

How is Mr Birling presented? Grade 9 PREZEL

In the opening act of *An Inspector Calls*, Priestley seamlessly fuses assertive language with juxtaposition to present Mr Birling as an injudicious character with negligible regard for the working classes. This can be seen when Birling proudly espouses the idea of “lower costs and higher prices.”

Instantly, it is evident to the audience that Birling’s desire for higher prices shows that his overall business aim is to reduce cost and this highlights that he prioritises profit over staff welfare as he clearly has no care or concern for the effect that lowering wages will have on his workers; seeing them as no more than “cheap labour.” This then illustrates that he is an exploitative capitalist character because he is taking advantage of his workers who have no protection or employment rights and is in fact proud of this professional approach and hopes it will lead him to a time when “Crofts and Birling are no longer competing but working together.” Furthermore, this dismissive attitude towards his workers shows that he lacks compassion for the lower classes and exaggerates the notion that he only cares about his own success because he is an individualist who believes that “a man has to look after himself.” Thus, from the onset of the play, the audience is exposed to Birling’s egotistical and wealth-orientated values and we are immediately encouraged by Priestley to question his capitalist views as it is clear that his treatment of the working classes will only lead to further division within society. The evident emphasis of “lower” exaggerates the impression that Mr Birling is a selfish man who is continually striving for greater profit because it suggests that he wants to reduce his costs even further than they currently stand; it is clear that his ambition is to improve his own material wealth rather than improve the welfare of his workers. Furthermore, the use of juxtaposition exaggerates a firm belief in capitalism that would horrify an audience in 1945 because, by this time, Labour had won the election and there was a distinct lean towards socialist ideals. Priestley deliberately sets the play in 1912 to expose the changes within society as Mr Birling’s actions can be seen as reflective of life in 1912 as, given high levels of unemployment, many employers took advantage of their workers and exploited them for greater profit – an approach to business that would appal an audience in 1945 who has seen the dangers of focusing solely on “higher

How is Mr Birling presented? Grade 8 PREZEL

In the opening act of *An Inspector Calls*, Priestley uses **assertive language and juxtaposition** to present Mr Birling as an **injudicious character**. This can be seen when Birling proudly discusses the idea of **“lower costs and higher prices.”** It is clear that Birling’s desire for **“higher prices”** shows that his overall business aim is to reduce cost and this highlights that he prioritises profit over staff welfare **as he clearly has no care or concern** for the effect that lowering wages will have on his workers; seeing them as no more than **“cheap labour.”** This then shows that he is an **exploitative character** because he is taking advantage of his workers who have no protection or employment rights and is in fact proud of this professional approach and hopes it will lead him to a time when **“Crofts and Birling”** are working together. Furthermore, this **dismissive attitude** towards his workers shows that **he lacks compassion** for the lower classes and shows that he only cares about his own success because he is an individualist who believes that **“a man has to look after himself.”** Thus, from the start of the play, the audience is shown that **Mr Birling’s is egotistical and wealth-orientated** and we are immediately encouraged by Priestley to question his capitalist views. The word **“lower”** emphasizes that Mr Birling is a selfish man who is continually striving for greater profit because it suggests that he wants to reduce his costs even further than they currently stand. Furthermore, the use of juxtaposition exaggerates a firm belief in capitalism that would horrify an audience in 1945 because, by this time, Labour had won the election and there was a **distinct lean towards socialist ideals**. Priestley deliberately sets the play in 1912 to expose the changes within society as Mr Birling’s actions can be seen as reflective of life in 1912 as capitalists has an **approach to business that would appal an audience in 1945 because they believed in the welfare state and people being treated equally as there are “millions and millions of Eva and John Smiths”**.

How is Mr Birling presented? Grade 7

At the start of *An Inspector Calls*, Priestley uses **assertive language and juxtaposition** to present Mr Birling as an **injudicious and elitist character**. This can be seen when Mr Birling says he wants **“lower costs and higher prices.”** It is clear that Mr Birling prioritises **“higher prices”** and this shows that he is aiming to reduce cost. **Therefore, this highlights that he prioritises profit over staff welfare as he clearly just sees his workers as “cheap labour” and therefore is uninterested in improving their welfare.** This then shows that he is an **exploitative character** because he is taking advantage of his workers who have no protection or employment rights and **only cares about getting closer to a time when “Crofts and Birling”** are working together for greater profit. Furthermore, this **dismissive attitude** towards his workers shows that **he lacks compassion** for the lower classes and shows that he only cares about his own success because **he is an individualist and thinks “a man has to look after himself.”** Priestley is showing the audience that **Mr Birling’s is egotistical and wealth-orientated and we are encouraged by Priestley to dislike his capitalist views.** Furthermore, **the use of juxtaposition exaggerates** a firm belief in capitalism that would horrify an audience in 1945 because, by this time, Labour had won the election and **people were becoming more socialist and so would dislike his capitalist views.** Priestley deliberately sets the play in 1912 to expose the changes within society as Mr Birling’s **actions can be seen as reflective of life in 1912** as, given high levels of unemployment, many employers took advantage of their workers and exploited them for greater profit – an approach to business that would **appal an audience in 1945 because they thought that we should look after the “millions and millions of Eva and John Smiths”.**

How is Mr Birling presented? Grade 6 PREZEL

Priestley uses assertive language and juxtaposition to present Mr Birling as an **injudicious and elitist character**. This can be seen **when Mr Birling says he wants “lower costs and higher prices.”** It is clear that Mr Birling cares most about **“higher prices”** and this shows that he is aiming to reduce cost because it is clear that he prioritises wealth. **This suggests that he cares more about money than staff welfare as he clearly just sees his workers as “cheap labour” who are irrelevant to his life or success.** This then shows that he is an **exploitative character** because he is taking advantage of his workers who have no protection or employment rights because **he seems himself as superior to them.** Furthermore, this shows he is **dismissive** towards his workers because it suggests that **he lacks compassion** for the lower class because **he is an individualist and thinks “a man has to look after himself.”** This suggests that **Mr Birling is egotistical and wealth-orientated** because he clearly has **strong capitalist views.** The word “lower” emphasizes that **Mr Birling is a selfish man** who keeps trying to increase his profit because **he only cares about money and “his family of course”** Mr Birling’s actions can be seen as **reflective of life in 1912** as, given high levels of unemployment, many employers took advantage of their workers and exploited them for greater profit – an approach to business that would **appal an audience in 1945** because they were voting for the Labour party because they thought everyone was equal.

How is Mr Birling presented? Grade 5 PREZEL

Priestley uses **juxtaposition** to present Mr Birling as an **injudicious character**. This can be seen in the quotation **“lower costs and higher prices.”** It is clear that Mr Birling cares most about profit and this shows that he is aiming to reduce cost because he wants to be as rich as possible. **This suggests that he cares more about money than his staff as he clearly just sees his workers as “cheap labour” and doesn’t care about them because they are unimportant to him.** This also shows he is **exploitative** because he is taking **advantage of his workers** because they do not have protection or employment rights and can be treated badly. Furthermore, this **shows he is dismissive** about his workers because it suggests that **he lacks compassion** for the lower class because **he is an individualist and thinks “a man has to look after himself.”** The word “lower” emphasizes that **Mr Birling is a selfish man** who keeps trying to increase his profit because **he only cares about money and “looking after himself”**. It is clear that he wants to reduce his spending even further because he wants to **become wealthier and wealthier**. Mr Birling’s **actions are reflective of life in 1912** because many employers took advantage of their workers and exploited them for greater profit. This would **make an audience in 1945 very angry because they thought everyone was equal.**