An Inspector Calls
Revision Booklet

EDUQAS Literature Component 2

Exam details:

TOTAL TIME: 2 hours 30 minutes

45 minutes Inspector Calls
45 minutes Jekyll and Hyde (context)
1 hour unseen poetry
‘An Inspector Calls’
Characters and Motives

**Eva Smith**
- Mid-1909
- Freshly failed county girl. Hard working at Birling’s.

**Daisy Renton**
- Spring 1912
- Last regards of responsibility given. Responsible, working girl, dejected.

**Mr Birling**
- Spring 1912
- Consequence: Pregnant, unable to get a job. Motive: To leave the fair and go back to the palace, although not the type to ask for help.

**Mrs Birling**
- Spring 1912
- Consequence: Thought the girl was important. Decided, with the word, geen to force the matter even. Encouraged others to refuse her any help.

**Gerald Croft**
- Spring 1912

**Sheila Birling**
- Spring 1912

**Mr and Mrs Birling**
- Action: Insulted, a shop assistant was.

**Mrs Birling**
- Action: Sacked work. Finds it during flu epidemic at Milward’s Shorts.

**Eric Birling**
- Mar 1911
- Action: Insulted a shop assistant was.

**Mr Birling**
- Action: Federer and Kandlar’s Hat. Because her mother.

**Gerald Croft**
- Action: Prawn, because her First Prime.

**Eva Smith**
- Motive: 1. Filled her with pride of force of a girl who killed by hunger. 2. No lessening of stolen.

**Daisy Renton**
- Consequence: Out of work for two months and facing hunger.

**Eva Smith**
- Action: Refused charity to a pregnant girl.

**Daisy Renton**
- Action: Sacked work. Finds it during flu epidemic at Milward’s Shorts.

**Eva Smith**
- Action: Inspite, because her First Prime.

**Mr and Mrs Birling**
- Consequence: She set her foot and accused, and another one.
‘An Inspector Calls’
Key Quotations

**Opening:**
- ‘large suburban house’ P1
- ‘Edna, the parlour maid, is just clearing the table, which has no cloth of dessert plates and champagne glasses’ P1
- ‘all five are in evening dress of the period’ P1
- ‘It's one of the happiest nights of my life’

**Mr Birling:**
- “nobody wants war” P7
- “there’s a lot of wild talk about possible labour trouble in the future” P4
- “unsinkable” P7
- ‘hardheaded practical man of business’
- ‘We're not all mixed up like bees in a hive’
- “a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own-and-” P10
- “(rather impatiently) Yes, yes. Horrid business. But I don’t understand why you should come here, inspector’” P12
- “a good worker too…the foreman told me he was ready to promote her’
- “It’s my duty to keep labour costs down” P15
- “How do you get on with our Chief Constable”
- “She’d had a lot to say, far too much”
- ‘I was quite justified’ P17
- “public scandal”
- I’d give thousands” P56
- “We’ve been had, that’s all”

**Sheila:**
- “It’s a rotten shame” P19
- “But these girls aren’t cheap labour they’re people” P19
- ‘I told my father-he didn’t seem to think it amounted to much’ P23
- ‘you were jealous of her’
- “and I’d persuade mother to close our account with them”
- ‘very impertinent”(rude)
- “So I’m really responsible” P23
- “I’ll never do it again to anybody” P24
- “if I could help her now I would” P24
- “You’re just beginning to pretend all over again”
- “Well, he inspected us alright”
- ‘Fire and blood and anguish. And it frightens me the way you talk, and I can’t listen to any more of it’ P71

**Gerald:**
- (distressed) Sorry-I –well. I’ve suddenly realised-taken it in properly-that she’s dead’ P35
- ‘So I went across and told Joe Meggarty some nonsense’ P35
- “I didn’t feel about her as she felt about me” P37
“I’m rather more upset by this business than I probably appear to be” P39
“T’d like to be alone for a while” P39
“There isn’t any such inspector. We’ve been had.”
“But how do you know it’s the same girl?”
“Everything’s all right now Sheila”

Mrs Birling:
‘I don’t think that we can help you much’
“She called herself Mrs Birling-“
“She only has herself to blame”
“I didn’t like her manner”
“I did nothing I’m ashamed of”
Insp: ‘You admit about being prejudiced against her case’
Mrs B: ‘Yes’
a girl in her position
“I accept no blame”
a girl of that class
“I don’t believe it. I won’t believe it!” P49
“I was the only one who didn’t give into him”

