

An inspector calls essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

OpeningThe style of Priestley's play seems at a first glance to be that of a straightforward, detective thriller, but as the inspector arrives with announcement of Eva Smith's death, and the involvement of each member of the family is progressively established. The structure becomes that of a whodnut, with the inspector slowly unraveling the history of Eva Smith. The audience's interest is sustained not only by progressively revealing details but their desire to find out whom ultimately, was responsible for driving Eva Smith to suicide.

Paragraph 1During the 1930's Priestley became very concerned about the consequences of social inequality in Britain, and in 1942 Priestley and some others set up a new political party, the Common Wealth Party that argued for public ownership of land, greater democracy, and a new "morality" in politics. The party merged with the Labour Party in 1945, but Priestley was influential in developing the idea of the Welfare State, which began to be put into place at the end of the war.

He believed that further world wars could only be avoided through cooperation and mutual respect between countries, and so became active in the early movement for a United Nations. And as the nuclear arms race between West and East began in the 1950s, he helped to found CND, hoping that Britain would set an example to the world by a moral act of nuclear disarmament. These ideas are reflected in the play especially through Inspector Goole's character who I believe Priestley created to influence his view through the character.

Paragraph 2 Birling's speech and the inspector's speech both show a totally different view on how to behave and treat people in society. Birling's opening speech is about his impending knighthood and about how "a man has to look after himself and his own." Birling thinks that a man should look after himself and no one else, hence why he takes no responsibility in his actions towards Eva Smith's death. He straightaway comes across as the person who will only do something, if he's going to get something out of it. Goole is clearly different to that of Birling. Unlike Birling he understands the importance of a joined society and believes that everyone should be treated equally whoever they are. He could even be seen as a God-like figure, as he preaches the same kind of quotes, as the bible; love your neighbour like your brother.

Paragraph 3 The character of the inspector Goole is the catalyst for the evening events he creates an impression of mysteriousness, massiveness, solidity and purposefulness. No one knows whether he was a realistic straightforward inspector, was he a hoaxer, or maybe something more and if so, what. Even though I don't know Priestley's full intentions of the character, I think perhaps he wanted Goole to be careful and weighty so he could put his political ideas across to the audience and by using such an intelligent character the audience are more likely to take in and act upon what the inspector says.

The inspector's character works very systematically; he likes to deal with one person and one line of enquiry at a time. His method is to confront a suspect with a piece of information and then make them talk or, as Sheila puts it, He's giving us the rope, so we can hang ourselves. Paragraph 4 Birling's character

is rather portentous. He quotes a man has to make his own way, he has to look after himself, this short speech highlights Birlings selfish personality, which also reflects on how he handles his business and himself in society. I. e, his greed for money, power, authority, knowledge and respect. Birling is to believe that he has all these things and therefore feels more superior than others; such as Eva Smith. Therefore he doesn't see any reason why he should possibly take the blame for her suicide. I told the girl to clear out, and she went. That's the last I heard from her, Birling can't see how sacking a girl because she caused an uproar could lead her to a suicide, he just sacked her and that was that. He even said, Go work somewhere else, it's free country, this quote gives me the impression that he didn't consider his actions, he just expected Eva to leave and just find another job.

Overall Birlings reaction to the inspector is very different to the other characters reactions. Instead of being affected by the confrontation with inspector over the effects his actions had caused, he was more angered by the inspectors presence. This was due to loss of control he had when the inspector entered. After losing his control and authority Birling becomes intermediated and threatened and this resulted in him speaking rudely and snapping at the inspector. Another way in which Birlings selfish character comes across is how he treats his daughters engagement party. He claims the party " is one of the happiest nights of my life." But is this because Sheila will be happy, or perhaps it's down to a merger with Crofts Limited will be good for his business.

Paragraph 5 Sheila is affected by the inspectors questions in the similar way to her brother Eric. Unlike the other characters, instead of pushing the blame

away, they both take responsibility for their actions and regret what theyd done. Sheila is very dramatic and emotional person, this especially unfolds when she confronts what she did and begins to cry so much she has to leave the room. She is horrified by her own part in Eva’s story. She feels full of guilt for her jealous actions and blames herself as “ really responsible. At the end of the play, Sheila is much has become much more wiser. She can now judge her parents and Gerald from a new perspective, but the greatest change has been in herself: her social conscience has been awakened and she is aware of her responsibilities.

The Sheila who had a girl dismissed from her job for a trivial reason has vanished forever, and has now been replaced with a young lady who if she could I would help her now. Paragraph 6Even though the play is divided into three acts, the particular scenes within the acts are easily identifiable, as the initial atmosphere is established, as the focus moved from one character to the next, as the family seeks to explain the evenings events. This enables us to understand the action and the relationship then to explore and experiment with the text to discover more depth and understanding of the character. Priestly heightens his audiences suspense by his skillful use of climaxes within the carefully controlled plot and by ensuring that the audience is left on tenterhooks at the conclusion of act 1.

Paragraph 7Priestly uses a lot of dramatic devices to create suspense in the audience. On of way he creates this is with dramatic irony, the audience knows how wrong Mr. Birling is when he makes confident predictions about there not being a war and is excited about the sailing of The Titanic. This puts the audience at an advantage over the characters and makes us

more involved as the audience who'd be viewing the play 10 years on from when it was set, fully know that what Birling wisely speaks of, is actually utterly wrong. The inspector himself adds drama especially with the ending, leaving the audience on a cliffhanger. In Act 3 the Birlings believed themselves to be off the hook when it is discovered that the Inspector wasn't real and that no girl had died in the infirmary. This releases some of the tension but the final telephone call, announcing that a real inspector is on his way to ask questions about the suicide of a young girl, suddenly restores the tension very dramatically. It is an unexpected final twist.

Paragraph 8 By the end of act 1, Priestley would have wanted his audience caught up by his writing wanting act 2 to quickly start. They'd be longing to find out who really drove Eva Smith to kill herself but what the audience are yet to find out is that the Inspector wanted each member of the family to share the responsibility of Eva's death, he later quotes, "each of you helped to kill her. so, his final speech at the end of play is aimed not only at the characters on stage, but at the audience too; "One Eva Smith has gone, but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, and what we think and say and do." The Inspector is talking about a collective responsibility, everyone in society is linked, in the same way that the characters are linked to Eva Smith. Everyone is a part of "one body", the Inspector sees society as more important than individual interests. The views he is propounding are again like those of Priestley who wanted his socialist views put across to the audience.

He adds a clear warning about what could happen if, like some members of the family, we ignore our responsibility: " And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, when they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish." Probably he is thinking partly about the world war they had just lived through, the result of governments blindly pursuing ' national interest' at all costs. No doubt he was thinking too about the Russian revolution in which poor workers and peasants took over the state and exacted a bloody revenge against the aristocrats who had treated them so badly.

Conclusion Overall Priestly introduces the theme of responsibility through his clever use of the character Inspector Goole. By doing this he is able to educate his audience without them realizing. The whole idea of this genius play, is just about teaching the people of society the importance of treating one another with respect and warning them of what will happen if they don't!