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An Inspector Calls

**J. B. Priestley**

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**Literature Paper 2**

**Revision Booklet**

Name:

Class:

**Context –** *The Key Terms*

**Social responsibility** is the belief that everyone has a duty to look after each other and society.

People who believe in social responsibility are called **collectivists**.

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**Individualism** is the belief that everyone only has a duty to look after themselves.

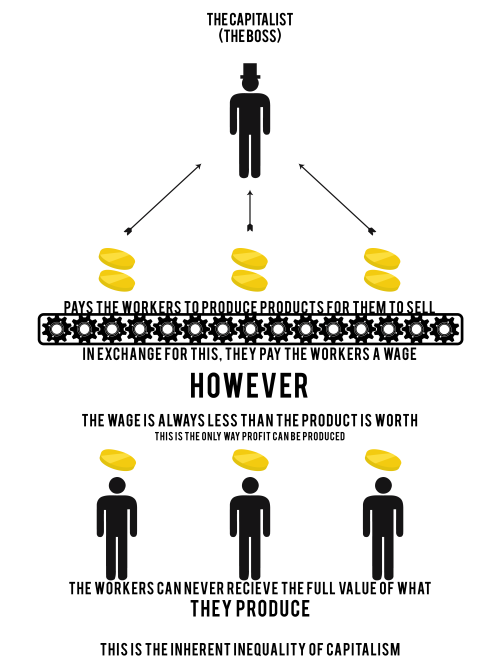
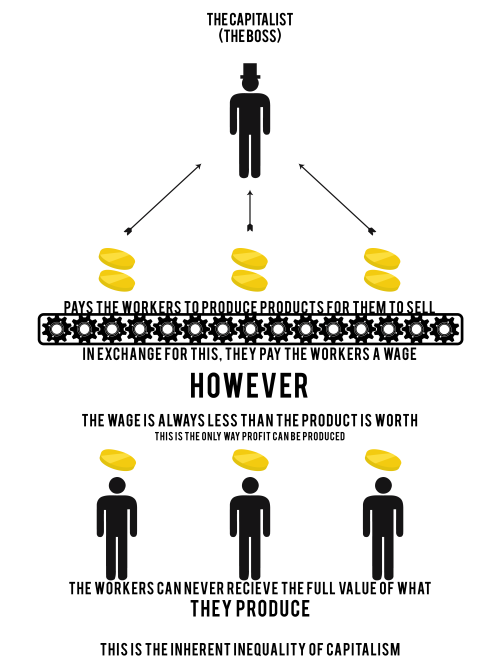
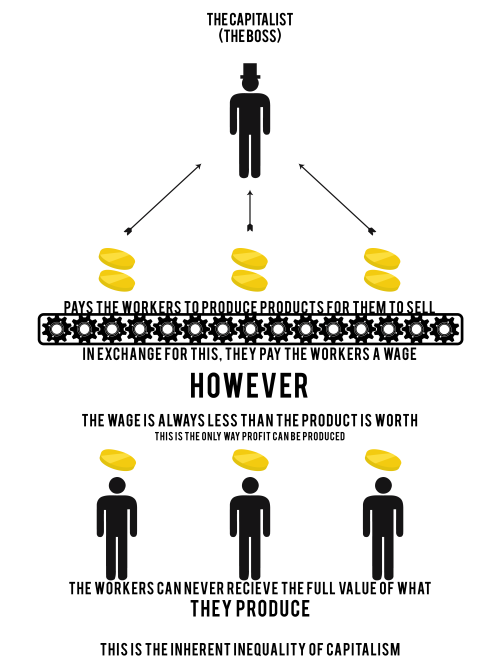
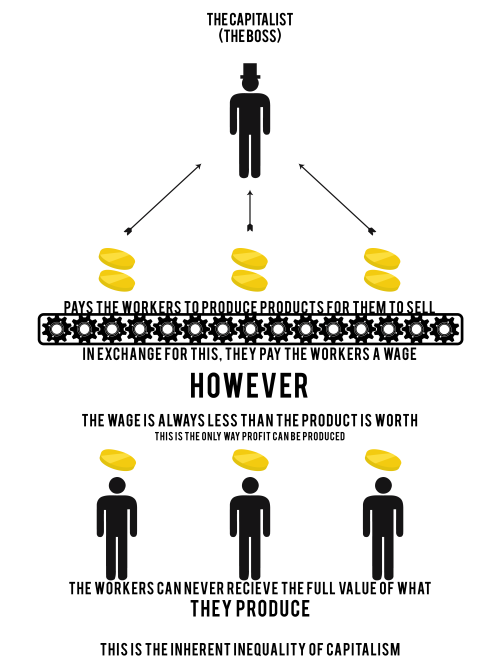
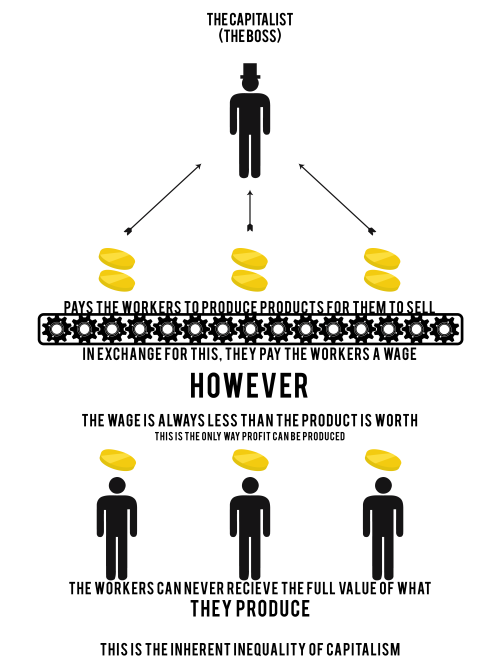
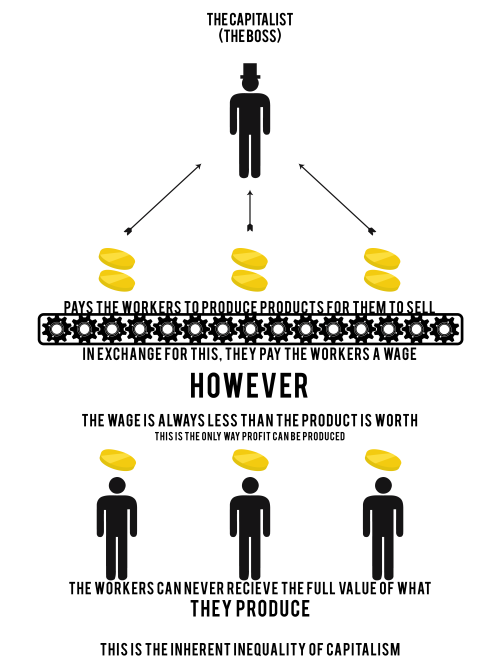
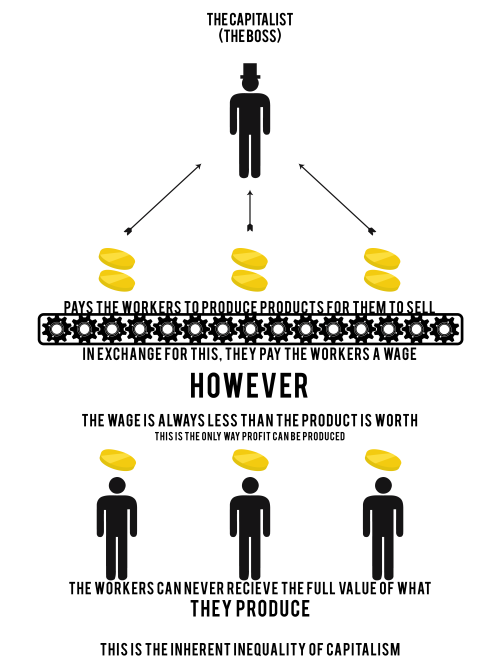
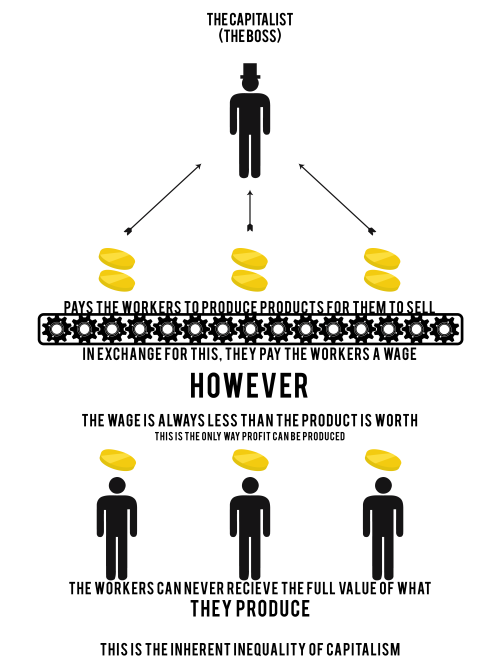
People who believe in individualism are called **individualists**.

