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**Well-made play**​

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A well-made play is a popular dramatic genre from the 19th-century. In a well-made play the plot is intricate and complex and the action builds to a climax. This is often concerned with events that happened before the events of the play. A well-made play usually ends with a return to order but Priestley moves away from this genre with the revelation at the end.​

*An Inspector Calls* is a well-made play because the events are all influenced by what happened to Eva Smith before the play takes place.​

*What is the effect of this?*​  
This structure allows J B Priestley to manipulate the audience. They do not know what happened to Eva Smith and so each revelation about her treatment by the Birlings and Gerald Croft adds to the drama. Each revelation is more shocking than the last and this **structure**allows Priestley to build toward a climax. In *An Inspector Calls* there is a twist at the end of the plot – the characters are unsure if the Inspector existed at all. This gives the audience time to reflect on the events of the play. When it is revealed that another inspector is on their way and the curtain falls, the audience would be stunned.​

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**Morality play**​

Morality plays were popular during the 15th and 16th-centuries. Historically **they sought to teach the audience lessons** that focused on the seven deadly sins: lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride. Whilst characters who committed these sins were punished, morality plays showed that if a character repented then they could redeem themselves.​

*An Inspector Calls* is a morality play because all of the Birlings and Gerald Croft commit crimes which are similar to the seven deadly sins. Mr Birling is greedy because he wants more money, Sheila is guilty of wrath and envy when she spitefully complains about Eva Smith and so on. Not all of the characters manage to redeem themselves.​

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*What is the effect of this?*​  
Priestley uses the morality play structure to teach a 20th-century audience a series of lessons that relate to his beliefs about social responsibility, age, gender and class. The audience is invited to enjoy judging these characters – they are also forced to question their own behaviour. Priestley would have hoped that people watching the play would have left the theatre as better people.​

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**Crime thriller**​

A crime thriller is a genre that tells a **gripping tale based around a crime**. The audience receives clues on who has committed the crime and will enjoy trying to guess what happened before the end of the action.​

*An Inspector Calls* is a crime thriller because the action centres around the suicide of Eva Smith. Initially, as this is a suicide and not a murder investigation, it would seem that there is no clear suspect. It soon turns out that all the characters are potential suspects for different reasons.​

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*What is the effect of this?*​  
The crime thriller genre encourages the audience to become involved in the events of the play. In this case they would be considering who is ‘more’ to blame for the death of Eva Smith. Ultimately, Priestley makes the audience suspects, their behaviour is questioned and they are left wondering if they had committed any ‘crimes’ like the Birlings had.