Eric:
“Well, I think that it’s a damn shame’ P16
‘He could have kept her, instead of throwing her out’ P15
“I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty”
“I wasn’t in love with her or anything”
You’re not the kind of father a chap could go to”
“You killed her”
“He was our inspector alright”
“we all helped to kill her”

The Inspector:
“creates at once an impression of massiveness”
she was in great agony
‘no work, no money coming in, and living in lodgings, with no relatives to help her, lonely, half starved, she was feeling desperate’ P19
“young women counting their pennies in their dingy little back rooms”
one line of inquiry at a time
‘ a pretty, lively sort of girl who never did anybody any harm”
each of you helped to kill her”
“We often do on the young ones. They’re more impressionable” P30
“Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges”
“Millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths” P56
“with their lives, their hopes and fears, their chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives” P56
“we are responsible for each other” P56
“will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish”
11. In Act 3 we begin to wonder whether Eva ever really existed. Yet the final phone call, announcing that a police inspector is shortly to arrive at the Birling's house to investigate the suicide of a young girl, makes us realise that maybe Eva Smith did exist after all.

1. We never see Eva Smith on stage in the play; we only have the evidence that the Inspector and the Birling's give us.

2. The Inspector, Sheila Gerald and Eric all say that she was "pretty." Gerald describes her as "very pretty - soft brown hair and big dark eyes."

3. Her parents were dead. She came from outside Brumley. Mr Birling speaks of her being "country-bred." - working class

4. The Inspector says that she had kept a sort of diary, which helped him piece together the last two years of her life.

5. She was one of the leaders in the protest for higher wages © Birling & Co.

6. Worked in Milwards before she was fired for smirking at Sheila.

7. Changed her name to Daisy Renton & met Gerald in the Stalls Bar - began the affair.

8. Met Eric in the Stalls Bar & fell pregnant.

9. Appealed to Mrs Birling's charity under the name 'Mrs Birling' & was denied help.

10. Swallowed disinfectant & died a horrible death.
‘An Inspector Calls’
Social Context

Note: although you do not need to include context in your answers, it’s vital that you understand the time in which it is set and written as this will improve your understanding of the plot, characters, Priestley’s intentions and your ability to analyse language.

J.B. Priestley

Priestley served on the Western Front in World War one and saw the horrors of trench warfare. He lived through the misery of the Depression years and saw that lives did not improve after the war but led to suffering on a global scale; lessons were not learned. A socialist in politics, Priestley was a Labour supporter who loved his country. His strong moral beliefs focused on:

- the need for social change to help the poor.
- the importance of society and community.
- the need for responsibility to others.
- the need for compassion and fairness in government.

Socialism

A political system based on the collective or governmental ownership of goods and services. The means of production is owned or controlled by the state.

Capitalism

An economic system dependent on the private ownership of goods and services in order to make a profit.

Working and Living Conditions

The years 1910 to 1912 when the play is set were years of great industrial unrest. The strike in Mr Birling’s factory would have been one of many in those years. Relations between employers and workers deteriorated. Prices were rising but wages were not – a situation which businessman approved. It was at this time that many small unions were joining together to make larger organizations with greater bargaining power. The summer of 1911 was the nearest the country came to a general strike at this time. Starting with the miners’ unions, who took united action in favour of a minimum wage, the strikes spread to the docks and the railways and resulted in management lockouts, violent riots in which eight men were killed and the deployment of troops to keep order and keep trade moving. During the next two years there were quarrels between leaders of the older and newer unions which made industrial action ineffective, but the atmosphere remained uneasy and the threat of revolution was never far away. Workers did not have much job security and being fired meant finding another job was difficult. There was no unemployment pay or benefits system to help if you were out of work.

Charities and the Welfare State

Mrs Birling is the chair of a charity that raises money for and gives aid to deserving causes. At the time when the play is set, 1912, people who were unemployed, homeless or ill had no Welfare State to rely on as they do today. Charity organizations were the only help available. When Eva Smith finds herself unemployed, pregnant and penniless, a charity such as the Brumley Women’s Charity Organisation is the only place she can turn to for help.
Serious unrest in Britain

In 1912, prices were rising and unemployment was high. The rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer. There were genuine fears of a revolution.

In 1909, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lloyd George, proposed a series of sweeping reforms that would have laid the foundations for the Welfare State as we know it today. These reforms required tax increases on the rich which were fiercely opposed by the Tory opposition. Parts of the programme were carried out but were interrupted by the First World War and never fully implemented until 1942 when the Welfare State began - compulsory taxes from everyone to pay for unemployed, sick, pensions for elderly. It was the compulsory nature of the contributions that caused a stir at the time. It was the first time the government had insisted that every member of society that had an income was to pay for those not able to earn.

