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<tr>
<td>Pre-Reading</td>
<td>Plenary discussion on crime, criminals and collective responsibility to prepare students to think along particular lines before they read the play.</td>
<td>Questions on Crime and Law Enforcement: Have there been any crimes in your hometown recently? How did the general public react? Was there a consensus? How can our behavior impact on other people? What is the role of the police and legal institutions? Which moral standards can law courts enforce, which can they not enforce?</td>
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<td>Pre-Reading:</td>
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<td>Genre / Questions: Do you know any plays about crime and criminals, justice, guilt, etc.? What do the plots of thrillers and crime stories often concentrate on? How do these thrillers affect the audience-you? What do they tell us about crime and criminals in our society? What is the function of an inspector, judge etc.?</td>
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<td>Brainstorming on the title of the play: What does the title imply the play could be about? What does it lead you to expect? Is the Inspector expected or unexpected?</td>
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<td>Pre-Reading / or later on during Act 3:</td>
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<td>(Re-)familiarize with the conventions of the genre (construct background knowledge)</td>
<td>What is a play? Students learn facts about the play (acts and scenes, props, stage directions, sound effects and music, lighting, dialogue, costume, set, etc.).</td>
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<td>Dramatic and stylistic features: exposition, rising action, climax/turning point, falling action, denouement</td>
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<td>Towards the end of the play: Students construct a graph to show how the playwright builds tension to dramatic peak during the play and provide evidence from the play. Teacher indicates that it follows the rule of Greek Drama – the three unities of place, time, and action.</td>
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</table>
**Topic:** J.B. Priestley *An Inspector Calls*  
**Suggested Teaching Time:** 6-8 lessons

| The main characters: Character study | Characterization / constellation of characters | Homework: Students read Act 1 up to the arrival of the Inspector. They receive a grid with a column for each character and make brief notes on character traits and relationships.  
*Group work:* Each group analyzes one character and shares their findings in class.  
*Stage and Setting:* Students re-read the *opening stage directions* and highlight the words and phrases which give more information – create a sense of foreshadowing – on plot, genre, theme, character. They also list props that hint at the (upper-middle class) status of the family (furniture, things on the table etc.). |
| --- | --- | --- |
| To be continued | To be continued | Homework: Students read Act 2 and Act 3 up to the Inspector’s leaving.  
*Group work:* Students chart the changes in Eva’s life in chronological order and record how each of them contribute to Eva’s suicide (who is most responsible / least responsible?). Students list differences between the older generation’s attitude and the younger generation’s attitude. They also consider where Gerald fits into the theme of the play. |
| Study of theme: Responsibility | Students think about the way Eva is treated by each of the characters and how this affects her status and her ability to control her life. Who is to blame for Eva’s death? “Chain of events” This task prepares students for the subsequent “mock trial” lessons. | Homework: Students read Act 1.  
*Group work:* Students make notes on how the Inspector’s questioning changes their views of characters. They justify their answers by providing evidence from the play (stage directions, character’s words, or what has been said about the characters by another character). |
**Topic:** J.B. Priestley *An Inspector Calls*  
**Suggested Teaching Time:** 6-8 lessons

| The play in performance | "Mock trial": The class stages a mock trial of either one, several, or all five of the accused characters.  
The purpose of this format is to offer students an opportunity to actively reflect and discuss some of the major themes of the play (on guilt, responsibility, etc.) as well as to use this role-play to practice developing and articulating arguments. The roleplaying aspect is also helpful in the sense that students will have to think about, understand and even argue positions that might not necessarily be their own. | "Generation gap.  
*Questions*: How do the characters feel about what has happened to Eva? How prepared are they to admit responsibility? Do they seem sorry?  
*Mock trial*: (see supplementary sheet on "The Birling Mock Trial"). 
*Homework*: Students read rest of Act 3.  
| The Ending / the role of Inspector Goole | Discussion of play’s ending and its dramatic impact. | *Discussion*: Is the end logical / plausible? Does the play provide a learning experience for both character and audience? Do all the characters learn their lesson? What does the playwright want us to think about? Is it really an ending?  
*Group work*: Students think what aspects of Inspector Goole are unusual. What is the main purpose of this presence? At which point in the play does he make his presence? Why? How does he behave (friendly, vengeful etc.)? What is he – voice of God, voice of consciousness, a ghost etc.? Why does he know an extraordinary lot of information? |
Pre-reading session on “An Inspector Calls” (J. B. Priestley)

**Aim:** to prepare students to think along certain lines before reading the play.

**Part 1: Brainstorming on the title of the play**

a) Key questions to be put up for discussion:
   - What does the title imply the play could be about?
   - What does it lead you to expect?
   - Is the Inspector expected or unexpected?

b) Students can be expected to relate the title to crime and criminal investigation. This leads to Part 2.