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**Capitalism** is the belief that profits should be kept by those who earn them.

**Socialism** is the belief that society should be equal and people should share their profits.





**Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, 1848**

The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat

Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things. In all these movements, they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

The Communists openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions.

Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletariats have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite!

**The 20th Century Social Hierarchy**

**Bourgeoisie** is a term used to refer to the middle-class people who own most of the wealth in a capitalist system.

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**Proletariat** is a term used to refer to workers without high status, especially industrial workers.



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| --- | --- |
| **Communism, socialism and capitalism** | |
|  | |
| 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **is the belief that everyone has a duty to look after each other in society** 2. Individualism 3. Social responsibility 4. Capitalism | 1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ believe that everyone only has a duty to look after themselves** 2. Socialists 3. Communists 4. Individualists |
| 1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_believe that profit should be shared** 2. Capitalists 3. Collectivists 4. Socialists 5. Individualists | 1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ believe that profits should be kept by those who earn them** 2. Individualists 3. Socialists 4. Collectivists 5. Capitalists |
| 1. **The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are workers** 2. capitalists 3. socialists 4. proletariat 5. bourgeoisie | 1. **The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are middle class people who hold the most wealth in a capitalist system** 2. capitalists 3. socialists 4. proletariat 5. bourgeoisie |
| 1. **Karl Marx said that the aim of Communists is “forcible \_\_\_\_\_\_” of the bourgeoisie** 2. abuse 3. overthrow 4. attack 5. revolution | 1. **Karl Marx wanted people to go “against the existing social and political order of things”. In other words, he wanted to…** 2. achieve violence against the bourgeoisie 3. destabilise the status quo 4. promote dogmatic views |
| 1. **Karl Marx wanted the “workers of the world” to “\_\_\_\_\_\_”** 2. overthrow 3. destabilise 4. unite | 1. **Karl Marx wanted the “ruling classes” to “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”** 2. shake 3. tremble 4. destabilise 5. unite |

**Context –** *Priestley’s Thoughts & Decision*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **J.B. Priestley** | | |
| **Socialist Industrial Bradford** | **Production with solid fill** | Priestley was born in 1894 in Bradford, Yorkshire. Bradford was an industrial town with a strong Socialist tradition. Priestley himself worked in the wool trade and noticed the poverty and injustice in Bradford. |
| **First World War** | **Firearm Gun Rifle - Free vector graphic on Pixabay** | When the First World War broke out in 1914, Priestley (aged twenty) joined and served for five years. Although the war led to some increase in social equality, he was traumatised by war and resentful towards the bourgeoisie ‘officer class’, who he blamed for ‘killing’ his ‘friends’. |
| **Broadcasting** | **Radio microphone with solid fill** | During the Second World War, Priestley broadcast his point of view on a BBC Radio Show, Postscripts. He wanted a better, fairer society where ‘free men could combine’ and where each ‘gives according to his ability and receives according to his need’. The show was cancelled after nine weeks. |
| **Socialist Russia** | **International Socialist Tendency - Wikipedia** | *An Inspector Calls* was first performed in Moscow, Russia, after no London theatres would put it on. The play’s socialist message meant that audiences thought it was ‘realistic Soviet art’. |

**J.B. Priestley, Postscript, 1940**

We are floundering between two stools. One of them is our old acquaintance labelled ‘Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost’, which can’t really represent us… The other stool … has some lettering round it that hints that free men could combine, without losing what’s essential to their free development, to see that each gives according to his ability, and receives according to his need.

**J.B. Priestley, Programme Note for the *Inspector Calls* production at the Mermaid Theatre**

The particular year [1912] in which the action is supposed to be happening was not chosen at random it is significant and is indeed a key to the play.

