

## “Do Now” Work

How can I write about Priestley's message?

*Be able to explain Priestley's message and identify examples from the text.*

What do these words mean?

- pride (definitions 1 and 2)
- lust
- envy
- greed

Which characters show these deadly sins?

**Challenge: Why might Priestley have alluded to this Christian idea?**

In Silence Please



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Which characters show the following deadly sins?

- pride - Sybil (Arthur)
- lust - Eric and Gerald (Joe Meggarty)
- envy - Sheila
- greed - Arthur

Priestley draws on Christian ideas to show his characters' lack of social morality.

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Priestley's message:

Priestley wanted to show that capitalism, which had brought prosperity to many middle class people, focused too much on individual gain and therefore caused people to be selfish. To do this, Priestley had to highlight the immorality of the Birling family. Therefore, it could be argued that it is morality rather than politics that lies at the heart of the play. Priestley is trying to create a kinder, fairer society that is not dominated by class - a socialist society.

In 'An Inspector Calls', Priestley creates a horrifying microcosm of society and encourages us to question the lack of equality (in terms of gender and class) in an unjust Edwardian England.

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### **How does Priestley present ideas about morality in 'An Inspector Calls'?**

Introduction: Two sentences - answer the question

Often, it is assumed that a Christian society will be a moral one. However, in 'An Inspector Calls', Priestley presents an Edwardian England that does not appear to allow morality to interfere with the avaricious pursuit of wealth, status and privilege, therefore encouraging us to question the purported moral superiority of characters like the Birlings.

Conclusion: Two sentences - comment on the writer's intention

Priestley's scathing critique of Edwardian England is convincing and depicts a morally corrupt society that puts on airs, purporting to be better than it is. However, the consequences of the characters' actions are dire and Priestley brutally serves them up as a stark warning to his post-war audience against the immoral behaviour that goes hand in hand with the privileged mindset of the wealthy Edwardians.

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**How does Priestley present ideas about morality in 'An Inspector Calls'?**

"He's [Alderman Meggarty] a notorious womaniser as well as being one of the worst sots and rogues".

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**How does Priestley present ideas about morality in 'An Inspector Calls'?**

Priestley presents a lack of morality amongst Brumley's middle class when Gerald reveals that Alderman Meggarty is "a notorious womaniser as well as being one of the worst sots and rogues". Priestley links him to the sins of lust and gluttony, using the superlative "worst" to emphasise his poor values. By using the adjective "notorious", it is also clear that lots of people know about Meggarty's behaviour and yet he still holds a position of responsibility. This is emphasised by Sheila who says that "Everybody knows" about Meggarty's behaviour. Priestley is criticising the higher classes' abuse of power and how they ignore in themselves the behaviour they would criticise and condemn in people of a lower status, highlighting the hypocrisy of the middle classes' idea that they're, as Gerald says, "respectable citizens and not criminals".