

# An inspector calls paper



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The play An Inspector Calls is about a pre-war family called, the Birling's.

They are celebrating their daughters engagement, when an inspector arrived asking them personal questions. The play was written in 1945 a time of exhaustion and regret when both wars were over, but it was set in 1912. With the play being set before the war some of the audience will be able to relate and reflect on the views the Birling's have although it could irritate people or contradict them as they may have been as clueless. The family is ignorant to people around them and think everything is perfect in their isolated world.

The play is almost a warning to the audience not to be so blind about issues in the world, as the family are in a microcosm of the world around them and the conflict that is happening. National Theatre Entrance  
In the opening scene of the national theatre production, the set displays the inspector standing statuette like, while in the background, behind, closed up, stands the Birling's house almost away from the world waiting for the inspector to open them up. As the inspector is standing there, he is below a gas lamp, this portrays the time of the play and when it was set which is important as it to give the audience clues of what is happening at that time. As well as the house being in the background there is children playing which the Inspector hands them an orange.

This shows the social context at the time that fruit is a luxury however was available at the time as the war had not started by then. The way he is dressed shows credibility, dressed in the hat and overcoat is a timeless look which can be used in productions for years. The clothing gives the

impression of a detective like character from the start giving him respect already and portraying his social class. Goole carries an old battered suitcase around with him representing that after he has dealt with the Birling family he will move onto another family, always travelling. The timeworn suitcase displays the wears and tears of his life. The rain falling around him on the stage creates realism so the audience automatically engage with the play from the start.

**What Does His Name Mean**The inspector's role in the play is to inspect the Birling's family, and question them. We hear from the maid Edna, "A police inspector, he says his name's Inspector Goole." This is the first time we hear of the inspector and his name sparks interest. Although his name is spelt Goole it still makes you think of the meaning Ghoul. The name is different, its meaning a ghost gives him a creepy feel already.

Also meaning a spirit which is said to take fresh life from corpses; however this is definitely morbid, he does this by taking the spirit of Eva Smith through description to the Birling family. **Inspectors Arrival**From the piercing sound of the doorbell the Inspector's intention to cut through the Birlings' façade is clear, as the Inspector and the Birlings contrast. The Inspector doesn't have the same morals as the Birlings and he shows that. The Inspector makes a big impression on the family as he arrives, interrupting their celebrations.

Timing of entrances is crucial. The Inspector arrives immediately after Birling has told Gerald about his impending knighthood and about how, "A man has to look after himself and his own." **Interview With Chosen Character**The

Inspector when interviewing approaches each family member differently. He treats the characters who refuse to confess harder, to try and make them give in, under pressure. Whereas other characters admit to their mistakes almost straight away without being pressured.

The inspector has a way of questioning that makes the characters concede easily, by controlling the room and repeating questions to make them own up. For example when questioning Mrs Birling he duplicates the question sternly with a threat to intimidate her, "I warn you...

What reason did she give for not taking any more money?" This shows that he denounces her to get the answer out of her with a pointed question.

Although the Inspector doesn't interrogate Mrs Birling like the others, it gets eased into the enquiry, almost by her own daughter, "Go on, Mother. You might as well admit." This shows that the Inspector has broke down Shelia, revealing that the younger generation is willing to change, whereas the older generation is set in their ways thinking their views are always right.

Although the younger characters are vulnerable which lets the Inspector crack them easily. The Inspector speaks softer to the women than the men but as Mrs Birling won't confess he becomes more forceful and aggressive.

Inspectors Language When I analysed the Inspectors words I found that Priestly used short sentences for dramatic effect. "Come along, Mr Croft."

The Inspector saying this when interviewing Gerald, is speeding up his confession, because it is very slow to begin with, as other characters keep interrupting. However as it progresses Gerald opens up and the inspector

has little to say as he reveals his secrets, the Inspector sits back and takes it in.