**Part 2: Discussion on crime, criminals and collective responsibility**

a) Instigate a discussion about a crime where the question of guilt is not clear-cut, f. ex. the deliberate crash of the Germanwings plane in the French Alps in March 2015.
   - Quick compilation of known facts to make everybody aware of what the crime is about.
   - If available, provide related newspaper headlines which point to a broader understanding of responsibility in the case of the crime, f. ex. “Andreas Lubitz’s medical background not reported to German aviation watchdog”, “Lufthansa, Admitting It Knew of Co-Pilot’s Depression, Is Under Pressure”

b) Students to work in small groups to discuss who – apart from the main suspect – could be held responsible for the crime or could feel responsible/guilty and WHY, f. ex. in the plane crash case:
   - Airline putting pressure on pilots to be fit to fly
   - Airline medical team which might have overlooked signs of severe depression
   - Colleagues who knew of his state of depression, but did not dare/feel the need to report it
   - Personal friends who knew of his mental state, but did not feel the need to help more
   - Medical profession bound by privacy/medical secrecy act – or not in such a case?
   - Social perception of people suffering from depression

c) Bringing together the results of the group work: Who can be held accountable? Why or why not?

d) Discuss the question “Was Andreas Lubitz villain or victim?” Or was he both? And why?

“Collective responsibility also known as "Collective Guilt" is a concept in which individuals are responsible for other people's actions by tolerating, ignoring, or harboring them, without actively collaborating in these actions.”
Micro-teaching session on “An Inspector Calls” (J. B. Priestley)

Pre-reading session

1) Do you know what this picture refers to?
2) Andreas Lubitz died in the crash, but who could be held responsible for the accident or could feel responsible/guilty (“If only I had/hadn’t ...”)?
3) Was Andreas Lubitz villain and/or victim?
«The Birling Mock Trial» – Discussing “An Inspector Calls” in Class

Overview / Aim:
- The class stages a mock trial of either one, several, or all five of the accused characters from *An Inspector Calls*.
- The purpose of this format is to offer students an opportunity to actively reflect and discuss some of the major themes of the play (on guilt, responsibility, etc.) as well as to use this role-play to practice developing and articulating arguments.
- The roleplaying aspect is also helpful in the sense that students will have to think about, understand and even argue positions that might necessarily be their own.
- The focus of this exercise is on arguing and debating (not on procedural accuracy; i.e. the emphasis is clearly on the mock-aspect of the “mock trial”).

Procedure:
- Class has read the play and a preliminary discussion of the material has taken place (meaning the plot and characters of the play are clear to everybody).
- Class is divided into two camps of equal size, the “guilty” and the “innocent” camp.
- Both camps should then assign roles to the individual pupils:
  - The *guilty camp* needs a team of prosecutors, witnesses for the prosecution and one pupil could perhaps take the role of a plaintiff (optional).
  - Similarly, the *innocent camp* needs a team of defenders, witnesses for the defence as well as a defendant.
- The groups are given at least one full lesson to work out their statements, positions, lines of questioning, etc. Help (vocabulary, etc.) is provided by the teacher.

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  - The first phase of the trial consists of cross-examinations of the witnesses, the defendant and (if present) the plaintiff. In accordance with their roles, the aim of the “guilty” camp is to establish the defendant’s guilt whereas the “innocent” camp has to defend his/her innocence.
  - Witnesses can be characters taken from the play or can be invented by the students (i.e. one of Eva’s co-workers at the factory [or the department store] as a witness for the prosecution).
  - The questioning / cross-examination phase probably requires two entire lessons (or, if possible, a double lesson).

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  - Based on the testimonies of the defendant, the plaintiff and the witnesses, the two groups will then have to draft their final arguments. They are given one lesson to prepare.

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  - At the end of the trial (one lesson), the prosecution and the defense will present their final arguments to the class.
  - Reaching a verdict by vote might be a bit difficult considering that the class is divided into two opposing camps and having the teacher decide as an arbiter seems wrong. One could include a jury as a third group to the whole process. However, this is not really desirable, because the students in the jury wouldn’t have anything to do and to say during the entire trial.

Questions:
- Is a sequence like this realistic for a real-life class situation? Or is it too elaborate or complicated to set up?
- Considering the amount of lessons that have to be set aside for the entire “project” (including the lessons needed for a preliminary discussion of the text before the actual “trial phase”): Is this even feasible? Won’t the students be totally sick of the play in the end?
- Is the task too demanding? Do students at a grammar school level have the necessary language skills to pull this off (even at higher levels)?
Re-read the opening stage directions for the play and answer the following questions below.

The dining room of a fairly large suburban house, belonging to a prosperous manufacturer. It has good solid furniture of the period. The general effect is substantial and heavily comfortable, but not cosy and homelike. [...] (The lighting should be pink and intimate until the inspector arrives, and then it should be brighter and harder.)

