

Key Stage 3 Twentieth Century Drama

‘An Inspector Calls’

Task:

Describe how Priestley develops Sheila Birling’s character during the course of the play ‘An Inspector Calls’.

(You will need to ensure that your essay includes the following details and that you include quotations to support your comments and explanations, within the main section of your essay.)

Introduction:

Introduce the name of the play and its author, when it was written and the period (era) it is set. (Not the same time!)

Write a little about the social and historical background of the play, remembering that the play is set at an earlier time from when it was written.

Discuss here, Priestley’s use of Dramatic Irony. (When the audience are aware of something which one or more of the characters in the play, are not aware of.) Explain why he used this literary technique in the play in to get his message across to the audience.

Finally, outline the character of Sheila Birling and how she first appears to the audience.

Main Section:

Remembering to refer to the essay’s question, discuss the following; (Don’t forget to use quotations throughout)

- How Sheila behaves when we first meet her and how we can tell what her social background is, from the way in which she speaks.
- What mood she is in and why.
- How the other characters treat her.
- How she behaves towards the other characters.
- How she responds to the Inspector when he first begins questioning her.

- How she reveals her contact with Eva Smith and responds to the consequences of her actions.
- How she gradually changes during her interview with the Inspector and when he interviews the other characters.
- How her maturity develops both, through the change in her language and with her interaction with the other characters, especially with regards to her parents and Gerald.
- How her relationship towards the Inspector develops.
- How Priestley suggests that society needs to change through his development of Sheila's character.
- How, by the end of the play, Sheila has changed from how she behaved at the beginning.

Conclusion:

Conclude your essay by summarising how and why Sheila has changed during the course of the play.

Offer your own personal response to the play. Do you think that all the characters will face the consequences of their actions? Has Priestley been successful in trying to persuade the audience in post-war Britain to face the need to change?

When you have finished writing your first draft, remember to fully proofread your writing, using the marking code and a different coloured pen (But not red!)

Well Done!

KPe