Social Position

Social position, a person’s place in society, was far more important in 1912 than it is today. As industry expanded, many men in coal, iron, steel and textiles etc made fortunes; they may have come from humble origins but their wealth allowed them to rise up the social ladder. Marriages between the newly rich families and older aristocratic land owning families helped to secure their social positions.
‘An Inspector Calls’
Key Themes and Ideas

Responsibility
• How far we should be responsible for one another
• How responsible we should be for our own actions and our behaviour towards others
• Explores what happens when we don’t take responsibility
• Explores what happens when we only take responsibility for those we feel ‘deserve’ it
• About whether responsibility should be something in our law (i.e. driven by political party – e.g. NHS) rather than just left up to us

Social class and how it’s viewed
• Whether people of upper social class should have advantages of those of lower social class (e.g. with the law)
• Whether social class is ‘deserved’ – e.g. Eric born with money but did nothing for it
• Questions why it is people at the top of the social hierarchy think they are morally superior and can make judgments on others (like Sybil did)
• Whether people should be able to move through the class system or whether class system abolished (post war class system broke down – people working and fighting alongside each other)

Gender and attitudes to women
• Is the inequality of women correct and moral?
• Are women unable to work and think and contribute alongside men? – Sheila understood Inspector’s message whereas Birling and Gerald didn’t – both male and female can understand – intelligence/conscience doesn’t depend on gender
• Is it right we use women for sex?
• Is it right men can emotionally and physically abuse women because they are physically and socially superior
• Pregnant and baby – emphasises her vulnerability as a woman – Eric not as responsible because he’s man
• Sheila vs. Sybil - new generations of women are more able

Age: the difference between the generations
• Whether the views of the old really work in a modern society (post 1945 building a new British society…)
• Should the youngers respect their elders, or should the parents listen to their children
• Eric and Sheila not treated like grown ups – older generation felt they knew better
Example Questions

8. An Inspector Calls

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.

Write about the character of Gerald and the way he is presented in An Inspector Calls.

In your response you should:
- refer to the extract and the play as a whole;
- show your understanding of characters and events in the play.

5 of this question’s marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

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**BIRLING:** (excitedly) You know something. What is it?
**GERALD:** (slowly) The man wasn’t a police officer.
**BIRLING:** (astounded) What?
**MRS BIRLING:** Are you certain?
**GERALD:** I’m almost certain. That’s what I came back to tell you.
**BIRLING:** (excitedly) Good lad! You asked about him, eh?
**GERALD:** Yes. I met a police sergeant I know down the road. I asked him about this Inspector Goole and described the chap carefully to him. He swore there wasn’t any Inspector Goole or anybody like him on the force here.
**BIRLING:** You didn’t tell him–
**GERALD:** (cutting in) No, no. I passed it off by saying I’d been having an argument with somebody. But the point is – this sergeant was dead certain they hadn’t any inspector at all like the chap who came here.
**BIRLING:** (excitedly) By Jingo! A fake!
**MRS BIRLING:** (triumphantly) Didn’t I tell you? Didn’t I say I couldn’t imagine a real police inspector talking like that to us?
**GERALD:** Well, you were right. There isn’t any such inspector. We’ve been had.
**BIRLING** (beginning to move) I’m going to make certain of this.
**MRS BIRLING:** What are you going to do?
**BIRLING:** Ring up the Chief Constable – Colonel Roberts.
**MRS BIRLING:** Careful what you say, dear.
**BIRLING** (now at telephone) Of course. (At telephone.) Brumley eight seven five two. (To others as he waits.) I was going to do this anyhow. (At telephone.) Colonel Roberts, please. Mr Arthur Birling here . . . Oh, Roberts – Birling here. Sorry to ring you up so late, but can you tell me if an Inspector Goole has joined your staff lately . . . Goole. G-O-O-L-E . . . a new man . . . tall, clean-shaven. (Here he describes the appearance of the actor playing the INSPECTOR.) I see . . . yes . . . well, that settles it. . . . No, just a little argument we were having here. . . Good night. (He puts down the telephone and looks at the others.)
**MRS BIRLING:** There’s no Inspector Goole on the police. That man definitely wasn’t a police inspector at all. As Gerald says – we’ve been had.
8. **An Inspector Calls**

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.

