AN INSPECTOR CALLS: THE INSPECTOR’S SPEECH

1. Look carefully at the Inspector’s speech. Try different ways of reading it aloud and annotate the speech to show what you would do to make this last speech powerful and memorable. Think about:

- speed

- volume

- pauses

- tone of voice and where they might change

- gestures, expression, stance, gaze etc.

“But just remember this. One Eva Smith has gone – but there

are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John

Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears,

their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with

our lives, with what we think and say and do. We don’t live

alone. We are members of one body. We are all responsible

for each other. And I tell you that the time will come when,

if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it

in fire and blood and anguish. Good night.”

You may have noticed that what the Inspector says here does not sound like ordinary conversation. The way it is structured and the language that is used makes it clear that Priestley wanted the audience to listen carefully. It is a speech.

2. Which of the following techniques do you recognise in the Inspector’s speech? Find an example.

- lists of three

- use of contrasting pairs (e.g. one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind)

- talking about ‘we’ or ‘us’ (often positively)

- using powerful or memorable words and phrases

- talking about ‘them’ (often negatively)

- the use of ‘I’

- the rhythm of language used (e.g. length of sentences, pauses)

**Now compare this speech to Mr Birling’s speech earlier on in the play (the one the Inspector interrupts as he arrives). What effect does the conflict between these two belief systems have on the audience?**