Stretch it!



The Birlings are dressed in formal evening clothes which suggests a formal dinner, though the men have removed their jackets. This formal wear suggests the wealthy classes – the upper classes of society. The Inspector is dressed for business and his work. His clothes are plain and practical, signifying a lower class.

p.81 Do it!



Feature	How does Priestley use this feature?
A murder	This device is subverted by Priestley. There has been a suicide rather than a murder.
A detective	An Inspector arrives to question the members of the Birling family; however, he is more interested in the moral crimes the characters have committed. The only true crime is Eric's theft from the business. A further Inspector is introduced at the end of the play.
Examining clues to find the murderer	The Inspector interviews each character one at a time. A photograph is shown to the characters.
A murderer	There is more than one person as the 'villain'. Collective rather than individual responsibility.
Use of suspense	Following Mr Birling and Sheila's questioning, the audience realises that the rest of the characters will follow. Use of cliffhangers at the end of each act, and dramatic exits and entrances add to the suspense.
Plot twist	The cyclical structure of the play; the final telephone call informing Mr Birling of a visit from an Inspector provides the plot twist.
The detective has the ability to get criminals to confess their crimes.	Sheila remarks how the Inspector gets them all to confess. This ability links to his omniscience.
The suspects are in one place – like a country house.	The action takes place in one room – the dining room.

p.81 Do it!



Priestley uses all of the conventions but some are subverted, for example, the obligatory scene is the Inspector's final speech, which doesn't really reveal secrets but instead establishes the moral message of the play. The final scene doesn't tie up loose ends; instead it places the events to begin again.

p.81 Stretch it!



Priestley gives the characters the opportunity to reform by the plot twist that suggests the events will be repeated. In this way, they could play out the events differently.

p.82 Stretch it!



pride/humility envy/kindness wrath/patience
 greed/charity sloth/diligence lust/chastity gluttony/temperance

p.82 Do it!



Sin	Who is guilty of this sin and what context?	What is the impact of this sin?
Pride	Mr Birling has a focus on his social advancement through a knighthood and his daughter's marriage to Gerald Croft.	He refers to his impending knighthood and is more concerned by losing this social advance than his role in the death of Eva Smith.
Envy	Sheila shows envy when Eva Smith suits the dress more than she does in Milwards.	This causes Sheila to demand that Eva Smith is sacked from the shop. This has an impact on Eva's fate.
Wrath	Mrs Birling is angry when Eva/Daisy uses the name 'Mrs Birling' when she appears in front of the charity committee.	This causes Mrs Birling to refuse help to Eva/Daisy and to manipulate the rest of the committee to do the same. This leads directly to Eva/Daisy's suicide as she saw no way out of her situation.
Greed	Mr Birling refuses to increase the wages of his workers in order to retain his profits. Gerald agrees with this action.	Mr Birling sacks Eva Smith following the strike. This is the first action in the chain of events that leads to Eva/Daisy's death.
Sloth	Eric's life lacks direction and hard work. He has been indulged and spoilt by his parents. Eva Smith could be viewed as committing the sin of despair.	Eric's lifestyle leads to his excessive drinking, which in turn leads to his treatment of Eva/Daisy. Eva Smith's despair leads to her suicide – itself a sin in the eyes of the Christian church.
Lust	Gerald installs Daisy as his mistress then discards her when he has no further use for her. Eric uses her like an 'animal' and gets her pregnant.	Daisy feels that Gerald was the best thing that happened to her and was heartbroken at the end of the affair. Daisy returns to the Palace bar where she meets Eric, triggering her final downfall.
Gluttony	Eric's excessive drinking is regarded as a problem throughout the play.	Eric's lifestyle leads to his excessive drinking, which in turn leads to his treatment of Eva/Daisy.

p.83 REVIEW IT!