Write about the theme of power and how it is presented in *An Inspector Calls*.

In your response you should:
- refer to the extract and the play as a whole;
- show your understanding of characters and events in the play.

5 of this question’s marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

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**Inspector:** was it owing to your influence, as the most prominent member of the committee, that help was refused the girl?

**Mrs Birling:** possibly.

**Inspector:** was it or was it not your influence?

**Mrs Birling:** *(stung)* Yes, it was. I didn't like her manner. She'd impertinently made use of our name, though she pretended afterwards it just happened to be the first she thought of. She had to admit, after I began questioning her, that she had no claim to the name, that she wasn't married, and that the story she told at first – about a husband who'd deserted her – was quite false. It didn't take me long to get the truth – or some of the truth – out of her.

**Inspector:** why did she want help?

**Mrs Birling:** you know very well why she wanted help.

**Inspector:** No, I don't. I know why she needed help. But as I wasn't there, I don't know what she asked from your committee.

**Mrs Birling:** I don't think we need discuss it.

**Inspector:** you have no hope of not discussing it, Mrs Birling.

**Mrs Birling:** if you think you can bring any pressure to bear upon me, Inspector, you're quite mistaken. Unlike the other three, I did nothing I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation. The girl asked for assistance. We were asked to look carefully into the claims made upon us. I wasn't satisfied with the girl's claim – she seemed to me not a good case – and so I used my influence to have it refused. And in spite of what's happened to the girl since, I consider I did my duty. So if I prefer not to discuss it any further, you have no power to make me change my mind.

**Inspector:** Yes I have.

**Mrs Birling:** No you haven't. Simply because I've done nothing wrong – and you know it.

**Inspector:** *(very deliberately)* I think you did something terribly wrong – and that you're going to spend the rest of your life regretting it. I wish you'd been with me tonight in the infirmary. You'd have seen-
8. An Inspector Calls

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.

Write about Priestley’s use of dramatic techniques in An Inspector Calls.

In your response you should:
☐ refer to the extract and the play as a whole;
☐ show your understanding of characters and events in the play. [40]

5 of this question’s marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Sheila: I tell you – whoever that Inspector was, it was anything but a joke. You knew it then. You began to learn something. And now you've stopped. You're ready to go on in the same old way.

Birling: (amused) And you're not, eh?

Sheila: No, because I remember what he said, how he looked, and what he made me feel. Fire and blood and anguish. And it frightens me the way you talk, and I can't listen to any more of it.

Eric: And I agree with Sheila. It frightens me too.

Birling: Well, go to bed then, and don't stand there being hysterical.

Mrs Birling: They're over-tired. In the morning they'll be as amused as we are.

Gerald: Everything's all right now, Sheila. (Holds up the ring.) What about this ring?

Sheila: No, not yet. It's too soon. I must think.

Birling: (pointing to Eric and Sheila) Now look at the pair of them – the famous younger generation who know it all. And they can't even take a joke-

// The telephone rings sharply. There is a moment's complete silence. Birling goes to answer it.//

Yes?. . . .Mr Birling speaking. . . .What? - here-

//But obviously the other person has rung off. He puts the telephone down slowly and looks in a panic stricken fashion at the others.//

Birling: That was the police. A girl has just died – on her way to the Infirmary – after swallowing some disinfectant. And a police inspector is on his way here – to ask some – questions -----

// As they stare guiltily and dumbfounded, the curtain falls}//
8. **An Inspector Calls**

*You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.*

*You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.*

Write about the character of the Inspector and how he is presented in *An Inspector Calls*.

In your response you should:
- refer to the extract and the play as a whole;
- show your understanding of characters and events in the play.  

5 of this question’s marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

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**Inspector**: This young women, Eva Smith, was out of the ordinary. I found a photograph of her in her lodgings. Perhaps you'd remember her from that.

// inspector takes a photograph, about postcard size, out of his pocket and goes to Birling. Both Gerald and Eric rise to have a look at the photograph, but the inspector interposes himself between them and the photograph. They are surprised and rather annoyed. Birling stares hard, and with recognition, at the photograph, which the inspector then replaces in his pocket.//

**Gerald**: *(showing annoyance)* Any particular reason why I shouldn't see this girl's photograph, inspector?

**Inspector**: *(coolly, looking hard at him)* There might be.

**Eric**: And the same applies to me, I suppose?

**Inspector**: Yes.

**Gerald**: I can't imagine what it could be.

**Eric**: Neither can I.

**Birling**: And I must say, I agree with them, inspector.

**Inspector**: It's the way I like to go to work. One person and one line of inquiry at a time. Otherwise, there's a muddle.