**The Significant Changes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The Golden Age (Edwardian Era)** | **The Post-War Era** |
| 1912 – when the play was set | 1945 – when the play was written |
| Class divide | Decrease in class divide after the two World Wars |
| No votes for women | Votes for women; increasing equality |
| No trade unions | Unions and strikes had occurred |
| No welfare state | Welfare state beginning to be created |
| Powerful empire | Empire reduced |
| Conservative government | Labour landslide in 1945, beating Winston Churchill |
| Capitalism | Socialist Labour government |
| Individualist politics | Increasing social responsibility |
| Titanic seen as magnificent and unsinkable | Titanic had, famously, sunk |

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| **Priestley’s views and decisions** | |
|  | |
| 1. **Priestley thought that society was stuck between capitalistic individualism and…** 2. the individualistic idea that “every man” should be “for himself” 3. the socialist idea that “free men could combine” 4. the idea of altruism and philanthropy | 1. **An Inspector Calls is set in…** 2. 1914 3. 1912 4. 1945 5. 1955 6. 1932 |
| 1. **Priestley was born in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ town of Bradford** 2. bourgeoisie capitalist 3. industrial socialist 4. collectivism bourgeoisie 5. proletariat | 1. **The First World War made Priestley resentful of the… because he blamed them for killing his friends** 2. proletariat soldiers 3. socialist fighters 4. brave army 5. bourgeoisie officer class |
| 1. **In Priestley’s radio show, he promoted…** 2. capitalism 3. socialism 4. individualism | 1. **Priestley set *An Inspector Calls* in 1912 to remind his 1945 audience of the injustice of the past and avoid…** 2. social progression and political progress 3. destabilising the status quo 4. social and political regression |
| 1. **The Labour landslide in 1945 showed people’s support for…** 2. socialism 3. individualism 4. capitalism | 1. **In the post-war era, there had been some social and political \_\_\_\_\_\_** 2. regression 3. progress 4. capitalism |
| 1. **During the Edwardian era, \_\_\_\_\_\_ party ruled.** 2. Labour 3. Conservative 4. Green Party | 1. **In 1945, the \_\_\_\_\_\_ party beat Winston Churchill by a landslide.** 2. Labour 3. Conservative 4. Green Party |
| 1. **Post war bought about a lot of change, especially in the workforce where \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ were introduced.** 2. Trade unions 3. Sweat shops 4. Rules and legislation | 1. **Women did not have the right to \_\_\_\_\_\_ until after the war.** 2. Work 3. Marry 4. Vote |



**Characters**

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated**Mr Birling**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character Tracking** | | |
| Mr Birling | | |
| **…is presented as…** | **when… [+quotation]** | **+key vocabulary** |
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**Mrs Birling**

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character Tracking** | | |
| Mrs Birling | | |
| **…is presented as…** | **when… [+quotation]** | **+key vocabulary** |
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**Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated with low confidenceSheila Birling**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character Tracking** | | |
| Sheila | | |
| **…is presented as…** | **when… [+quotation]** | **+key vocabulary** |
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**Eric Birling**

