**How does Priestley use the character of Mrs Birling to explore ideas about social class?**

**Introduction**

* Outline how Mrs Birling represents the upper class and its attitudes
* Mention Priestley’s socialist views and how he uses Mrs Birling to critique the upper classes

**Mrs Birling’s Attitude Towards the Working Class**

* Mrs Birling is presented as prejudiced against the working class
* ‘Girls of that class’
* Dismissive tone emphasises social division
* The definite article ‘that’ suggests disdain and reinforces the rigid class hierarchy
* Reflects 1912 class divisions and how the upper class saw themselves as superior

**Mrs Birling’s Lack of Responsibility**

* Refuses to take responsibility for her actions
* ‘I accept no blame for it at all’
* Shows her arrogance and lack of empathy
* Highlights upper-class refusal to acknowledge and address significant social issues
* Priestley wanted to encourage a more collective form of responsibility post-WWII

**Mrs Birling as a Symbol of Hypocrisy**

* She criticises the father of Eva’s child and unknowingly condemns her own son
* ‘It’s his responsibility’
* Her naivety makes her look foolish and highlights the flaws in her sense of morality
* Priestley exposes those who act selfishly and then pretend to have high moral standards

**The Inspector’s Role in Exposing Mrs Birling**

* The Inspector forces her to confront her actions
* ‘I was the only one who didn’t give in to him’
* Her stubborn defiance contrasts with Sheila’s transformation
* Shows generational differences in attitudes towards class and responsibility
* Priestley promotes the idea that younger generations are more open to change

**Conclusion**

* Summarise how Priestley uses Mrs Birling to criticise the upper class
* Reinforce how her character embodies resistance to social progress
* Link to Priestley’s wider message about social responsibility

**How does Priestley use the Inspector to suggest the need for social change?**

**Introduction**

* Introduce the idea of a morality play
* Mention that the Inspector is used as Priestley’s mouthpiece for socialist ideals

**The Inspector as a Moral Figure**

* The Inspector represents justice and morality
* ‘We are members of one body’
* The metaphor of a ‘body’ suggests unity and collective responsibility
* Reflects Priestley’s socialist views and the post-war push for equality

**The Inspector Challenges Capitalist Attitudes**

* He directly challenges Mr Birling’s capitalist views
* ‘Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges’
* Highlights Birling’s selfishness and reinforces the need for change
* Criticism of pre-war capitalism which Priestley saw as exploitative

**The Inspector’s Use of Emotive Language**

* He evokes sympathy for Eva Smith to encourage change
* ‘She was here, alone, friendless, almost penniless, desperate’
* Makes it hard for the characters (and audience) to ignore her suffering
* Highlights the consequences of social inequality

**The Inspector’s Final Warning**

* His speech warns of dire consequences if society doesn’t change.
* ‘If men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish’
* Foreshadows the wars and suggests that ignoring social issues leads to destruction
* Urging the audience to build a fairer society post-WWII

**Conclusion**

* Reiterate that the Inspector serves as Priestley’s voice for social reform
* Explain how his role pushes the audience to reflect on their own responsibilities