An Inspector Calls by J B Priestley



The Author’s Ideas and Perspectives (AO3ii)

Read the notes you have been given and then answer these questions.

**The Author**

1. When and where was Priestley born?
2. For whom did Priestley first work and how may this have influenced his beliefs about workers?
3. What is socialism (a brief definition!)?
4. What was Priestley particularly disappointed about as a socialist?
5. What could this play be seen as?



**Social Position**

1. How had many men made their fortunes?
2. What did this enable them to do?
3. Why do you think older families might have disapproved of these ‘newly rich’ people? Think about the strength of the class system and how it divided society.
4. How does Mr Birling fit into these ideas and how is he expecting to be raised further up the social ladder?
5. As a result, how does he (and Mrs Birling) treat the Inspector?

**Workers and Bosses**

1. As a worker, what sort of conditions could you expect?
2. If you were sacked from your job, what were the consequences?
3. What is different about society now?
4. Explain whether you think Eva Smith was right to protest about working conditions and whether she was right to be one of the leaders of the strike.
5. What happens to Eva after she is sacked from Milwards?

**Setting and Place**

1. In which fictional town is ‘An Inspector Calls’ set and what can we deduce about it?
2. Why might a fictional town be used rather than the name of a real town?
3. Where does the action of the play take place and how is it described in the stage directions?
4. What does this setting symbolise – think about the specific example you have and the wider connotations too.
5. Why does Priestley want to create a normal setting?