



AN INSPECTOR CALLS – TOP 15 QUOTATIONS



Quotation	Who?	When?	Methods + Analysis
The lighting should be pink and intimate, until the INSPECTOR arrives, and then it should be brighter and harder	Stage directions	Start	At the start, the lighting is pink, reflecting the happiness and 'rose-tinted' view of society that the Birlings have. The fact that the lighting is warm and intimate reflects their ignorance and blindness to the harsh realities of society, due to their class and capitalist views. The light brightening as the inspector arrives reflects how his arrival will expose the truth of the Birlings, and reveal their hidden sins and prejudices.
Giving us the port, Edna?	Mr Birling to Edna	Opening line (start)	Interrogative sentence – the fact that Birling questions Edna harshly highlights his expectation of Edna to serve the family. His use of this blunt, commanding tone reflects the commanding and dominant nature of the rich over the working class. The prop of port , a luxurious wine, reflects the upper class, luxurious nature of the rich. This would have been seen as wasteful by the audience watching in 1945, who had just lived through WW2, a time of rationing and bare basics.
The titanic – she sails next week – unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable	Mr Birling	Act 1	Symbolism – the Titanic was a symbol of modern technology, upper class values and luxury. The fact that it sank could mirror how the Birling's blindness, security, happiness and ignorance will be destroyed by the Inspector as he seeks justice for Eva Smith. Dramatic irony – the 1945 audience know that the Titanic sank, revealing Mr Birling's views to be instantly ridiculed by the audience. From this moment, we view him and his views as deeply flawed, and mock him.
As if we were all mixed up like bees in a hive – community and all that nonsense	Mr Birling	Act 1	Simile – Mr Birling mock the idea of socialism, seeing it as a ridiculous and foolish concept. His use of animalistic language , comparing the working class to little more than subhuman insects, reveals his class prejudice and victimisation of the rich. Noun "nonsense" – this highlights his prejudice against socialism, which the socialist 1945 audience would have found deeply wrong.
I don't accept any responsibility	Mr Birling	Act 1	Simple sentence – Mr Birling's confident and simple statement summarises Priestley's view that the rich and older generation lack responsibility. The audience view this attitude as deeply flawed and ignorant. Priestley's agenda in the play is to dispel these attitudes.
But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people	Sheila	Act 1	Noun "girls" – Sheila, despite showing empathy for the poor, shows a lack of respect for the poor, using belittling language to describe them. This highlights her ignorance and class prejudice. Noun "people" – this demonstrates Sheila's hidden empathy, which will emerge later. From the outset, we realise that she juxtaposes her parents, symbolising Priestley's view that hope for change in society lies with the younger generation (those watching the play in 1945)

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A chain of events	The Inspector	Act 1	Symbolism - Priestley's central message is that individual behaviour has an impact on others, and that people in society should consider the consequences of their actions on others. The image of a chain demonstrates Priestley's socialist idea that everyone in society is forged together, like a heavy chain, and cannot easily be separated.
The young ones.. They're more impressionable	The Inspector	Act 2	Symbolism - Priestley believed that hope for a better society lay in the younger generation of 1912, or those watching the play in 1945. By demonstrating how the Inspector (a symbol of socialism) has an impact on the young, Priestley is demonstrating how socialist ideologies can be easily adopted by the young, in order to create societal change.
There are millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives... intertwined with our lives	The Inspector	Act 3	Hyperbole - The Inspector's statement that there are 'millions' of Eva Smith and John Smiths, representing the working classes, exaggerates the suffering of the poor Verb "intertwined" - similar to the image of the 'chain of events,' society is seen as connected, with all people's lives influencing others. This underscores Priestley's desire for people to consider how their actions impact others more.
We don't live alone. We are members of one body	The Inspector	Act 3	Body metaphor - like a body, where all organs are connected to one another and rely on others to make the body function, people in society must rely on others and live in a more collective, connected manner. As the mouthpiece of Priestley , the Inspector's message teaches the audience the importance of collective responsibility and socialism.
(excitedly) By jingo! A fake!	Mr Birling	Act 3	Exclamatory sentence - Mr Birling's joy and relief as the Inspector is revealed to be a fake highlights his hypocrisy, and is used by Priestley to symbolise how the rich and older generations prevent progress, as they do not take responsibility and will not break free from their prejudice.
Girls of that class	Mrs Birling	Act 3	"that" - Mrs Birling's view that the poor are separate to her reveals the callousness and prejudice that Priestley believed pervaded the upper classes. Despite working for a charity, Mrs Birling views the poor almost as another race, which Priestley and the audience view as deeply ignorant and hypocritical.
// Sheila moves towards the door// I want to get out of this.	Sheila	Act 3	Physical movement - Sheila's physical movement towards the door signifies her character development, and her complete break away from her parents' capitalism and prejudiced ideology. As a symbol of the younger generation, Sheila's upward move could be seen to symbolise Priestley's desire for the young to break free from the mistakes of the past in order to build a more collective, caring society built on socialist principles.
We did her in, all right.	Eric	Act 3	Collective pronoun "we" - Eric's acceptance of blame here, and his recognition that his entire family are collectively responsible for the death of Eva Smith, indicates his character development from the start of the play, where he was an immature, bourgeois member of the upper class. Through Eric, Priestley places hope in the younger generation, whom he believed were the hope for a fairer and more equal society.