(At rise of curtain, the four Birlings and Gerald are seated at the table, with Arthur Birling at one end, his wife at the other, Eric downstage and Sheila and Gerald seated upstage.

Edna, the parlourmaid, is just clearing the table, which has no cloth, of the dessert plates and champagne glasses, etc, and then replacing them with decanter of port, cigar box and cigarettes. Port glasses are already on the table. All five are in evening dress of the period, the men in tails and white ties, not dinner-jackets. Arthur Birling is a heavy-looking, rather **portentous** man in this middle fifties with fairly easy manners but rather provincial in this speech. His wife is about fifty, a rather **cold** woman and her husband's social superior. Sheila is a pretty girl in her early twenties, very pleased with life and rather excited. Gerald Croft is an attractive chap about thirty, rather too manly to be a dandy but very much the well-bred young man-about-town. Eric is in his early twenties, not quite at ease, half **shy**, half **assertive**. At the moment they have all had a good dinner, are celebrating a special occasion, and are pleased with themselves.)

**TASK #1** – What impression is Priestley trying to give us of the Birlings here? Why?

1. **Opening Stage Directions**

**TASK #4** – Complete single word analysis on the following words:

-portentous -cold -shy -assertive

**TASK #2** – Why is Mrs Birling, Mr Birling’s ‘social superior’ considering ‘An Inspector Calls’ is set in a patriarchal society?

**TASK #3** – Highlight any words that you do not understand. Write them in this box and look up their definition.

**TASK #6 –** What do the possessions of the Birling’s tell you about them?

**TASK #5** – Why is Edna present in this scene? How is she different from the others?

**Status –** Identify vocabulary which suggests that Lennie admires George.

What does this suggest about both men’s status in the relationship?