

Week 1 - Context

- J. B. Priestley was born to a working-class family in Yorkshire
- He fought in WWI and used this experience in his writing
- *'An Inspector Calls'* was written and first performed in 1945, after WWII, but it is set in the run-up to WWI in 1912
- The play explores the concepts of capitalism and socialism in detail.

WWI—1914-1918

WWII—1939-1945

1912

1945

Strong distinctions between the upper and lower classes

Class distinctions had been greatly reduced as a result of two world wars

Women were considered to be lower than men

As a result of the wars, women had earned a more valued place in society

The ruling classes saw no need to change the status quo

Great desire for social change

Week 3 - Ambitious Vocabulary

Conscience: The understanding of what is morally right or wrong, and using that understanding to guide actions.

Omniscient: When a character or narrator is all knowing.

Patriarchy/Patriarchal: A system of society in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded.

Social responsibility: The idea that we are all responsible for behaving in a manner that benefits society especially the most vulnerable members of society.

Superficial: To be shallow, artificial or insincere.

Week 2 - Key Words: Plays

Act: A main section of a play

Dialogue: A conversation between two or more people

Dramatic Irony: When the audience is aware of something that a character is not. *e.g. Mr Birling states that the Titanic is "Unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable" (Act 1)*

Entrances and Exits: How and when a character comes onto stage or leave it

Stage directions: An instruction in the text of a play indicating the movement, position, or tone of an actor, or the sound effects and lighting. *e.g. "The lighting should be pink and intimate until the inspector arrives, and then it should be brighter and harder" (Act 1)*

Reminder: Revise sections from previous weeks as part of your homework. You will have questions from previous weeks' learning in your weekly tests.

Week 4 - Techniques: Plays

Ambiguity: When the meaning behind something is unclear and open to interpretations.

Cliff hangers: A dramatic ending that leaves the audience in suspense or excitement.

Cyclical Structure: When a piece of literature ends in a similar way to how it begins.

Foreshadowing: Be a warning or indication of (a future event). *e.g. In Act 1, Mr Birling speaks about his impending knighthood, saying "there's a very good chance... so long as we behave ourselves, don't get into the police court or start a scandal."*

Juxtaposition: The fact of two things being seen or placed close together often with contrasting effect.

Week 5 - Punctuation: The Colon

Colons are like flashing arrows: they are there to direct your attention to the information that follows them.

They amplify, explain or fulfil the information presented before the colon.

To introduce a list: I went to the shops and bought a lot of fruit: strawberries, apples and bananas

To emphasise a noun: The clouds broke through the sun to light up her favourite place: her father's rose garden

To introduce a quotation: Mr Birling is a clear capitalist: "I speak as a hard headed business man"

To separate closely related clauses and add EMPHASIS to the second clause: Remember the saying: be careful what you wish for!

If the two clauses are of equal importance, use the semi-colon.

Week 6: Apostrophes and Modal Verbs

An apostrophe can be used in **two** ways.

The first way is to replace missing (omitted) letters.

For example:

I am → I'm

Can not → Can't

I have → I've

Should have → Should've

The second is using apostrophes to show possession.

Using apostrophes for possession is simple, if you follow these three steps carefully.

Find the owner (who/ what possesses something in the sentence?)

Sheila
Priestley
James

Add the apostrophe

Mr Birling'
Priestley'
James'

Add an 's' even if there is one already

Sheila's engagement
ring
Priestley's intentions
James's homework

It's / its

You only EVER use **it's** if you are saying **it is**.

This applies even if 'it' possesses / owns something.

So: 'The Titanic was huge; its ballroom was beautifully decorated.'
This does not have an apostrophe, even though the Titanic owns the ballroom.

If it had an apostrophe, it would mean 'The Titanic was huge; it is ballroom was beautifully decorated.' This is clearly wrong.

Modal verbs - these indicate the likelihood of something

Can/could/be able to *e.g. the writer could be suggesting...*

May/might *e.g. the writer might be suggesting...*

Shall/should *e.g. they should be trying their hardest because...*

Must/have to *e.g. she must be doing this because...*

Will/would *e.g. he would have wanted to...*

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