- 1 To intensify the emotional responses of the characters; to manipulate the features of the well-made play; to create dramatic tension.
- 2 Characters entering the room do not know what has happened during their absence. Eric's entrance at the end of Act 2 after Mrs Birling has condemned the father of Eva's child. The audience realises that Eric is the father of the child before Mrs Birling does.
- 3 Sheila has just been shown the photograph of Eva Smith and she is overcome by emotion.
- 4 The ending of Act 1 and Act 2. The final phone call to end the play.
- 5 Mrs Birling denouncing the father of Eva/Daisy's child just as the audience realises that the father is Eric.
- 6 You could include: the ring of the door bell to signal the arrival of the Inspector and Gerald and the ring of the telephone at the end of the play.
- 7 You could include: 'The girl's dead though.'
- 8 'on the streets' is a euphemism for prostitution. He is asking whether Eva Smith went into prostitution after she was sacked.
- 9 Your paragraph may include that the Inspector uses the word to mean helping people and doing what is morally right. Mrs Birling saw her duty as refusing to help Eva/Daisy.
- 10 The lighting change suggests that the Inspector will place them under sharp scrutiny. That he will see things clearly.
- 11 A cyclical play structure means that the play ends at the same point that it began.
- 12 Real time means that the events happen in a complete sequence as if the audience was in the room living the plot alongside the characters. Nothing is missed out.
- 13 A unity of action – one plot; a unity of place – one location; a unity of time – one day. The play fulfils these unities with a small cast of characters, no subplots, all in one location and everything taking place over one evening.
- 14 Your paragraph could include how the play does include some of the features of the 'whodunnit' genre: for example, the arrival of a detective to question the suspects and unravel clues. However, Priestley subverts the genre, for it is a suicide, not a murder, and the detective (Inspector) finds the group responsible, not just one person. He also focuses on morality rather than an actual crime.
- 15 The obligatory scene is the scene that the audience is waiting for; it could be a confrontation between two characters, for example. In this play it is the Inspector's final speech.
- 16 Your paragraph could include: exposition that introduces the characters, with some secrets hinted at; the action focuses on events before the play takes place; exits and entrances are timed to increase the tension; surprises increase the tension, for example, each character's involvement with Eva/Daisy; use of cliffhangers; no subplots; obligatory scene. The denouement is where it differs from the standard well-made play because the ending is left open.
- 17 Mrs Birling.
- 18 Pride is the desire to be more important or attractive than others. Mr Birling shows this sin through his desire for social advancement especially through his daughter's marriage to Gerald Croft and his desire for a knighthood.
- 19 Eva Smith represents the working classes and her story outlines their struggles. Morality plays featured a character that represented all of humankind.
- 20 The play uses features of all of these structures and features. However, Priestley's key influence was the need to deliver a message to the audience that we must take social responsibility for each other.

DOING WELL IN YOUR AQA EXAM

p.88 Do it!



Student A refers to the question and begins immediately to answer it, using the word 'attitude' from the question. The function of the characters is referred to, showing understanding of Priestley's methods.

p.89 Stretch it!

**Your response may include:**

Priestley criticises Mrs Birling's attitude towards the working class.

Priestley ridicules Mr Birling's political viewpoints by his use of dramatic irony.

Priestley subverts the use of a denouement by leaving the end on a cliffhanger.

Priestley questions the moral standpoint of the wealthy classes through his presentation of Alderman Meggarty.

Priestley condemns the older generation of the Birling family as he judges that they will need to repeat the Inspector's lesson until they learn it.

p.91 REVIEW IT!



- 1 45 minutes
- 2 Anthology poetry and unseen poetry
- 3 One
- 4 There will be two questions. You must only select one of them.
- 5 a For example:
Do you think Gerald is an important character in *An Inspector Calls*?
Write about:
 - how Priestley presents the character
 - how Priestley uses Gerald to present ideas about people and society.
- b For example:
How and why does Eric change in *An Inspector Calls*?
Write about:
 - how Eric responds to other characters
 - how Priestley presents Eric by the way he writes.
- c For example:
How does Priestley explore love in *An Inspector Calls*?
Write about:
 - the ideas about love in *An Inspector Calls*
 - how Priestley presents these ideas in the way he writes.
- 6 5–10 minutes
- 7 You need to pin down or prepare your exam question so that you are certain what the question is asking you. You are then prepared to answer the question well.
- 8 You can use indirect quotations: you can paraphrase what the quotation is about; briefly mention what a character says or does; briefly mention an event.
- 9 Vocabulary, sentence structures, spelling and punctuation are assessed through AO4 and are worth up to 4 marks.
- 10 AOs 1, 2 and 3 are worth 30 marks all together.
- 11 Read, understand and respond. Use evidence. 12 marks
- 12 Language, form and structure/Subject terminology: 12 marks
- 13 Contexts: 6 marks
- 14 Perhaps advise them that it's better to know the whole play well as that question might not appear on the exam this time.
- 15 True. Write them only if they help you to answer the question.
- 16 Theme on page 78 to review how well you responded and where you need to improve.

p.91 REVIEW IT!



16 Plan and write answers to exam questions.

17 Example **question:**

Do you think Gerald is an important character in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents the character
- how Priestley uses Gerald to present ideas about people and society.

Paragraphs:

- 1 Gerald's function/importance as engaged to Sheila. What he represents. Links to theme of love.
- 2 Gerald's function/importance in the play as a link in the chain of events in the downfall of Daisy Renton. How he responds to the Inspector. Links to theme of social responsibility.
- 3 Gerald 'playing detective' trying to discredit the Inspector. Importance in theme of social responsibility.
- 4 Gerald at the end of the play: does he learn from the Inspector? Importance of this.
- 5 Priestley's message about society. Gerald's function/importance as a member of the aristocracy.

18 Example question: How does Priestley explore love in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- the ideas about love in *An Inspector Calls*
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the way they write.

