

## English Year 9 Autumn 1 - *An Inspector Calls*



### Wider reading

Google 'An Inspector Calls and J B Priestley's political journey – Alison Cullingford' and write a ten point summary of Cullingford's essay.

### 5 Minute Morphology!

'**soc**' comes from Latin meaning '**partner**' or '**comrade**'. It prefixes words such as 'social', 'socialist' and 'society'. JB Priestley believed that within society, we are all responsible for one another. In particular, he was of the opinion that the most powerful in society should look after the most vulnerable something that several members of the Birling family DON'T agree with.

**TASK:** Can you think of any antonyms (words with the opposite meaning) for words like 'social'?

### Key Vocabulary

Egalitarian Disparity Affluent

Bourgeoisie Proletariat Egocentric Hubris

Exploitation Puerile

Patriarchal Submissive Contrite

Perpetuated Exacerbated

Below are some theatrical devices and an example of where each has been used in the play. As you read, jot down other examples that you come across.

**Dramatic irony** - Birling's speeches, \_\_\_\_\_

**Stage directions** – The lighting change when the Inspector arrives: "Pink and intimate then brighter and harder," \_\_\_\_\_

**Foreshadowing** – Gerald's unexplained absence the previous spring \_\_\_\_\_

### Key concepts and context: Think about...

**1912** - Set just before WWI and the sinking of the Titanic. A moment of rising international tensions and industrial expansion. End of Victorian era saw the demise of the rigid class system. Labour Party, founded in 1900, gaining momentum. The Russian Revolution began in 1917.

**1945** - People were recovering from six years of warfare, danger and uncertainty. Class distinctions greatly reduced as a result of two world wars. Women had a more valued place in society. Desire for social change. Following WW2, Labour Party won a landslide victory over Winston Churchill and the Conservatives.

**Wealth, power and influence** - The Birlings and the Crofts are representative of the wealthy upper-class. They all misuse their social influence to benefit themselves. Their actions adversely affect the vulnerable people in society.

**Blame and responsibility** - Who is to blame for Eva's death? Each of the Birlings contribute to a chain of events leading to the destruction of Eva Smith. What responsibilities do the characters have to each other? To society?

**Public v Private** - How do the public lives, the facades, of the Birlings juxtapose their private personas? What are their motivations for this? What are the repercussions, and for who?

**Class Politics** - How do the ideologies of capitalism and socialism collide in the play? Which characters are representative of which political allegiance? Is there a correlation between a character's political beliefs and their behaviours?

**Prejudice** - What are the prejudices held by the Birlings? What are their inherent views regarding class and status? How do they act on these prejudices, and what are the consequences?

**Young v Old** What differences are evident between the younger and older generation? They react and behave differently throughout the play – why? What are their attitudes towards each other? What do they learn? Which characters change, and how?