**Dramatic irony** the device of giving the audience an item of information that at least one of the characters in the play is unaware of, thus placing the spectator a step ahead of at least one of the characters. For example, In [*Romeo and Juliet*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romeo_and_Juliet), the audience knows that Juliet is already married to Romeo, but her family do not.

Look at the quotes before each of your sources from Mr Birling. Think about **how** and **why** Preistly uses dramatic irony.

**Mr Birling: “Just because the Kaiser makes a speech or two, or a few German officers have too much to drink and begin talking nonsense, you’ll hear some people say that war’s inevitable. And to that I say – fiddlesticks!”**

Whilst the catalyst for the war was the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, there were in fact a number of causes. One issue was that many of the allies disliked the fact that the central powers were countries which had a very powerful elite who wanted more power and resisted democracy.

We are not used to seeing World War One as an ideological struggle, a battle between democracy and dictatorship. Yet that is in many respects exactly what it was. The original alliance of countries, of course contained Tsarist Russia, but Britain and France had a shared democratic heritage. In 1917, the defeat of Russia and adherence of the USA to the alliance narrowed the conflict to one between a group of states committed to liberal and democratic values, and a militarist autocracy. The alliance was imperfectly democratic. Both Britain and France had large empires whose people did not have access to democratic forms of government, and both sought to extend their empires at the expense of their enemies. In Britain, universal male suffrage, along with the vote for some, but not all, adult women, was only introduced at the end of the war. All states behaved in some ways that were at odds with liberal democratic principles, persecuting pacifists (a person who believes that war and violence are unjustifiable) for example.

Yet there was a marked difference between the democratic powers and Germany. For one thing, encouragement of the French and British peoples by playing the democratic card helped rally support for the war in 1917-18 whilst, in Germany, support for the regime crumbled. Britain and France came to be led by Lloyd George and Clemenceau, popularist democratic leaders, while Germany was ruled by a military dictatorship that sidelined the constitutional leader, the Kaiser. An Allied victory led to the maintenance and even extension of liberal democracy in Europe. A German victory would have snuffed it out. When the German army appeared to be on the verge of victory in spring 1918, the Kaiser crowed that this was the vindication of monarchy and autocracy over democracy.

What does this source tell us about advancements in technology in the early 1900’s?

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How is Priestley using dramatic irony here?

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New technologies were being developed.

**Mr Birling: “the *Titanic* – she sails next week – forty-six thousand eight hundred tons – forty-six thousand eight hundred tons – New York in five days – and every luxury – and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable.”**

As soon as the waves of the North Atlantic closed over the stern of RMS Titanic on 15 April 1912, the myths began surrounding her design, construction and transatlantic voyage. On her maiden voyage, she carried 2,224 passengers and crew. Under the command of [Edward Smith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Smith_(sea_captain)), the ship's passengers included some of the wealthiest people in the world, as well as hundreds of emigrants from [Great Britain and Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Ireland), [Scandinavia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scandinavia) and elsewhere throughout Europe seeking a new life in North America. The ship was designed to be the last word in comfort and luxury, with an on-board gymnasium, swimming pool, libraries, high-class restaurants and opulent cabins. Though *Titanic* had advanced safety features such as watertight compartments and remotely activated watertight doors, there were not enough [lifeboats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lifeboat_(shipboard)) to accommodate all of those aboard due to outdated maritime safety regulations.

It was said that the builders and owners of Titanic claimed she was 'unsinkable'. The claim actually made was that she was 'practically unsinkable', close enough, but nevertheless an unfortunate statement and one which would haunt both builder and owner for years.

On 14 April 1912, four days into the crossing and about 375 miles (604 km) south of [Newfoundland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newfoundland_(island)), she hit an iceberg at 11:40 pm ship's time. The glancing collision caused *Titanic*'s hull plates to buckle inwards along her starboard side and opened five of her sixteen watertight compartments to the sea; the ship gradually filled with water. Meanwhile, passengers and some crew members were evacuated in lifeboats, many of which were launched only partly loaded. A disproportionate number of men were left aboard because of a "[women and children first](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_and_children_first)" protocol followed by some of the officers loading the lifeboats. By 2:20 AM, she broke apart and foundered, with well over one thousand people still aboard. Just under two hours after *Titanic* foundered, the Cunard liner [RMS *Carpathia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RMS_Carpathia) arrived on the scene of the sinking, where she brought aboard an estimated 705 survivors.

The disaster was greeted with worldwide shock and outrage at the huge loss of life and the regulatory and operational failures that had led to it.

What reasons for WW1 are outlined in this source?

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What would have been the difference if Germany had won?

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Life in 1912

(Remember, the play is set in 1912 but written in 1945.)