The Inspector says, "I see." showing that Priestly uses short sentences to sum up the Inspectors thoughts in a calm expression. This allows the audience to generate what Gerald has confessed. Also shows the Inspector is taking into account what he has said. The Inspector constantly implies that knows more than he does.

"And anyhow I already knew." This again indicates that he is omniscient displaying his power and control over the room. At other times, he speaks in long sentences which normally displays the story Eva Smith." She felt there would...

make it last longer." The Inspector tells the girls story of what he knows of her life to make the characters and audience emphasise with Eva Smith, he gives the sense that she's a pleasant girl that did no wrong. Where as compared to the stories and secrets that the Birlings have confessed to, which all involved Eva Smith. He uses her diary as an example of the thoughts she had, which is something very personal to Eva Smith an ammunition to her thoughts. He quotes her diary, "At the end of January..". Telling the victims story for sympathy of Birlings and audience. Also he speaks in long sentences which are broken up to produce a rhythm which gives what he says extra emphasis and makes what he says profoundly logical.

“ Because what happened to her then may have determined what happened to her afterwards, and what happened to her afterwards may have driven her to suicide”. Those words are followed by the terse comment, “ A chain of events.” And we can see that the logical sequence links up just like the links of a chain. Matter of fact words are a feature of the Inspectors speech when he is addressing the Birlings and Gerald.” Yes, she’s dead.” Very short and simple sentences but dramatic impact.

He states facts that may be harsh sounding but affects the characters with the bluntness of his tone. He calls Daisy/Eva to Gerald” Your mistress”. This conveys the way Gerald used her like an object. It is a pejorative term the Inspector could of phrased it in a nicer way. However being direct like that gets a reaction of shock out of the audience and cast of almost disgust to Gerald to hurt him. Role in Community People like Gerald and Mr Birling have important in the community.

Mr Birling is constantly reminding the Inspector of his status . “ I’m still on the bench”. Proving and boasting to the Inspector of the authority that he has. He has a role in the legal system of Brumley, as a councillor. The police come to Mr Birling to sanction warrants. There is irony underneath his role as he is there to represent right and wrong also refining the life of the community especially with his wealth helping poorer residents to improve their quality of life.

However he doesn’t show these qualities as he sacked Eva Smith over disputes with money.” Did she go on the streets”. Mr Birling asks this to the Inspector likes it’s a normal thing where as he should not approve of that

with his role in the community. He thinks very highly of himself thinks he does a lot for the community he thinks he will be on the next honours list to be knighted and then get a title.

“ There’s a fair chance that I might find my way into the next Honours List. Just a knighthood, of course”. Mr Birlings wealth and own age of his business means he has friends also in high places. An example of his role is in Act 3 at the end of the play he uses his position to get information he wants from the police, when if anybody else did this the information would be denied.

Gerald also is an important person in the community and will soon have a title. He also is part of his fathers business which the Croft family is also a wealthy family and Mr Birling’s daughter Shelia is marrying into the family. He also can use his position to get information when needed. As he requested information from a police officer and got it.

However he can do morally wrong things and can get away with it because of his role. For example he uses his role to win over Eva/Daisy, he is good to her and takes on a role of a protector to her. However he does this for while looking after her, leading her own but then drops her when he gets bored of her. Ironically he plays a protector to Eva and at his workforce when in reality he is just protecting himself. This may not be legally wrong but it is morally wrong.

The Inspector is a complete opposite to Mr Birling and Gerald. We find out that he is not actually a police officer and has no public role. There is a role reversal he does all the things that Mr Birling and Gerald should do; the Inspector has no power but he takes on the responsibilities that Mr Birling

and Gerald have that come with the power. He stands up for the vulnerable, representing the poor he believes in morals and you are shown from the start that he may not be a police officer.

He is loyal to his duty and shows characteristics that Mr Birling and Gerald should have with their positions. Inspector as a Moral Figure  
The way the Inspector uses the information he creates the impression of someone who is both an outsider and an all-knowing creature. Referring back to his role in the community, he doesn't associate with what the other men do in Brumley." Just used her for..

