1 The Strike

In the play Arthur Birling sacks Eva and four or five other workers who lead a strike. Act out the scene where she and the other “ringleaders” go to his office with their requests.

1. Re-read the sections of Act 1 where Birling expresses his opinions.
2. Allocate roles to your group: Eva, Birling, Will Fairwage, Len Standup, Alice Bettalife.
3. Decide on what Eva and the others will say and how Birling will respond.

Consider:

- What the *strikers* would say about wages at the factory.

- What they would say about their living conditions.

- What they would say about solutions to poverty and squalor.

- What their attitude towards strikes are.

- What their attitudes towards families like the Birlings are.

- How *Birling* would justify keeping wages down.

- What his attitude towards the strikers would be.

4. Role-play the incident with a rough script if you like.

5. Remember to:
   a. Speak clearly and confidently.
   b. Adapt your talk to the role - think about who you are and how you feel.
   c. Show an understanding of the attitudes of the characters concerned. Why do you feel like this?

**SUGGESTED 1st LINE**

Eva (entering Birling’s office with others after knocking): Mr. Birling, we have come to see you about a very important matter ...
2 Sheila’s Shopping Trip

Imagine that it is now several months after the Inspector’s visit and Sheila has been invited to help a friend whom she hasn’t seen for months with wedding preparations. They go to Brumley and take afternoon tea.

1. Re-read the pages where Sheila and Gerald discuss their relationship and make clear their attitudes to marriage.

2. Allocate roles to the group: Sheila, Miss Dutiful (who is about to marry), Miss Giddy and Miss Chusenotosee who are also friends.

3. Decide what each will say – Miss Dutiful is not marrying for love but for a wealthy, well-connected husband and has much the same views on marriage as Mrs. Birling; Miss Giddy is silly and vain, much like Sheila used to be – her main interests are fashion, hairstyles and gossip; Miss Chusenotosee is also engaged to be married in the more distant future and knows that her fiancé has affairs, but does not see this as important.

The four will discuss marriage (what are Sheila’s views now?) and a possible trip to Millwards to view wedding gowns (how will Sheila react?).

4. Role-play the meeting with a rough script if you wish.

5. Remember to:
   a. Speak fluently and clearly.
   b. Adapt your talk to your role – Who are you? – How do you feel?
   c. Show an understanding of the values and attitudes of each character – Why do you feel like this?

SUGGESTED 1st LINE

Miss Giddy: So, Sheila are you going to fill us all in at last on the mystery behind you and Gerald calling it all off? Really old thing, it's so brave of you to come along under the circumstances – and you're not looking your old self at all – aren't those clothes a bit last season?
3 Gerald’s Gentlemen’s Dinner

Gerald is meeting some old friends for an evening dinner, some months after the Inspector’s visit. They are discussing their views on marriage and business.

1. Re-read the pages in which Gerald talks about his parents, his relationship with Sheila and his affair with Eva.
3. Decide on what each will say: Charlie and Percy both keep mistresses and Henry is a factory owner like Birling.

   How will Gerald talk about Eva and Sheila?
   What will he say about the Inspector?
   What are his plans for the future?

4. Role-play the incident with a rough script if you like.
5. Remember to:
   a. Speak fluently and confidently.
   b. Adapt your talk to the role - Who are you? - How do you feel?
   c. Show an understanding of the views and attitudes of each character - Why do you feel like this?

SUGGESTED 1st LINE

Charlie (Passing the port to Gerald): Well Croft, I must say that I’m dashed surprised that the intended and now ex little woman reacted like she did when she discovered your “little bit of fun”! Really, you’d think that she’d just be glad of the opportunity of marrying into a family like yours and turn a blind eye forever and ever amen, if you catch my drift ...