

How does priestly present sheila birling in act one



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In act one Priestly presents Sheila Birling using a variety of techniques.

Firstly, during the beginning of the act, Priestly uses stage directions to present Sheila as a half-joking character with the stage direction '[half serious, half playful]' to show that although the conversation may be sincere she brings a lightness to the atmosphere. In addition, another stage direction '[mocking aggressions]' also indicates this half-joking, half-genuine characteristic and shows that Sheila adds the humour and sarcasm to the conversation in to room to insure it don't become too firm.

However, towards the ending of the act Sheila hears about the girl's death which causes her 'mocking' side to disintegrate and the stage directions change to '[distressed]' and '[agitated]' to show that this girl's horrible death has touched Sheila and she is concerned about the outcome of the investigation. Secondly, during the onset of the act Priestly also used speech to present Sheila as a possessive character, especially when Gerald proposes to her and she says referring to the ring " Careful!

I'll never let it go out of my sight for an instant" this shows how excited Sheila is with the ring and how she'll never be without it, some would say that she's focusing all of her attention on the ring instead of her fiancé, which further shows how women were perceived as going for the men with wealth.

Furthermore, Priestly also uses speech to present Sheila's concern about the woman's death when she says " It's just that I can't help thinking about this girl - destroying herself so horribly" this shows she's distorted about the circumstances of the death.

Additionally, towards the end of the act you get a sense that she feels guilty for the women's death. For example, "So I'm really responsible", this indicates that she feels that her acts have accounted for the death. Moreover, Priestley also uses the way the other characters interacted with Sheila to develop her character. Firstly, Mr Birling - her father - regards Sheila with disrespect and authority, as well as being very protective.

For example, "Just a minute, Sheila... Now, Inspector, perhaps you and I had better go and talk this over quietly in the corner", this shows how Mr Birling doesn't want to involve Sheila in a business matter and shows how women were seen to have no authority and respect in terms of business. Secondly, Mrs Birling - her mother - acts very motherly and strict around her. For example, "What an expression Sheila!

Really, the things you girls pick up these days!", this shows how Sheila's mother had strict rules and expectations for how her daughter should act, this may be because Sheila is the direct representative of her mother and needs to make a good impression on others. Thirdly, Gerald - her fiancé - treats Sheila in a loving, polite and respectful manner. For example, "Thanks you. And I drink to you - and I hope I can make you as happy as you deserve to be.", this shows that Gerald wants to make Sheila happy and enjoy their future together.

Finally, the inspector has respect and understanding for Sheila, however, he is highly suspicious of her. For example, "I had an idea it might be - from something the girl herself wrote", this shows that from the start the inspector thought Sheila was involved but, although the inspector had his

suspicions he's wasn't willing to express them but, would rather wait until those involved either figure it out for themselves and confess or tell him something entirely different which contradicts his theory.