

**Stanchester Academy**  
**Year 10 – English 2 – Unit 1 – An Inspector Calls**

**Section 1: Characters, Plot and Context and Key Terminology**

1	<b>Mr Birling</b>	Successful businessman. Sacks Eva for organising a strike. Epitomises Capitalist values.	9	<b>The Palace Bar</b>	Where Eva/Daisy works as a prostitute and meets Gerald and Eric. Symbolic for the unquestioned power of men/upper echelon in 1912.	17	<b>epitome/ epitomises</b>	A typical or exact example of something – usually an idea.
2	<b>Mrs Birling</b>	An important member of a local charity. Rejects Eva's plea for help. Epitomises upper-class snobbery.	10	<b>1912</b>	Women could not vote; pre-WW1 and WW2; no welfare state; rigid class system.	18	<b>power</b>	Possession of control, authority, or influence over others.
3	<b>Gerald Croft</b>	The son of a wealthy business rival of Mr Birling. Sheila's fiancé. Has an affair with Daisy Renton.	11	<b>1945</b>	A period of momentous social change. Post WW1 and 2; women can vote; the labour party win by a landslide; the welfare state is born.	19	<b>voicelessness</b>	A person or character's lack of voice (due to their oppression at the hands of another).
4	<b>Sheila Birling</b>	Gerald's fiancée. Gets Eva sacked from Milwards. Influenced by the Inspector.	12	<b>Act 1</b>	The Birlings celebrate Sheila and Gerald's engagement. An Inspector arrives; Eva Smith has committed suicide. We learn how Mr Birling and Sheila are responsible for her death.	20	<b>subordinate</b>	Lower in rank or position.
5	<b>Eric Birling</b>	Drunken son. Gets Eva pregnant. Influenced by the Inspector.	13	<b>Act 2</b>	We learn how Gerald and Mrs Birling are responsible for the girl's death.	21	<b>critique</b>	When a writer uses events, characters or a persona to criticise a larger idea.
6	<b>Eva Smith/Daisy Renton</b>	Mistreated by each member of the Birling family. Becomes pregnant and uses bleach to commit suicide.	14	<b>Act 3</b>	We learn how Eric is responsible for the girl's death. The Inspector warns the family that they must change before leaving. Gerald tells the family the Inspector was a fake. Relief is followed by a phone call: a girl has died and an Inspector has some questions.	22	<b>upper-echelon</b>	The highest level of any group. The Birlings in their 1912 society.
7	<b>Edna</b>	The Birlings' maid. Represents the mistreated working-class.	15	<b>microcosm</b>	A miniature version of a much larger thing. The play acts as a microcosm for the larger battle between capitalist and socialist values.	23	<b>lower-echelon</b>	The lowest level of any group. Eva and Edna in their 1912 society.
8	<b>Inspector Goole</b>	A police inspector that interrogates the Birling family and Gerald. A mouthpiece for Priestley's socialist ideas.	16	<b>welfare state</b>	A government that takes care of its most vulnerable citizens, through pensions, benefits and free housing.	24	<b>mouthpiece</b>	A character whose voice, dialogue or expression represents the ideas and thoughts of the writer.