

# An Inspector Calls : Character Profiles

## Eva Smith/Daisy Renton

- Her death is the cause of the Inspector's investigation
- smiles as Sheila tries on a dress that doesn't suit her. ○ Eva shows that she has a sense of humour
- organises a strike for higher wages. ○ Was strong willed
- They learn about her through the characters she came into contact with
- changes her name to Daisy Renton ○ Had a relationship with Gerald

## Inspector Goole

- Arrives as the Birling family are celebrating the engagement of Sheila and Gerald
- revealing the consequences of their behaviour ○ Inspector investigates each family member one at a time
- questions creating shocking moments
- He seems to know what the characters will say before they do
- Final message: If people do not take responsibility for each other, the world is doomed!

## Gerald Croft

- The easy well-bred young man-about-town
- Mr Birling is very pleased because Gerald's family are upper-class business owners ○ Gerald is getting engaged to Sheila
- but changes after his affair with Eva Smith is revealed. ○ Initially he comes across as being confident and charming
- but he becomes being more open and honest as he talks to Sheila. ○ He initially is evasive about the affair
- by trying to get the family out of trouble ○ Finally he lets himself down

## Arthur Birling

- Head of the Household
- 'Hard-headed' Business Man
- long speeches about predictions for the future
- Arrogant ○ thinks that he might be in the running for a Knighthood
- a man should look out for number one ○ not waste time helping others
- materialistic and possessive
- old fashioned views about women ○ patronising

## Mrs Sybil Birling

- cold-hearted and snobbish ○ tells Sheila and Eric off for things that she considers impolite
- turns a blind eye to her son drinking too much.
- cold, uncaring nature ○ forced to condemn her own son.

## Sheila Birling

- Arthur and Sybil's daughter in her early twenties
- A giddy, naive and childish young lady. ○ celebrating her engagement to Gerald Croft
- shocked by the news of Eva Smith's death ○ very regretful of her own involvement in the suicide.
- She matures during the play ○ admiring Gerald's honesty ○ even though he cheated on her
- Shows an assertive side ○ by standing up to her mother and father
- She grows up during the play ○ and realises that her actions can have grave consequences.

## Eric Birling

- Eric is the Birlings' son in his early twenties,
- he lacks confidence ○ half shy, half assertive
- he tries to stand up to his father ○ but is talked down.
- he is drunk at the dinner table ○ and it is clear that he has been drinking too much for quite some time
- had an affair with Eva Smith and that she was pregnant with Eric's baby ○ when she committed suicide
- Eric stole money from his father's business to help Eva