**Method: Dramatic irony**

‘The Titanic – she sails next week...and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable.’ (p.7)

**Method: Extended speeches**

‘A man has to make his own way – has to look after himself – and his family too, of course”  (p.7)

**Method: Short sentences**

‘I can't accept any responsibility.’ (p.14)

**Method: Dismissive language/stage directions**

*(rather impatiently)* Yes.Yes. Horrible business”

**Method: Exclamatory sentence**

‘Fiddlesticks! The Germans don’t want war!’
Method: Abrupt and dismissive language

“I’ve done nothing wrong – and you know it.”

Method: Imperative verbs and assertive language

“Go and look for the father of the child. It’s his responsibility.”

Method: Euphemisms

“As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money!”

Method: Short sentences and dismissive language

“I’m very sorry but I think she only had herself to blame.”
Method: Passionate language and juxtaposition

“But these girls aren’t cheap labour- they’re people.”

Method: Sarcasm

“Oh I suppose we’re all nice people now.”

Method: Biblical language

“fire, blood and anguish”

Method: Metaphor

“he’s giving us the rope so that we will hang ourselves”

Method: questions

‘so am I really responsible?’
Method: Questions and assertive language

“Why shouldn’t they try for higher wages? We try for the highest possible prices”

Method: Short sentences

‘I’d have let her stay’

Method: Violent language, fragmented language and repetition:

“killed them both- damn you, damn you’

Method: Stage directions

(*shouting*) And I say the girl’s dead and we all helped to kill her
Method: Character description

An attractive chap about thirty, rather too manly to be a dandy but very much the easy well-bred young man-about-town’’

Method: assertive language

“You couldn’t have done anything else”

Method: dramatic irony

“I don’t come into this suicide business”

Method: Rhetorical questions

“I became at once the most important person in her life- you understand?”
Method: Stage descriptions
He speaks carefully, weightily and has a disconcerting habit of looking hard at the person he addresses before actually speaking

Method: Short sentences
“Chain of events”

Method: dramatic pauses
Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges

Method: Inclusive pronoun and metaphor
We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other.

Method: Biblical language
“fire and blood and anguish.”
Method: Voice of the inspector and emotive language

“alone, friendless, almost penniless”

Method: Voice of Mr Birling/juxtaposition

“lower costs and higher prices”

Method: Voice of Mrs Birling/euphemism and exclamatory sentence

“As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money!”

Method: Voice of the inspector/hyperbole

“There are millions and millions and millions of Eva and John Smiths”
### Key quotations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MR BIRLING</strong></th>
<th>This shows.....</th>
<th>Themes/ Priestley’s Ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I’m talking as a hard-headed practical man of business”</td>
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<td>“I gather there’s a very good chance of a knighthood”</td>
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<td>“A man has to make his own way – has to look after himself – and his family too, of course”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Yes. Yes. Horrible business”</td>
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<td>“community and all that nonsense.”</td>
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<td>“there’s every excuse for what your mother and I did”</td>
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<td>“Probably a Socialist or some sort of crank”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Now look at the pair of them- the famous younger generation who know it all”</td>
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### Themes/ Priestley’s Ideas

- **Capitalism**
  Priestley uses Birling as a symbol of the heartlessness of capitalism. Through his character he is criticizing the complacency of capitalist prosperity.

- **Older Generation**
  He is representative of the older generation who were unwilling to change.

- **Lack of responsibility**
  Birling’s capitalist views mean that he is unable to accept responsibility.

- **Class**
  Priestley uses Mrs Birling to criticize all that is wrong with the upper class of society. She represents the social snobbery and hypocrisy of the upper classes and shows no remorse in her cruel treatment of Eva Smith.

