

# An inspector calls by j.b priestly essay sample

[Society](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Arthur Birling and InspectorGoole's philosophies on life and society contrast throughout the play. For most of the play Sheila, Eric and Mrs Birling are fully behind Mr Birling and his philosophies, but towards the end of the play, Eric and Sheila effectively switch sides and begin to back Inspector Goole's philosophies on life and society.

Mr Birling is a strong believer in stratas and classes in society; he believes he is in the upper class. In act 1, Mr Birling says " I'm still on the bench. It may be something about a warrant". This shows that he does put in some effort and do his part for the community. He always striving to get that little bit more respect in the town and is always worried about his reputation and what other people think of him. He also believes everyone should look after themselves; he has a very self-centred view on life. Most of Mr Birling's philosophies revolve around money and profit. On the other hand InspectorGoole has a totally different view on life. He believes that everyone is equal and we should have collective responsibility for each other. Mr Birling and InspectorGoole certainly have very different views and opinions.

The first point in the play where Mr Birling reveals to the audience that his life revolves around profit is (Page 4, Act 1). Mr Birling is toasting Sheila and Gerald's engagement. In his speech he congratulates them and wishes them a happy life. Nearly a quarter of this paragraph is taken up by Mr Birling talking about ' Crofts Limited' and ' Birling and Company' working better together. He says " we may look forward to the time when Crofts and Birlings are no longer competing, but are working together for lower costs and higher prices". He feels every person should look after themselves, work hard and make money. InspectorGoole's theory is exactly the opposite the opposite.

<https://assignbuster.com/an-inspector-calls-by-jb-priestly-essay-sample/>

These views contrast a lot throughout the play. Mr Birling thinks his ideas are correct. He speaks to Eric and Gerald as though he is never wrong. Mr Birling says “ I’m talking to you as a hard-headed, practical man of business. And I say there isn’t a chance of war”. Mr Birling was wrong about that. Then he goes on to talk about the Titanic: “ forty-six thousand tons - New York in five days - and every luxury - and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable”. He was wrong about that too. The Titanic did sink! He sometimes gets his facts right but often gets them wrong. He thinks he knows what he’s talking about but really he doesn’t.

InspectorGoole always seems confident in what he says, using different techniques to underline this. For example: when he interviews the Birlings he speaks to them individually, allowing him to focus on each person and get as much information as possible. The Inspector always keeps control of the situation; he does not allow anyone else to butt in while he is speaking with one of the other characters. InspectorGoole never allows the situation to get out of hand. Mr Birling, who is usually strong and confident (the head of the household), is silenced by InspectorGoole. Mr Birling doesn’t like being in this position but doesn’t really have much choice.

InspectorGoole outlines his views when he makes an important speech just before he leaves the Birling household towards the end of the play. “ One Eva Smith has gone but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us”. Here the Inspector is saying that most people in the world are just like Eva Smith, they are in the working class. The Birlings are part of a lucky minority who can afford to live an upper class lifestyle, but with wealth comes a responsibility in society.

<https://assignbuster.com/an-inspector-calls-by-jb-priestly-essay-sample/>

Inspector Goole goes on to say “ We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other”. This is the Inspector's view.

Mr Birling has a view that is totally opposite, but his speech delivers a very strong message, not only to the characters but to the audience. I believe this is what the author, JB Priestley, set out to achieve. There are still classes in society today, but they are not stuck to as strictly as they were when the play was written.

At the beginning of the play Mr Birling's family stuck by his views on life, but towards the end of the play Eric and Sheila, Mr and Mrs Birling's son and daughter, swap sides and start to follow the inspector's views and begin to think about the consequences of their own actions.