Paragraphs:

- 1 Exploration of romantic love – Gerald/Sheila and how Priestley presents it. What he wanted the audience to learn.
- 2 Exploration of family love – the Birling family- and the rifts within that family by the end of the play and how Priestley presents them. What he wanted the audience to learn/message.
- 3 Sexual love – Daisy Renton and Gerald/Eric – how Priestley presents it. What he wanted the audience to learn/message.
- 4 Love of society/each other – Inspector – and how Priestley presents it. What he wanted the audience to learn/message.
- 5 Priestley's key messages about love.

19 The mark scheme on page 86 to review how well you responded and where you need to improve.

20 The mark scheme on page 86 to review how well you responded and where you need to improve.

AQA EXAM-STYLE QUESTIONS

**p.92 Practice question 1**

How far does Priestley present Eric as a likeable character?

- Overarching idea: Eric's behaviour as a character is unacceptable but he is presented by Priestley as showing capacity for change which means that the audience forgives him: this makes him likeable.
- Consider Eric at the start of the play: he represents young, wealthy, educated young men of the time.
- Explore Eric's role in the treatment of Eva/Daisy; look at the language of euphemism.
- Explore Eric as a socialist – what he says at the start of the play and what he says at the end of the play (e.g. his responses to his parents).
- Show how Eric fits into the themes of social responsibility and the older versus younger generations; explore how his capacity for change offers hope for the future.

**p.92 Practice question 2**

How does Priestley present different attitudes to women and women's rights?

- Overarching idea: the Inspector presents women through Eva/Daisy as people, not as playthings or workers to be exploited; women are used by Priestley to teach society.
- Explore the treatment of Eva/Daisy by older men: Alderman Meggarty and Mr Birling; look at Priestley's message and the historical context – how women were exploited ('cheap labour' by wealthy factory owners and as 'playthings' by wealthy older men).
- Explore the presentation of Sheila and Mrs Birling; at the start of the play, Sheila is obedient and accepting of her mother's advice regarding male behaviour.
- Explore the presentation of Eric and Gerald's treatment of women as disposable playthings.
- Explore the presentation of Sheila's ability to accept responsibility – she is an agent of social change; consider the context – the suffragette movement, and the Inspector's use of language to show Eva as a person.

**p.92 Practice question 3**

How does Priestley use the Inspector to explore ideas about social responsibility?

- Overarching idea: Priestley uses the Inspector as a mouthpiece for socialist principles; use of contextual information (e.g. end of the Second World War).
- Explore the Inspector as embodiment of the theme of social responsibility, including an analysis of the language of his final speech.
- Consider the Inspector as a dramatic device – an instrument to 'inspect' the characters; consider how he represents 'judgement' – judges the characters and leads them to redemption and acceptance of their social responsibility.
- Explore the Inspector's language of responsibility (e.g. 'duty'; 'we are all responsible for each other') and power.
- Show how the Inspector is used to drive the plot (e.g. the order of interviewing characters); the cyclical structure of the plot ensures that Priestley's message will be remembered as the audience leaves the theatre.



p.93 Practice question 4

How does Priestley present Mr Birling?

- Overarching idea: Mr Birling represents capitalism; he embodies the sins of pride and greed.
- Explore the character of Mr Birling and his family: the patriarchal view of family and the social context of treatment of women at this time; Sheila is seen as a tool within a business merger.
- Consider Mr Birling as a wealthy factory owner and employer, and the social context of treatment of the working classes – he does not see them as human.
- Consider Mr Birling as the voice of capitalism: Priestley presents him as wrong in his thinking through his use of dramatic irony; Mr Birling contrasts with the Inspector and his views are seen as out-dated.
- Explore Mr Birling and the theme of social responsibility: Mr Birling does not accept his role in the fate of Eva/Daisy; he will not face up to his social responsibility; the play's structure tells the audience that Mr Birling must repeat the events of the evening until he learns the Inspector's message.



p.93 Practice question 5

How does Priestley use Mr and Mrs Birling to explore ideas about class?

- Overarching idea: Mr and Mrs Birling are representatives of the upper middle class.
- Explore how Mr Birling's capitalist thinking is shown as he saw it as his 'duty' to maximise profit over people; he would not accept social responsibility.
- Explore Mrs Birling's prejudice against working class women, 'girls of that sort'.
- Consider how Mr and Mrs Birling are central within the theme of social snobbery and hypocrisy.
- Explore Priestley's message about social responsibility and how those classes with wealth and power should help those classes that do not have power and wealth.



p.93 Practice question 6

How does Priestley present family relationships in An Inspector Calls?

- Overarching idea: Priestley's message is that family is important but family should include the whole of society – social responsibility.
- Explore the generation gap and Priestley's presentation of conflict between the values of each generation.
- Consider the social context of a patriarchal society: how Mr Birling sees Sheila as a tool in a business merger; Mrs Birling views them as 'children'.
- The structure of the play shows the destruction of the family; they start off as 'pleased with themselves' and at the end of the play Mrs Birling faces public condemnation of her family's part in Eva/Daisy's fate.
- Explore the theme of hope for the future: how the younger generation rejects the views and actions of their parents; how Sheila and Eric change and accept their social responsibility.