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| **Character Tracking** | | |
| Eric | | |
| **…is presented as…** | **when… [+quotation]** | **+key vocabulary** |
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**Gerald Croft**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character Tracking** | | |
| Gerald | | |
| **…is presented as…** | **when… [+quotation]** | **+key vocabulary** |
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**Inspector Goole**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character Tracking** | | |
| **Inspector Goole** | | |
| **…is presented as…** | **when… [+quotation]** | **+key vocabulary** |
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| **Act 1 Part 1: The presentation of the Birlings** | |
|  | |
| 1. **Although the Edwardian era was patriarchal, Mrs Birling is described as her husband’s “social superior”, meaning that perhaps she would be concerned about the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the family’s social status** 2. futility 3. inevitability 4. stability 5. benevolence | 1. **Sheila is “very pleased with life”, revealing that, despite the injustice of the Edwardian era, she is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** 2. naively, ignorantly and selfishly satisfied with her “life” because of her privilege 3. superior to everyone in her family including her father and mother because she is in the younger generation 4. inferior to her father because of the Edwardian patriarchal society |
| 1. **Eric is “half shy, half assertive”, revealing that he is not fully mature and is perhaps \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** 2. disrespectful and treacherous 3. superior and patriarchal 4. unstable and volatile | 1. **The whole family are “pleased with themselves”, perhaps revealing their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** 2. inferiority 3. hubris 4. socialism 5. volatility |
| 1. **Mr Birling “clearly relaxes” when…** 2. he drinks port 3. notices his wife hasn’t taken port 4. Sheila calls him an “old man” 5. Gerald discusses the “governor” 6. Edna leaves the room | 1. **Mrs Birling tells Mr Birling “you’re not supposed to say such things” because…** 2. he swore at the dinner party and drank too much, embarrassing Mrs Birling in front of Gerald 3. she feels intimidated by Mr Birling because he is her “social superior” and she knows that she should respect him 4. he asked Edna to “tell cook” that the dinner was “good” but he should have kept a distance between himself and the proletariat |
| 1. **Eric “suddenly guffaws” after…** 2. Gerald “object[s]” to being one of the family 3. Sheila mentions how Gerald “never came near” her “all last summer” 4. Sheila calls him “squiffy” – drunk 5. Sheila calls him an “ass” for being embarrassing | 1. **When Eric “suddenly guffaws” this reveals his…** 2. superiority and loyalty 3. benevolence and altruism 4. immaturity and volatility |
| 1. **Mr Birling is happy about the union between Gerald and Sheila because it will lead to “Crofts and Birlings… working together” for “lower costs” for the business and “higher prices” for the customer, revealing…** 2. his altruistic, benevolent socialist views 3. his bourgeois, misanthropic philanthropy 4. his callous, avaricious capitalist views 5. his positivity towards Gerald Croft’s family because of the Birlings’ superiority | 1. **Mrs Birling tells Mr Birling what he “ought to” and is “supposed to” do. In other words, she…** 2. polices what he says to try to preserve her family’s status and force him to behave in a proper way 3. is bossy and rude to him in order to impress Gerald Croft and avoid volatility 4. creates instability in her family by being abusive and aggressive to her husband |
| 1. **Sheila says “is this the one you wanted me to have”. In other words…** 2. she hates her engagement ring from Gerald and she regrets getting engaged to him 3. Gerald chose her engagement ring and her enjoyment of it is based on whether he “wanted” her to have it 4. she got the wrong ring from Gerald but she “wanted” to choose her own and he wouldn’t allow her | 1. **To be infantilised is to be treated like a child. When Sheila, who is in her “early twenties” says \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we see she has been infantilised by her parents** 2. “It’s wonderful”” 3. “Isn’t it a beauty?” 4. “Careful!” 5. “squiffy” 6. “mummy” |

**Plot Quiz**

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| --- | --- |
| **Act 1 Part 2: The foolishness, ignorance, callousness and hubris of capitalism** | |
|  | |
| 1. **Mr Birling repeatedly calls himself a “hard-headed” and “practical” “man of business”. In other words, he is…** 2. a misanthropic and blinkered member of the proletariat 3. a superior and patriarchal patriot 4. a dogmatically and callously avaricious capitalist | 1. **Mr Birling says that Sheila and Gerald are marrying at a “good time” but…** 2. the audience know that there are about to be two World Wars, strikes and turmoil 3. Gerald knows that there will be a war and he will sign up for it 4. Eric is supportive of the war and is patriotic and loyal to the king |
| 1. **Although the audience know that “war’s inevitable”, Mr Birling trivialises the possibility of war when he says…** 2. “there’s too much at stake” 3. “nothing to gain by war” 4. “steadily increasing prosperity” 5. “silly little war scares” | 1. **Mr Birling seems foolish and ignorant when…** 2. He says that the Titanic is “unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable” 3. He says that “auto-mobile’s making headway” 4. He says that he is “hard-headed” 5. He says “that’s what you’ve got to keep your eye on” |
| 1. **Mr Birling shows his insecurity in his family’s social status when he says to Gerald…** 2. “Don’t blame her” 3. “Lady Croft… feels you might have done better for yourself socially” 4. “it’s a bit too early for that so don’t say anything” 5. “I was Lord Mayor here two years ago when royalty visited” | 1. **Mr Birling says there’s a “very good chance of a knighthood” if they don’t get into the “police court” or “start a scandal”. He “laughs complacently”, showing his…** 2. superiority 3. patriarchal society 4. status 5. hubris 6. callousness |
| 1. **Birling misogynistically says that “clothes,” for women…** 2. are a sign of their “self-respect” 3. are a “joke” 4. are “potty about ‘em” 5. are something they’ve “never had” before they “get married” | 1. **Mr Birling calls socialists “cranks”, showing that…** 2. he respects socialism and socialists 3. he undermines capitalism with his socialist views 4. he thinks socialism is ridiculous and foolish |
| 1. **Mr Birling calls “community” “nonsense”. In other words, he is trivialising…** 2. the idea of individualism, capitalism and avarice 3. the views of Thomas Malthus 4. the attitude of Gerald Croft’s family 5. the idea of socialism, altruism and social responsibility | 1. **Mr Birling says that a man has to “mind his own business and look after himself and his own”. In other words…** 2. people should be altruistic, philanthropic and benevolent 3. people should be selfish, avaricious and individualistic 4. the bourgeoisie should promote socialism 5. the proletariat should act in a generous and benevolent way |

