

| PLOT                        |  | CHARACTERS                       |  | KEY QUOTATIONS                       |   |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Act 1                       | Birling family celebrate Sheila and Gerald's engagement. Birling says there will be no war; references Titanic. Inspector arrives; a young girl has committed suicide. Birling sacked her after strike; Sheila had her fired for laughing. | Mr Birling                       | Pompous, overconfident, stubborn, a social climber.  | Birling's confidence                 | 'the Titanic - ... unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable.' – dramatic irony   |
|                             |  | Mrs Birling                      | "Cold", supercilious, upper-class, prejudiced.   |                                      |   |
| Act 2                       | Gerald had an affair with Daisy Renton. Mrs Birling refused to give charity to Eva; blames father of child.  | Sheila                           | Naive, compassionate, perceptive, curious, wiser.  | Birling on society                   | 'The way some of these cranks talk and write now, you'd think everybody has to look after everybody else'   |
|                             |  | Gerald                           | Aristocratic, partly repentant, unchanged.   |                                      |   |
| Act 3                       | Eric's involvement is revealed. Inspector leaves after warning family to remember his message. Gerald returns; met policeman, no Inspector G. Telephone rings; an inspector is coming.   | Eric                             | Irresponsible, reckless, frustrated, repentant   | Sheila's recognition                 | 'but these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people'  |
|                             |  | Inspector                        | 'Massiveness', systematic, unflappable, mysterious. A ghoul? Voice of God? Voice of Priestley? Voice of collective conscience?   | Sheila's regret                      | '(slowly, carefully now) You mustn't try to build up a kind of wall between us and that girl.'  |
| <b>SUBJECT TERMINOLOGY</b>  |  | Eva Smith                        | 'warm hearted', moralistic, representative, feisty.  | Inspector's message                  | 'there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths.'<br>'We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other.' |
| Allegory                    | A story that has a deeper, hidden meaning, often a political or moral one.   | Edna                             | Voiceless, the underdog, working class.  |                                      |   |
| Foreshadowing               | A warning or indication of future events e.g. lighting change "pink and intimate" to "brighter and harsher"  | <b>THEMES</b>                    |  | Mr Birling                           | 'If you don't come down on these people they'll soon be asking for the earth...'<br>'better to ask for the earth than to take it.'                |
|                             |  | Age                              | Priestley shows the <b>older generation</b> to be set in their ways, while the young are <b>open to change</b> .   | Inspector                            |   |
| Hubris                      | Blind over-confidence. E.g. Mr Birling's hubris causes the audience to formulate a negative opinion of him.  | Social responsibility            | Priestley asks his audience to examine their <b>individual</b> and <b>collective responsibility</b> to society. He wants a <b>welfare state</b> .  | Mrs Birling                          | 'Girls of that class'<br>'I did nothing wrong'  |
| Dramatic irony              | The audience know/understand something that the characters do not. E.g. the dramatic irony exposes Mr B as a foolish, ignorant person, implying that others of his age and class are too.  | Hypocrisy                        | The <b>hypocrisy</b> of <b>middle-class Edwardian</b> society is uncovered: <b>appearance &amp; reputation</b> matter more than <b>reality &amp; morality</b> .                            | Inspector on guilt                   | 'I think you did something terribly wrong – and that you're going to spend the rest of your life regretting it'                                   |
| Pathos                      | Appeals to the emotions. Extreme sadness & pity. E.g. a sense of pathos is created when we learn about Eva.  | Capitalism/socialism             | Priestley criticises the selfishness of <b>capitalism</b> and wants a fairer, <b>socialist</b> future after the horrors of two world wars  | Mrs Birling defends herself          | 'she was claiming elaborate fine feelings and scruples that were simply absurd in a girl in her position'   |
| Ouspensky's theory of time  | Priestley studied Ouspensky's theory that when we die, we start our lives again, trapped in a loop, unless we learn from our mistakes.   | Class & gender                   | Eva Smith is the <b>embodiment</b> of young, <b>working-class women</b> who were <b>oppressed</b> by the <b>middle/upper classes</b> . Patriarchal society means women not taken seriously | Eric explains                        | 'I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty – and I threatened to make a row'   |
| Circular/cyclical narrative | A plot that goes in a circle – ends where it began – the death of a girl and arrival of an inspector.  | Workers' rights                  | The play demonstrates that when workers do not have <b>full employment rights</b> they cannot fight back   | Inspector says                       | 'but each of you helped to kill her. Remember that'   |
| <b>CONTEXT</b>              |  | <b>METHODS: DRAMATIC DEVICES</b> |  | <b>METHODS: LANGUAGE DEVICES</b>     |   |
| Workers' rights             | Very few rights for workers like Eva Smith in 1912: women paid less than men, no protection against dismissal, no welfare state/unemployment pay, strikes with no union not taken seriously.   | <b>Setting</b>                   | "heavily comfortable house". All action happens in one setting – creates a claustrophobic atmosphere where there is no escaping guilt.   | <b>Rhetoric – persuasive devices</b> | Inspector uses collective pronouns "we" "us" ; repetition, triplets, emotive/evocative language; metaphor 'we are one body'                       |
| 1912                        | Play is set here; just before both world wars and the sinking of the Titanic. Edwardian Era; of social inequality (class, gender).   | <b>Lighting</b>                  | from "pink and intimate" to "brighter and harsher" – Inspector reveals truth, flaws and weaknesses.  | <b>Symbolism</b>                     | Mr Birling = Capitalism; inspector = socialism; Eva Smith = The working class   |
| 1945                        | Play first performed in Russia in 1945. Start of the welfare state in UK and ideals of social equality made real – Labour party elected. Post WW2.   | <b>Dramatic irony</b>            | The audience knows, but Mr B does not, that the Titanic will sink & Germans want war. Ignorant.  | <b>Spoken language</b>               | Hesitations – uncertainty; interruptions - dominance; long speeches by Mr Birling to show dominance/arrogance                                     |
| Socialism                   | A political/social idea of shared wealth and social responsibility – government owns factories & businesses; more equal society  | <b>Morality play</b>             | Popular in medieval Europe. Teaches the audience a lesson about good conduct and character. Characters represent deadly sins.  | <b>Vocabulary choices</b>            | the inspector "gives an impression of massiveness, solidity and purposefulness." triplet used to emphasise his power' ;                           |
| Capitalism                  | Individuals own factories & businesses; people driven by profit; hierarchy of wealth; more inequality.   |                                  |  |                                      |   |
| Class                       | Clear hierarchy and segregation between the classes in 1912. Upper & middle classes prejudiced against working class.  | <b>Characterisation</b>          | Characters represent a wider group in society.   | <b>Emotive language</b>              | "she died in misery and agony – hating life" - empathy  |

