

An Inspector Calls

by J.B. Priestley

Practice Exam Questions

AQA-style extract-based questions

8 exam-style questions with extracts

Covers every major theme and character

30-mark questions with AO breakdown

Planning space included for each question

GCSE English Literature | AQA Paper 2, Section A

Grade 9 Targeted

HOW TO USE THESE QUESTIONS

Each question follows the AQA Paper 2, Section A format:

- Read the extract carefully
- Spend 5 minutes planning your response in the planning space provided
- Write for 45 minutes (aim for 5-6 paragraphs)
- Cover both the extract AND the wider play

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES – WHAT THE EXAMINER IS LOOKING FOR

A01

Read, understand and respond to texts. Use textual references to support and illustrate interpretations.

A02

Analyse language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.

A03

Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Question 1

Character: Mr Birling

Read the following extract from Act 1 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

BIRLING: But take my word for it, you youngsters – and I've learnt in the good hard school of experience – that a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own – and –

We hear the sharp ring of a front door bell. BIRLING stops to listen.

BIRLING: I wonder who that can be at this time of night.

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley present Mr Birling as a foolish character?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE

Question 2

Social Responsibility

Read the following extract from Act 3 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

INSPECTOR: But just remember this. 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. We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other.

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley present ideas about social responsibility?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE

Question 3

Class & Power

Read the following extract from Act 2 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

MRS BIRLING: As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money!

INSPECTOR: (staring at her) There are a lot of young women living that sort of existence in every city and big town in this country, Miss Birling. If there weren't, the factories and warehouses wouldn't know where to look for cheap labour. Ask your father.

MRS BIRLING: I don't suppose for a moment that we can understand why the girl committed suicide. Girls of that class –

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley present Mrs Birling's attitude to the working class?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE

Question 4

Generational Divide

Read the following extract from Act 3 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

SHEILA: You're pretending everything's just as it was before.

ERIC: I'm not pretending.

SHEILA: No, but these two are. (To her parents.) And I tell you – whoever that Inspector was, it was anything but a joke. You knew it then. You began to learn something. And now you've stopped. You're ready to go on in the same old way.

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley use the younger generation to present ideas about change?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE

Question 5

Gender & Exploitation

Read the following extract from Act 2 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

GERALD: She was young and pretty and warm-hearted – and intensely grateful.

INSPECTOR: In fact, he was the most important person in her life – you understand?

GERALD: (eagerly) Yes – and then I was sorry for her.

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley present Gerald's relationship with Eva Smith?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE

Question 6

Artifice & Pretence

Read the following extract from Act 1 (Opening) of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

The lighting should be pink and intimate until the INSPECTOR arrives, and then it should be brighter and harder.

BIRLING: (jovially) Gerald, I'm going to tell you frankly. Your engagement to Sheila means a tremendous lot to me. She'll make you happy, and I'm sure you'll make her happy. What I like about it is that I think you're just the kind of son-in-law I always wanted.

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley use the opening of the play to present the theme of artifice and pretence?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] AO1 · AO2 · AO3

PLANNING SPACE

Question 7

Social Responsibility

Read the following extract from Act 3 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

ERIC: (nearly at breaking point) Then – you killed her. She came to you to protect me – and you turned her away – yes, and you killed her – and the child she'd have had too – my child – your own grandchild – you killed them both – damn you, damn you –

MRS BIRLING: (very distressed now) No – Eric – please – I didn't know – I didn't understand –

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley present the effects of the Inspector's investigation on the Birling family?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE

Question 8

Social Responsibility

Read the following extract from Act 1 of *An Inspector Calls* and then answer the question that follows.

INSPECTOR: Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges.

BIRLING: Possibly. But you weren't asked to come here to talk to me about my responsibilities.

INSPECTOR: Let's leave it at that then. Good night.

Starting with this extract, how does Priestley present the conflict between the Inspector and Mr Birling?

Write about:

- how Priestley presents ideas in this extract
- how Priestley presents these ideas in the play as a whole.

[30 marks] A01 · A02 · A03

PLANNING SPACE