At the rise of the curtain, the four Berlings and Gerald are seated at the table, with Arthur Birling at one end, his wife at the other, Eric downstage and Sheila and Gerald seated upstage. Edna, the parlourmaid, is just clearing the table which has no cloth, of dessert plates and champagne glasses, etc., and then replacing them with a decanter of port, cigar boxes and cigarettes. Port glasses are already on the table. All five are in evening dress of the period, the men in tails and white ties, not dinner-jackets.

1. What kind of mood did Priestly want the furniture to represent?

2. Why does Priestly not want it to be ‘cosy and homelike’?

3. Why might he choose pink lighting at first? What might that represent?

4. Why change to harder and brighter light when the inspector arrives?

5. What is the significance of where Arthur Birling sits?

6. What do the things on the table suggest about their status?

7. Why might the men be dressed in tails, not dinner jackets (tails are more formal)?
## Characterization and constellation of characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Characterization</th>
<th>Constellation of characters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Birling</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Birling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheila</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspector Goole</td>
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Who is to blame?

Who is to blame for Eva’s death? Think carefully how each of the Birlings and Gerald Croft influence what happens to Eva.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>What role does the character play in Eva’s death?</th>
<th>How prepared is the character to accept blame / or to admit responsibility? Does the character feel sorry?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Birling</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Birling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheila</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerald</td>
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TENSION GRAPH OF “An INSPECTOR CALLS” – STRUCTURE

ACT 1

ACT 2

ACT 3

TIME

TENSION
J. B. Priestley’s ‘An Inspector Calls’

An Inspector Calls

Mrs. S., Sheila & Eric Leave
Birling and Gerald to Smoke

You know, I’m getting a little nosy.

Eric Returns. Birling Gave a Lecture Speech

A man has to mind his own business and look after himself...

Birling Toasts Sheila and Gerald’s Engagement, Saying:

Maybe our families will get together to lower labour costs and raise prices.

I know what I’m in about, ma.

Times are prosperous and business is booming. There’s no way there’ll ever be another war.

Irony

And look at the progress we’re making. Why, they’ve even built an unsinkable ship called the Titanic!

There’s an Inspector Knocking on the Door...

I remember her. She was a good worker but I had to sack her.

What’s that got to do with us?

We want to be paid a bit more money so we’re going on strike.

What’s going on?

This girl your father sacked drank disinfectant and died a long death.

That’s horrible.

It’s not just your dad who’s involved.

Can we see the photo?

She left a letter and a diary. Do you remember Eva Smith, Ma Birling?

She worked for you. Look at this photo.

She tipped herself because you sacked her!

You’re not getting a pay rise. You’re a troublemaker. You’re fired.

No, I’ll deal with one live of inquiry at a time.

Don’t be silly, I sacked her two years ago.

Her suicide’s got nothing to do with me. It’s just business, keeping the labour costs low and all that.

No, what you did affected what happened afterwards.

I’ve never known an Eva Smith...

Me neither.

She was doing well but then she was sacked for seemingly no reason.

Look at this photo of her.

After your father sacked her she was out of work and desperate. Then by a stroke of luck she was taken on as a shop assistant in Milwards. She was doing well but then she was sacked for seemingly no reason.

MILWARDS

GULP

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK

FLASHBACK
Eva made me jealous so I used my influence to get her sacked. Bah, sob.

That awful girl was rude to me. Such lies! I'll take my own revenge.

Gerald, how did you meet Eva Smith, calling herself Daisy Renton?

I was working hard last summer. I met her in a VERY dodgy bar. I felt sorry for her and paid for her drink. She was funny and became my mistress. After the summer I broke it off and she had to leave the lodgings. I never saw her again.

She came to us with lies about her name being Mrs Birling and her husband deserting her. She put my break up using their names. She gave me this copy and told me the story of the father being a young drinker and she couldn't take his money because it was stolen. She was a liar and I used my influence to get the committee to turn her down.

She needed help because she was pregnant, didn't she?

You can't pressure me — I'm in the right. The father was to blame. He's irresponsible. He should be ashamed.

Oh, mother, not you too?

What? Oh no, you mean it was my boy?

You know, don't you?

I met her in the Palace Bar when I was a bit saucy. I don't remember much about it. I saw her a few times and she told me she was preggers. I was scared. I stole money from dad's business, but he wouldn't take it when she realised it was stolen.

Then mum turned her away from our charity.

Hey, baby!

You killed her, mum, and your own grandchild!

Eva Smith killed herself, dying a horrible death. But you all helped to kill her. NEVER FORGET IT.

And remember, there are millions of Eva Smiths out there. We're all responsible for each other. Goodnight.

It'll be a scandal. We're ashamed of you, Erin.

The Inspector wasn't a real policeman or copper!

I'm ashamed of both of you, mum and dad.

We've been bad. It was a house.

We could've shown us all different photos!

We still killed someone!

Who says? We still did those things even if it didn't end in tragedy. We're not suddenly nice people.

Dumb, Dumb, Dumb, Dumb

The End