Wednesday 6th April 2022

Pride in An Inspector Calls

Characters that show Pride

* Mr Birling
* Mrs Birling

[Podcast](https://podtail.com/en/podcast/gcse-english-revisionpod/an-inspector-calls-episode-8-mr-and-mrs-birling-an/) Notes

Pride - One of the seven deadly sins, disliked by God. Important in play, as religion was important then. Priestly wants people to drop the idea of pride

Mr and Mrs Birling's pride is not in their class - they are not upper class

It is in the wealth, and in how far they have risen up the ladder. They are a reflection of the desire to always have more. Because they are so proud, they do not learn their less - they show what happens if we do not listen to the message of the play.

Thesis - "In the play An Inspector Calls, we see how pride, particularly in one’s position, is represented in the Birlings, through inflated self-worth"

**Mr Birling**

***A proud character, whose pride makes him appear foolish and out of touch, putting his profit before his workers. Seen as the embodiment of capitalism.***

*"*Just because the miners came out on strike...*"* *"*Don't worry, we've passed the worst of it*" - Short sentences show his certainty. His pompous pride makes him seem foolish. Mr B is not a comic relief character, his foolishness is a dark tone - he was blind to what happened (WWI and WWII).*

*"*…and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable*" - Shows his pride in humanity and society, but society is only working for him, not the lower-class. Shows the pre-war Edwardian society, working for the few, not the many.*

*“*I refused of course*”* *…* *"*Did you say ‘why’*?" - Cannot believe that the inspector is questioning him, he is so proud of himself, showing him to be out of touch and foolish.*

*"*Well, it’s my duty to keep labour costs down*." - Compares his business to a child, it is his "duty" to protect it from harm. But he doesn't think that it is his "duty" to protect the actual human workers, the people who make the money for him.*

*"*If you don't come down sharply on these people, they'd soon be asking for the Earth*" - He is proud of not giving in to his workers, see the world as everyone against each other. Metaphor shows that he is proud of depriving his workers, even though they only wanted a little bit more money so they could live comfortably.*

**Mrs Birling**:

***Perversely proud of her decisions, even when she finds out the consequences of her actions. Her pride is not positive, it is harsh - she thinks it is the right thing, even if it is actively harming others. Unable to change as a result of her pride.***

*"*First, she called herself Mrs Birling*" - Outrage at a working-class girl taking her name. Shows her pride, to the point where she feels no empathy. She is head of a charity, but is not charitable, just doing it to seem a "good" person.*

*“*Yes, I think it was simply a piece of gross impertinence – quite deliberate – and naturally that was one of the things that prejudiced me against her case*.” – Mrs Birling’s pride means that she has no shame in admitting her prejudice against Eva Smith’s case. She sees herself as better than Eva, and treats her poorly, without feeling any regret or remorse.*