**An Inspector Calls**

The central message of the play is both a warning and a call for further action: a warning about the consequences of selfishness and a call to continue campaigning for a fairer and more socially responsible society. Remember that the Labour Party was elected in 1945 and the leader, Clement Attlee, made a pledge to provide welfare to all British citizens who needed it. In this this sense – despite the grizzly events that unfold on stage – the play is actually very optimistic.

* **Stage Directions**
	+ Lighting ‘*Pink and intimate’* **to** ‘*brighter and harder’* **→** change in atmosphere
	+ Sounds ‘*sharp ring of a front doorbell’* **+** *‘telephone rings sharply’***→** marks clear transitions
	+ Emotions ‘*Smiling’*, ‘*admiringly’*, ‘*humorously’* **to** ‘*sulkily’*, ‘*angrily’*, ‘*startled’* **→** change in mood
* **Costume and Props**
	+ Clothes ‘*tails and white ties’* **+** ‘*sign or token of their self-respect’* **→** social status and respect
	+ Alcohol ‘*You’re squiffy’* **+** *‘I was a bit squiffy* **+** *‘I didn’t even remember’***→** lack of control
	+ Engagement ring ‘*Oh – it’s wonderful’* **to** ‘*I think you’d better take this with you’* **→** shift in relationship
* **Minor Characters**
	+ Edna ‘*Arthur, you’re not supposed to say such things’* **→** class structure and prejudice
	+ Alderman Meggarty ‘*But everybody knows about that horrible old Meggarty’* **→** superficial respectability
* **Character Names**
	+ Eva Smith Purity and innocence **+** a representative character **→** ‘*millions and millions’*
	+ Daisy Renton Innocence and beauty **+** something temporary **+** her treatment as a commodity
	+ Inspector Goole Play on words: Ghoul **→** A haunting figure that disturbs the Birling family
* **1912 vs 1946**
	+ Edwardian England Clear and rigid class divides **+** limited opportunities **+** wealth divide
	+ Post-war England Labour government **+** growing sense of optimism **+** greater levels of equality
	+ Dramatic irony ‘*absolutely unsinkable’* **+** ‘*peace and prosperity’* → undermines Birling’s credibility
	+ Generational ‘*You’re ready to go on in the same old way*’ **→** older vs younger **→** hope for the future
* **Women**
	+ Sheila *‘men with important work’* **→** *‘You’ll have to get used to that’* **→** patriarchy
	+ Eva Smith *‘As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money’* **→** prejudice
	+ Male gaze *‘dough-faced women’* **+** *‘young and fresh and charming’* **→** objectification