

Key themes

- Social responsibility
The upper class older generation are less likely to accept responsibility for their mistakes that cause tragedy whereas the upper class younger generation are more likely to accept responsibility for their actions.
Priestley felt that if people were more considerate of one another, it would improve quality of life for all.
- Class
Divisions between how the upper class (Bourgeoisie) should treat the lower/ middle class (Proletariat).
During WWII everyone ate and dressed the same. Priestley highlights inequality still existed in post-war Britain.
- Gender
Sexism of Mr. Birling
Men have more power over women
Men went to war, work done by women. Impact explored through independence of Eva vs sexism of Birling.
- Age
Older generation have stubborn fixed opinions
Younger generation change their opinions and are seen as hope for the future.
Priestley believed that there was hope in the younger generation's ability to learn and change. Older characters' opinions are stubbornly fixed. Younger generation accepts their mistakes and offers the chance for a brighter future.
- Socialism vs Capitalism
Priestley uses the inspector to present socialist views
Birlings are capitalists
Birlings represent capitalism. The Inspector is Priestley's socialist mouthpiece.
Condemns capitalism and teaches socialist ideals.

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