An Inspector Calls

Summary of Act I

When the play opens the Birling family are celebrating the ............... of Sheila and Gerald ........... . The mood seems to be ..........., friendly and happy. Arthur Birling hopes that the marriage will help his ............... . Birling’s social aspirations become apparent when he tells Gerald that he might be in line for a ............... . He says that ‘a man has to make his ............... ’.

Inspector Goole arrives immediately after this and announces that he is investigating the suicide of a girl named ............... who killed herself by swallowing ............... . He says that she left a diary and a ............... . With the arrival of the Inspector a note of ............... and menace is introduced, and the audience expects the complacency of the Birlings to be ............... .

The Inspector shows Birling a photograph and he then recognises her as the girl he ............... after a dispute over wages. The inspector soon adopts a very ............... tone which continues throughout the play. Birling tries to defend himself by referring to his friendship with ............... .

Sheila is the next to be interrogated. She admits ............... to the manager at Milwards because she thought Eva was ............... at her when she tried on a dress. As a result of this, Eva, or Daisy Renton was ............... . Sheila feels very ............... about her behaviour and feels ............... towards Eva Smith. She is open and ............... about her involvement with the girl.

When Gerald hears the name Daisy Renton he reacts so ............... that his own involvement with the girl is ............... . At the end of Act I he admits to ............... that he was having an ............... with Daisy Renton over the ............... .

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. How does Priestley show the confidence of the Birlings in their position?
2. Compare and contrast the reaction of Arthur Birling and Sheila Birling to interrogation by the Inspector.
3. The mood in this Act changes from relaxed to tense. Explore the ways Priestley transforms the tone throughout the Act.
4. How does Priestley hint at the tensions within the group that later become more clear?
5. How does Priestley present the Inspector as an unusual policeman in this Act?