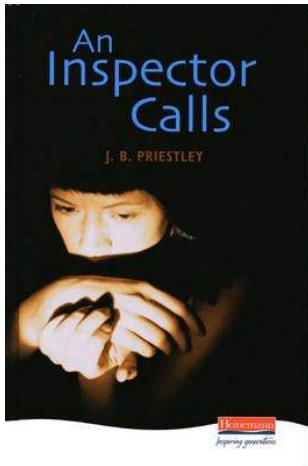


Section Internationale Britannique - Newsletter #2 - April 2020

Students in 2nde SIB have been studying drama over the last term. Here is their review of *An Inspector Calls* written by British playwright, J.B. Priestley, in 1945 but set in 1912.

An Inspector Calls - J.B. Priestley



Social injustices, differences in generational ideologies and pro-socialist views are all put under the microscope in Priestley's morality play *An Inspector Calls*, with the aim of sending a message to the audience. Throughout his play, Priestley shares his socialist views and presents them in a memorable way, to gain more followers of his political ideologies. J.B Priestley's main goal in this play is to make his audience realise that the lack of knowledge of and empathy with the lower echelons of society can lead to social unrest and crises, emphasising that "We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other. And [...] that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish". Priestley makes it clear that our actions have consequences, and that as citizens, it is our role to take care of one another and most importantly take responsibility for our actions

and the outcome it has on the lives of those affected.

J.B Priestley's play *An Inspector Calls* is today considered as one of the most important moral plays of all time. It includes themes such as social responsibility and class. The ending leaves the audience with a very important message about how our actions affect others.

This well-made play is set in 1912, in a fictional town, in the north of England called Brumley and features the Birling family, an upper class family. The play starts when the family is having a dinner party to celebrate their daughter's engagement to another rich family: The Crofts. However, the festivities are soon interrupted by the arrival of Inspector Goole.

The Inspector makes it known that he is investigating the suicide of a young lady: Eva Smith. He goes on to interrogate every member of the family; one by one. As he works his way



through each character the audience progressively learns that everyone's actions had a consequence on Eva's life and consequently her death.

J.B Priestley through this morality play is trying to convince people that we are all responsible for each other. He does so with multiple themes such as: social responsibility, gender, age, love and the seven deadly sins. JB Priestley expresses his personal opinions through the commanding voice of the inspector. The playwright proves to be a loyal socialist with strong ties to the belief of joint responsibility. Even though some of the members of the Birling family appear friendly at the beginning of the play, they soon start to show their true colours as selfish, cowardly or arrogant people. Ultimately, the younger generation finally understands this idea of social responsibility, and come out of it changed and stronger. However, the older generation has trouble accepting their part, and tend to put the blame on others.



The moral of this story lies in the representation of a social group by each character. Some characters, such as the young adults Sheila and Eric, change their views on society and represent the younger generation willing to take more responsibility for others around them. Gerald, Sheila's fiancé, represents an old head on young shoulders still attached to a traditional way of living. Mrs. & Mr. Birling however stick to their conservative more liberal way of thinking.

Although this play follows one family, one woman and an Inspector, it is in fact a microcosm of pre-war English society (1912): with a clear separation between the upper and lower classes; and what could be considered a wall dividing the older and younger generations and the different priorities depending on the people. The play is full of plot twists and suspense and the ending will get you thinking.

Unfortunately, our excursion to The Sydney Opera House to see Bell Shakespeare's production of *Hamlet* was cancelled due to Covid-19 social distancing measures. However, we were still able to watch a broadcast of the performance at school!



SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

On March 17th, students from 6^e and 2nde showed off their dancing skills by performing two traditional Irish dances: "The Walls of Limerick" and "The Siege of Ennis". This was an opportunity for students of the International Section to get together and enjoy a taste of Irish culture and traditions.





