

An Inspector Calls

GCSE English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Explain how the structure of the Inspector's questioning builds tension.

Step 1 · One at a time

The Inspector questions each character in turn, following the chain of events in Eva's life.

Step 2 · Act endings

Each act ends on a revelation or a dramatic entrance, so the audience waits for the next piece.

Step 3 · Effect

Guilt is passed along like a chain; every character's link tightens the trap.

Answer: A chain-of-events structure turns a single death into a shared responsibility.

Check: Structure explained by its effect, with no quotation needed.

2. Now try one with the steps

Use dramatic irony (described, not quoted).

Step 1 · Moment

Step 2 · Audience knowledge

Step 3 · Effect

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. In what year is An Inspector Calls set? Write the year. [1]

2. In what year was the play written? Write the year. [1]

3. How many acts does the play have? Write the number. [1]

4. What is the name of the fictional town where the play is set? [1]
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5. What event are the family celebrating at the start? [1]
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6. Why did Mr Birling sack Eva Smith? [2]
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7. What is dramatic irony, and how does Priestley use it with Mr Birling? [2]
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8. What does the Inspector represent? [2]
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9. How do the younger and older generations respond differently by the end? [2]
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10. Why does Eva Smith never appear on stage? [2]
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11. Explain the significance of the final phone call. [2]
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12. How does Priestley's 1945 context shape the play's message? [3]
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13. Write a thesis for: 'How does Priestley present the theme of responsibility?' [2]
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14. Why is the lighting change when the Inspector arrives an effective dramatic method? [2]
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4. Before you hand it in

Retelling who did what to Eva in order.

Organise by argument: how Priestley uses each character to make a point about class, age or gender.

Forgetting the play was written in 1945.

Always consider both dates: 1912 setting, 1945 audience.

Writing about characters people.

'Priestley uses Mrs Birling to criticise...'

Ignoring stage directions.

Analyse lighting, entrances, exits and directions about tone.