👨‍👧‍👦 ***‘A man has to look after himself – and his family, too’***

Birling argues that he has a duty to look after himself and his family. This doesn’t seem unreasonable and, actually, it’s an opinion that many members of the audience may well have shared.

**Explain why Birling is ideally placed to look after others in the community**

🏭 ***‘She was one of my employees and then I discharged her’***

Birling did not do anything illegal when he chose to dismiss Eva Smith from her role at his factory. In this sense, he is correct in arguing that he did nothing wrong.

**Explain why Birling’s treatment of Eva Smith is unfair**

🆓 ***‘It’s a free country I told them’***

Birling is free to choose his workers and his workers are free to move onto other jobs. By this logic, Eva Smith could’ve chosen to seek employment elsewhere rather than going on strike.

**Explain why Birling’s view of employment is overly simplistic**

👹 ***‘Joe Meggarty’s advances had left her rather shaken’***

Gerald notices the situation that Daisy Renton is in removes her from it. Looked at this way, it’s easy to view his actions as chivalrous.

**Explain how Alderman Meggarty and Gerald are similar**

💷 ***‘I’ve got to cover this up as soon as I can’***

Birling’s first instinct is to disguise Eric’s theft because he has committed a crime. It’s possible to interpret Birling’s behaviour as protective: he doesn’t want his son to face prosecution.

**Explain how you know that Birling only cares about himself**

💑 ***‘He at least had some affection for her and made her happy’***

The Inspector partly justifies Gerald’s affair with Daisy Renton in his one of his final speeches. This makes his behaviour seem more acceptable than the behaviour of the others.

**Explain why Gerald’s behaviour is no less selfish than the behaviour of the others**