**Mr Birling**

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| AO1: In his didactic play AIC, Priestley… presents Mr Birling as a privileged, pompous, loquacious head of the family. Priestley uses his characterisation of Mr Birling to excoriate the callous nature of Capitalism and show how the rich exploited the poor. As well as this, Priestley uses his presentation of Birling at the end of the play to encourage his audience to build upon the changes brought about by the two World Wars and create a better society where we are all responsible for one another. |
| 1. **AO1: At the start of the play, Priestley presents Mr Birling as a privileged, pompous and loquacious supporter of Capitalism.** |
| AO2:   * *‘I speak as a hard-headed business man’* * *‘A man has to make his own way – has to look after himself – and his family too, of course.’* |
| AO3: In 1912 there was **no Welfare State** and, therefore, **no safety net** to catch the most vulnerable members of society when they were most in need. |
| 1. **AO1: As the play progresses, Priestley uses Mr Birling’s treatment of Eva Smith to show how in 1912 the rich exploited the poor for their own wealth and power.** |
| AO2:   * *‘ The girl was causing trouble in the works. I was quite justified.’* |
| AO3: During the period when the play was set, **labour was cheap and workers had few rights**, so they were at the **mercy of employers** who treated them badly. |
| 1. **AO1: Finally, at the end of the play Priestley uses Mr Birling’s stubborn attitude and refusal to accept responsibility to encourage his audience to take on board the mistake of the past and build a better society.** |
| AO2:   * *‘(Triumphantly) There you are! Proof positive. The whole story was a lot of moonshine!’* |
| AO3: Priestley himself was a well-known **supporter of Socialism** and voted for the Labour party in the General Election of 1945 (Clement Attlee won a landslide victory). |