

## Worksheet 4 – Act 1: The Setting of the Play

## Review: Lecture 3

In the previous lecture of the unit, Prof. McRae explored social changes that took place in the wake of World War Two.

- ✓ Which party came to power in 1945? Why did Priestley support them?

## Recall: Lecture 4

**Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.**

1. In which year did Stephen Daldry direct *An Inspector Calls*?
  - a) 1912
  - b) 1945
  - c) 1967
  - d) 1992
2. What does Prof. McRae state is a typical setting for plays in the 1940s and 1950s?
  - a) Countryside
  - b) Inside a house
  - c) City streets
  - d) Inside a workplace

## Analysis

3. Prof. McRae says of the opening stage directions that ‘the whole play is there’ [0:25]. What do the phrases in **bold** suggest about the Birling family?

The dining room is of a **fairly large suburban house**, belonging to a **prosperous manufacturer**. It has a good solid furniture of the period. The general effect is a substantial and **heavily comfortable**, but **not cosy and homelike**.

- a) 'fairly large suburban house'
- b) 'prosperous manufacturer'
- c) 'heavily comfortable'
- d) 'not cosy and homelike'

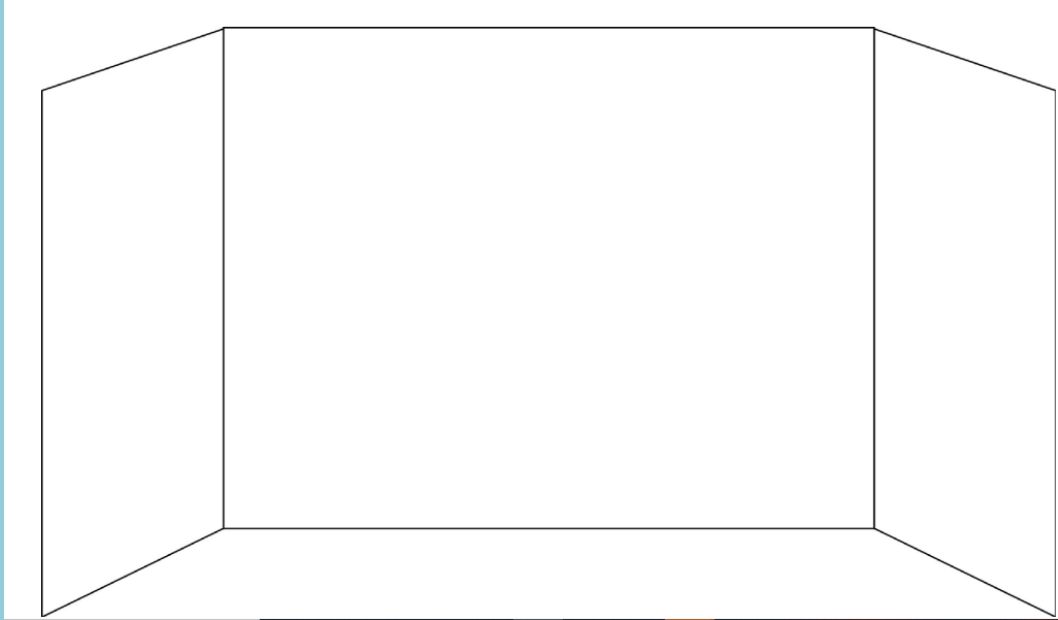
## Evaluation

4. In his lecture, Prof. McRae mentions the 1992 production of *An Inspector Calls* directed by Stephen Daldry, saying that the production ‘shows how a director with a clear idea of the what the play is doing can give it extra depth and meaning’ [5:24].
  - a) Look at the images from the 1992 production: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9dyvpmc> and/ or watch the production trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzF6BQ-Zv6I>
  - b) Write a detailed paragraph describing Daldry’s set design.
  - a) Explain why you think Daldry chose to present the Birlings’ house in this way.

Extension task: Use the template below to design your own staging for the opening of *An Inspector Calls*.

You might include:

- References to the play's key themes.
- Links to historical context.
- Links to Priestley's stage directions.
- Inspiration from Daldry's production.



### Glossary

- **Complacency (n.)** – a feeling of self-satisfaction or smugness; a feeling of being pleased with oneself.
- **Fault line (n.)** – a line on a rock surface or the ground that traces a geological fault; a divisive issue or difference of opinion that is likely to have serious consequences.
- **Hypocrisy (n.)** – the act of claiming to have higher standards or morals than you actually hold.
- **Prosperous (adj.)** – wealthy; successful financially.
- **Suburb (n.)** – a residential area on the edge of a city.
- **Suburban (adj.)** – relating to a suburb; a term sometimes used insultingly to describe something considered dull or boring.