




## Knowledge Organiser – Year 10/11 – An Inspector Calls

Overview of Topic			
The topic focuses on the set text that you will study for component 3. You have to answer questions in the written exam from the viewpoint of a performer, director and stage designer. You will look specifically at key scenes and how the play is staged to create meaning for the audience.			
An Inspector Calls - Context			Key Words
<h3>Social &amp; Historical Context</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'An Inspector Calls' was written in 1946 but is set in 1912. Put historically, it was written just after the Second World War and set just before the First World War.</li> <li>• J.B. Priestley had lived through both wars, which must have had a huge impact upon him.</li> <li>• By setting the play in the past, Priestley can make use of <b>dramatic irony</b> – the audience knows what happens after the events in the play but obviously the characters don't.</li> </ul> 		<p>The plot of the play focuses on the death of Eva Smith and the role of the Birling family within it. A police inspector arrives at the Birling house in the middle of an engagement party. Each character has a secret about their relationship with Eva and it is the Inspector's job to reveal the truth. The play is structured into two acts to show the events unfolding as each character is questioned.</p>	<p><b>Context</b> – Understanding the relevance of social, historical and political issues at the time the play was written.</p> <p><b>Playwright</b> – The person who writes and creates a play script</p> <p><b>Symbolism</b> – The meaning created in the performance by certain elements of the production.</p> <p><b>Tension</b> – This refers to the build-up of dramatic tension and atmosphere for both characters and the audience.</p> 
<p>The play takes place in the dining room of the Birling family. The design needs to portray a wealthy middle class family.</p> 		<p>The Inspector's final speech is the most important lines of the play. The inspector is the <b>moral</b> centre of the play. He is right about everything! In this speech, he makes it explicit to the audience that Eva Smith is a <b>symbol</b>. She represents the whole of the working class. The inclusion of John Smiths shows that Eva Smith is not representing the plight of women but of the whole working class.</p> <p><b>THEMES</b> – CLASS, WEALTH, RESPONSIBILITY</p>	
<p>The exam will focus on your understanding of how the play's meaning is shown through performance. This is what to look for in each design area.</p> <p><b>COSTUME</b> – Time Period, character's age and class, material, colour and fit.</p> <p><b>SET</b> – Time Period, type of set (realistic or stylised/suggested, colours, details, how set changes – how space is used, materials</p> <p><b>LIGHTING</b> – Colours, effects, how it is focused?</p>		<p><b>Key Quotes</b></p> <p>SHEILA BIRLING  <i>"But these girls aren't cheap labour-they're people."</i></p> <p>INSPECTOR GOOLE  <i>"Millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths"</i></p> <p><i>"fire and blood and anguish"</i></p> <p>MR BIRLING  <i>"If you don't <b>come down hard</b> on these people they'd soon be <b>asking for the earth</b>."</i></p> <p><i>"Unsinkable, <b>absolutely unsinkable</b>"</i></p>	