**How does Priestley present the character of Mr Birling at the start of the play?**

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| **Summary** |
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| **Overview** |
| 1. Birling is a ‘prosperous manufacturer’ who claims to be enjoying ‘one of the happiest nights’ of his life
2. He is not from the aristocracy and appears to be aware of his lower position in the social hierarchy
3. He is proud of being a ‘hard-headed’ businessman and believes that ‘a man has to make his own way’
4. He makes a series of incorrect predictions about the future and is unfairly dismissive of Eric’s questions
5. He displays a ‘touch of impatience’ when the Inspector enters and feels uncomfortable during their interactions
6. He calls Eva Smith a ‘ringleader’ and fails to show any remorse for ‘throwing her out’
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| **Key Points** |
| * Priestley’s use of dramatic irony undermines Birling’s credibility as a character He is **arrogant**
* Birling obviously sees the marriage as an ideal opportunity to accumulate more wealth He is **greedy**
* His eagerness to tell Gerald about the knighthood shows the importance of social class in 1912 He is **pretentious**
* Birling’s relationship with the Inspector is characterised by antagonism He is **selfish**
* Priestley invites the audience to judge Birling when he refuses to accept his role in the suicide He is **irresponsible**
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| **Targets** |
| * Get started a bit more quickly and aim to write a bit more
* Review the length of your sentences to make sure they don’t ‘run on’ for too long
* Begin a new paragraph each time you shift the focus to a new part of the play
* Zoom-in on single words and explore the significance of them
* Embed short quotations into your sentences
* Slow down a bit and take a bit more care with your presentation
* Proofread after each paragraph and make clear corrections
* Continue to think hard about your vocabulary choices and always aim for precision
* Use **Templates** e.g. *not only… but also* **+** *this is significant because* **+** *this reveals*
* Use **Extenders** e.g. *furthermore* **+** *additionally* **+** *also*
* Use **Connecters**: *in contrast to* **+** *a similarity is* **+** *a difference is* **+** *equally* **+** *however*
* Use **Signposts**: *before* **+** *after* **+** *initially* **+** *as the text progresses* **+** *finally*
* Use **Analysers** e.g. *this implies* **+** *this conveys* **+** *this reinforces* **+** *this emphasises*
* Use **Qualifiers**: *although* **+** *despite* **+** *whilst* **+** *whereas*
* Use **Speculators**: *could* **+** *might* **+** *arguably*
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