|  |  |
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| **Act 1 Part 3: Inspector Goole disrupts, destabilises and contradicts** | |
|  | |
| 1. **The “sharp ring of a door bell” interrupts Mr Birling’s…** 2. speech promoting socialism and social responsibility 3. speech denying the possibility of war and trivialising the danger of conflict 4. speech promoting avarice, selfishness and individualism | 1. **The Inspector creates an “impression of massiveness, solidity and purposefulness”. In other words, he is…** 2. superior, hubristic, avaricious and futile 3. inferior, feeble, fragile and weak 4. intimidating, potent, focused and determined |
| 1. **The Inspector “cut[s] through, massively” when Mr Birling speaks. In other words, he…** 2. dehumanises Mr Birling and trivialises his problems 3. interrupts, disrupts and perhaps destabilises Mr Birling and his callous capitalism 4. denounces and criticises Mr Birling and his misanthropic attitude | 1. **The Inspector “interposes himself between them and the photograph.” In other words, he controls who sees the photograph, revealing…** 2. that he is rude and impertinent 3. that he is inferior to the Birling family and trivialising their status 4. that he is commanding, controlling and potent |
| 1. **The Inspector wants “one person and one line of inquiry at a time”. In other words,…** 2. he is jealous of the family’s social status because he wishes he had their power and position in the social hierarchy 3. he controls the family, showing that, despite his inferior social status, he is still potent 4. he doesn’t like the Birling family because they are capitalists and they are callous | 1. **Mr Birling tries, unsuccessfully, to intimidate the Inspector by referring to…** 2. the “silly little war scares” and calling him a “crank” 3. “Sir George Croft” 4. his business, Birling and Company |
| 1. **When Inspector Goole refers to a “chain of events”, he means…** 2. that all actions are connected together; we should be socially responsible 3. that we are all imprisoned and trapped by a chain 4. that everyone should be socialists because otherwise we will be punished | 1. **Mr Birling says “I don’t like that tone” because…** 2. he thinks that Eric is being “squiffy” and rude to him 3. he thinks that the Inspector should respect him due to his social status 4. he finds the Inspector irritating and hates his voice |
| 1. **Mr Birling says “it’s my duty to keep labour costs down.” In other words, he…** 2. is a capitalist and hates his workers 3. feels no social responsibility and avariciously wants to increase his profits 4. thinks that Eva Smith was being fair and that he should have given her a pay rise | 1. **Mr Birling says “she'd had a lot to say – far too much – so she had to go”, revealing that…** 2. he was upset by Eva Smith’s attitude because he had shown her such kindness in the past 3. he felt dehumanised by Eva Smith’s strike; she wasn’t treating him as a person 4. he didn’t think Eva Smith should have power or a voice because he was afraid of her destabilising his authority |
| 1. **Mr Birling thinks he had to “come down sharply” on Eva Smith. In other words, he…** 2. believes that abuse and violence are ok 3. thinks that callousness is needed to preserve the status quo 4. sees himself as superior to Eva Smith because he is more intelligent | 1. **Inspector Goole says “I don’t play golf”, revealing that…** 2. he rejects the lifestyle of the bourgeoisie 3. he enjoys the lifestyle of the bourgeoisie 4. he wishes he was part of the proletariat |

**Timeline

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