

“Do Now” Work

How does Priestley present Eric Birling?

Be able to identify the ways Eric is presented and explore the effect.

1. What did Eva say her name was when she visited Mrs Birling's charity?

2. Why did Eva go to the charity for help?

Challenge: What does Sheila realise about the identity of the father of Eva's child? How do the stage directions show this?

In Silence Please



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Eva Smith's timeline: 'A CHAIN OF EVENTS'

January 1911 Sacked from Milwards	September 1911 Gerald ends affair. Eva goes away.	December 1911 Eva tells Eric she's pregnant	March 1912 Asks Mrs Birling's committee for help.
September 1910 Sacked from Birling and Co.	March 1911 Meets Gerald	November 1911 (p39) Returns from seaside. Meets Eric.	April 1912 Commits suicide

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"she told me she didn't want me to go in... I threatened to make a row."

"she was pretty and a good sport."

Do you feel sorry for Eric?

"And I didn't even remember."

"(nearly at breaking point)...
you killed her - and the child
she'd have had too - my child
- your own grandchild."

"your not the kind of father
a chap could go to when
he's in trouble."

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In the opening stage directions, Priestley refers to Eric as 'not quite at ease, half shy, half assertive'.

How does Priestley present these and other ideas about Eric in *An Inspector Calls*?

(30 marks)

[AO4: 4 marks]

In *An Inspector Calls*, Eric and Sheila Birling are brother and sister.

How are they alike and how are they different?

(30 marks)

[AO4: 4 marks]

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Eric's shame is clear when he describes his first night with Eva: "And I didn't even remember - that's the hellish thing. Oh - my God! - how stupid it all is!" The adverb "even" emphasises his self-reproach for his drunken behaviour and this can also be seen in the contrasting religious language, implying sin and confession. Priestley's use of repeated exclamations, punctuated by dramatic pauses, shows the distress that should be apparent in his voice on stage.

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