**Birling**: I see. Sensible really. *(moves restlessly, then turns.)* you've had enough of that port, Eric.

// the inspector is watching Birling and now Birling notices him.//

**Inspector**: I think you remember Eva Smith now don't you. Mr Birling?

**Birling**: Yes, I do. She was one of my employees and then I discharged her.

**Eric**: Is that why she committed suicide? When was this, father?

**Birling**: Just keep quiet, Eric, and don't get excited. This girl left us nearly two years ago. Let me see – it must have been in the early autumn of nineteen-ten.

**Inspector**: Yes. End of September, nineteen-ten.
8. An Inspector Calls

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.

Write about the character of Eric and how he is presented in An Inspector Calls.

In your response you should:
☐ refer to the extract and the play as a whole;
☐ show your understanding of characters and events in the play. [40]

5 of this question’s marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

//Exactly as at the end of Act Two. Eric is standing just inside the room and the others are staring at him.//

Eric: You know, don't you?
Inspector: (as before) Yes, we know.

// Eric shuts the door and comes farther in.//

Mrs Birling: (distressed) Eric, I can't believe it. There must be some mistake. You don't know what we've been saying.
Sheila: it's a good job for him he doesn't, isn't it?
Eric: why?
Sheila: because mother's been busy blaming everything on the young man who got this girl into trouble, and saying he shouldn't escape and should be made an example of-
Birling: That's enough, Sheila.
Eric: (bitterly) You haven't made it any easier for me, have you, mother?
Mrs Birling: But I didn't know it was you – I never dreamt. Besides, you're not the type – you don't get drunk-
Sheila: Of course he does. I told you he did.
Eric: You told her. Why, you little sneak!
Sheila: No, that's not fair, eric. I could have told her months ago, but of course I didn't. I only told her tonight because I knew everything was coming out – it was simply bound to come out tonight – so I thought she might as well know in advance. Don't forget – I've already been though it.
Mrs Birling: Sheila, I simply don't understand your attitude.
Birling: Neither do I. If you'd had any sense of loyalty-
Inspector: (cutting in, smoothly) Just a minute, Mr birling. There be plenty of time, when i've gone, for you all to adjust your family relationships. But now I must hear what your son has to tell me. ( sternly, to the three of them.) And I'll be obliged if you'll let us get on without any further interruptions. (turning to Eric.) Now then.
Eric: (miserably) could I have a drink first?
8. An Inspector Calls

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.

Write about the theme of power and how it is presented in An Inspector Calls.

In your response you should:
- refer to the extract and the play as a whole;
- show your understanding of characters and events in the play. [40]

5 of this question’s marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

// As he waits, the others show their nervous tension. Birling wipes his brow, Sheila shivers, Eric clasps and unclasps his hand, etc.//

Yes? . . . You're certain of that. . . . I see. Well, thank you very much. . . Good night. (He outs down telephone and looks at them.) No girl has died in there today. Nobody's been brought in after drinking disinfectant. They haven't had a suicide for months.
Birling: (triumphantly) There you are! Proof positive. The whole story's just a lot of moonshine. Nothing but an elaborate sell! (He produces a huge sigh of relief.) Nobody likes to be sold as badly as that – but – for all that - (he smiles at them all) Gerald, have a drink.
Gerald: (smiling) Thanks, I think I could just do with one now.
Birling: (going to sideboard) So could I.
Mrs Birling: (smiling) And I must say, Gerald, you've argued this very cleverly, and I'm most grateful.
Gerald: (going for his drink) Well, you see, while I was out of the house I'd time to cool off and think things out a little.
Birling: (giving him a drink) Yes, he didn't keep you on the run as he did the rest of us. I'll admit now he gave me a bit of a scare at the time. But I'd a special reason for not wanting any public scandal just now. (Has his drink now, and raises his glass.) Well, here's to us.
Come on, Sheila, don't look like that. All over now.
Sheila: The worst part is. But you're forgetting one thing I still can't forget. Everything we said had happened really had happened. If it didn't end tragically, then that's lucky for us. But it might have done.
Birling: (jovially) But the whole thing's different now. Come, come, you can see that, can't you? (Imitating Inspector in his final speech.) You all helped to kill her. (pointing at Sheila and Eric, and laughing.) and I wish you could have seen the look on your faces when he said that.