. not a person". He is one of the men that doesn't use women like objects, he isn't part of their social class he rises above them." And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson". The things he says shows his omniscience as he predicts the future almost he already knows what is going to happen. For example how Gerald and Eric treated Eva/Daisy he knows that they will have learned a lesson from what they did to her, it may not of been legally wrong but it was morally wrong which he is there to represent.

Also ironically he does predict what will happen at the end of the play." I tell you that the time will soon...learn that lesson." He may be saying soon but he knows that it will happen to the Birlings its mysterious that he knows this.

Additionally he stands up to Birling where as no one else can, as they are afraid of him and what his authority can do to them,"(Rather savagely) You started it". All these qualities of a moral figure makes him seem powerful and mysterious. Priestly uses the Inspector as a catalyst, as someone who



creates the possibility for others to face up to what they have done." I don't think any of you forget." After all he's said and got the Birlings to confess he hopes that he's done enough for the family to change their ways.

He is relying on their consciences for them to feel guilty. The younger generation is willing to change whereas the older generation isn't they are set in their ways. However the Birlings must decide for themselves whether they change or not, however it's what they have done wrong morally nothing they have done is illegal. The Inspector is a character who represents Priestley's strong moral views. He is a mouth piece.

He is more interested in morals than legalities. He doesn't believe in the divide in rich and poor." We don't live alone, we are members of one body." He is saying that everyone is equal no matter what the situation, him saying this doesn't sound like a normal policeman, it sounds very religious with him believing in equality. There is suspicion from the start of the play that the Inspector isn't a police officer, even the characters start to suspect." Yes that's true.

You know" (She goes close to him wonderingly) " I don't understand you." Sheila says this to the Inspector she does question him near the start but if his identity was given a way it would ruin the structure of the play, and the Inspector's mystification. The audience also starts to realise his real position. He may first arrive on the stage as police officer but as the play progresses he has a moral rather than legal task to fulfil. His moral dimension makes him different from an ordinary policeman which this is what gives the suspicion that he's not. His determined question and control of event may be

what expected of a policeman, but towards the end of the play it is those same qualities which fuel suspicions about him.

He shows this by not being intimidated by the threat Mr Birling makes, about him knowing the constable, and how close they are. Stage Directions Priestly provides extensive stage directions to show how he wants actors to say the lines and in what tone, it is extremely helpful to anyone wishing to stage the play. The use of stagecraft is an important part of the play and contrast can be drawn between Mrs Birling and the Inspector. The Inspector starts off calmly and so does Mrs Birling she is almost cocky with him as she is so confident that she has done nothing wrong. However as their interview progresses Mrs Birling starts to get agitated with what the Inspector is insinuating. " Agitated now", " Rather cowed", " Dubiously", and " Stung".

She is shown not to be in emotional control. The Inspector is catching her out every time. In contrast Goole is often said to speak " Sternly", " Severely", " Very deliberately", " Coolly", " Gravely", " Steadily" and " With calm authority". He is mainly shown to be in emotional control of himself- " Imperturbable"- as well as in control of other characters.

There is contrast between the Birlings and the Inspector, there is much less control in the Birlings emotions. When the Inspector does show emotion its anger, reflecting his outrage at the callous and selfish behaviour of the Birlings. The stage directions often give a helpful indication of how different characters respond to Goole's interrogation and they highlight the contrasts between the characters and their reactions to the death of Eva. The stage directions are there to help to add to the dramatic impact of the play and

also enhance the reader's understanding on the characters and their emotions. Conclusion The Inspector makes a massive impact on the Birling's night.

He causes a lot of confusion to the audience and the characters. There are many interpretations of what the Inspector's purpose of him being there and his role to Eva Smith. Priestley hints several times at Goole being a figment of the Birlings' drunken imagination. With the Inspector showing the photograph of Eva at separate times to each person gives the suspicion that he is there to play a trick on the family or he knew that each person did morally wrong to different girls but wanted to point out their wrong doings. Either way he hopefully changed the Birling family for the better.