- **Responsibility**
  Priestley presents her as a dislikeable character that ironically passes her own social guilt onto her own son – condemning him.
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<td><strong>SHEILA BIRLING</strong></td>
<td>“A pretty girl in her early twenties, very pleased with life and rather excited”</td>
<td>Age</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“But these girls aren’t cheap labour- they’re people.”</td>
<td>She offers hope for the future and Priestley uses Sheila as an example of people’s changing attitudes of the younger generation.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I went to the manager and told him this girl had been very impertinent – and – and - “</td>
<td><strong>Socialism</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>“And if I could help her now, I would-”</td>
<td>Priestley uses the character of Sheila to represent his own views of social responsibility. She recognizes and understands the Inspector’s message that we are all collectively responsible for all that happens in the world.</td>
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<td>“Am I really to blame?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Why- you fool- he knows. Of course he knows.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bitterly “I suppose we’re all nice people now”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ERIC BIRLING</strong></td>
<td>“In his early twenties, not quite at ease, half shy, half assertive”</td>
<td>Socialism:</td>
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<tr>
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<td>“Why shouldn’t they try for higher wages? We try for the highest possible prices”</td>
<td>Eric has the most active social conscience even at the start of play. At the end of the play Eric shows remorse and his acceptance is evidence of his moral fibre.</td>
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<td>“I’d have let her stay”</td>
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<td>“Well I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty- and I threatened to make a row”</td>
<td>Eric illustrates the capacity to change – despite your past errors and your family’s beliefs you can change.</td>
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<td>“you killed them both- damn you, damn you-“</td>
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<td>“(shouting) And I say the girl’s dead and we all helped to kill her- and that’s what matters.”</td>
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</table>
**GERALD CROFT**

“An attractive chap about thirty, rather too manly to be a dandy but very much the easy well-bred young man-about-town”

“You couldn’t have done anything else” (sacking Eva Smith)

“After all, y’know, we’re respectable citizens and not criminals”

(about Sheila): “She’s obviously had about as much as she can stand”

“Why should you [stay]? It’s bound to be unpleasant and disturbing”

‘[Daisy] gave me a glance that was nothing less than a cry for help’

“I insisted on Daisy moving into these rooms and I made her take some money to keep her going there...I want you to understand that I didn’t install her there so I could make love to her...I was sorry for her...I didn’t ask for anything in return”

“She was young and pretty and warm-hearted- and intensely grateful. I became at once the most important person in her life- you understand?”

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**Age**

The Birling children who are certainly very responsive to the Inspector’s message, but possibly in a slightly naïve and hysterical way. Gerald acts as a bridge between the two generations.

**Class**

Priestley shows that it was common for the upper class to behave so badly towards the lower-class by having Gerald present. If the Inspector only questioned the Birling family, Priestley wouldn’t be able to convey to the audience how widespread the problem was.

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**INSPECTOR GOOLE**

“He speaks carefully, weightily and has a disconcerting habit of looking hard at the person he addresses before actually speaking”

**Socialism**

The omniscient Inspector is used by Priestley to further convey his views on collective social responsibility. The Inspector is used very effectively to highlight the corruption and the selfish attitudes of the twentieth century society.
“A chain of events”
“it’s better to ask for the Earth than to take it”

“If there’s nothing else we have to share our guilt”

“Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges”

“We don’t live alone. We are members of one body.”

“fire, blood and anguish”
EXAM QUESTIONS

How does Priestley present the relationship between Sheila Birling and Gerald Croft in An Inspector Calls?

Write about:

What Sheila Birling and Gerald Croft say and do

What their relationship is like

The methods Priestley uses to present their relationship. (30 marks) SPaG: (4 marks)

FIVE MIN PLAN:
How does Priestley present the different attitudes of Mr Birling and the Inspector?

Write about:

what Mr Birling and the Inspector say and do

their different attitudes

the methods Priestley uses to present these different attitudes. (30 marks) SPaG: (4 marks)

FIVE MIN PLAN
How does Priestley present Sybil Birling in An Inspector Calls?

Write about:

What Sybil Birling says and does

The methods Priestley uses to present her. (30 marks) SPaG: (4 marks)
How does Priestley present the family life of the Birlings in An Inspector Calls?

Write about:

what the members of the Birling family say and do

what happens within the Birling family

the methods Priestley uses to present the family life of the Birlings.

(30 marks) SPaG: (4 marks)
Write about the differences between Arthur Birling and Eric Birling in the play An Inspector Calls.

You should write about:

what Arthur and Eric Birling are like

their different attitudes

the methods Priestley uses to present Arthur and Eric Birling. (30 marks)