**TASK #4** – How is Mrs Birling presented as hubristic (excessively proud) in this scene? Use quotations from the text and hit all of the assessment objectives.

**TASK #1** – ‘I think she had only herself to blame’ – What does this tell you about Mrs Birling’s character?

**Challenge: which philosophy does this reflect and how?**

Mrs Birling: Yes, I think it was simply a piece of gross impertinence – quite deliberate – and naturally that was one of the things that prejudiced me against her case.

Birling: And I should think so! Damned impudence!

Inspector: You admit being prejudiced against her case?

Mrs Birling: Yes.

Sheila: Mother, she's just died a horrible death – don't forget.

Mrs Birling: I'm very sorry. But I think she had only herself to blame.

Inspector: Was it owing to your influence, as the most prominent member of the committee that help was refused the girl?

Mrs Birling: Possibly.

Inspector: Was it or was it not your influence?

Mrs Birling: (*stung*) Yes, it was. I didn't like her manner. She'd impertinently made use of our name, though she pretended afterwards it just happened to be the first she thought of. She had to admit, after I began questioning her, that she had no claim to the name, that she wasn't married, and that the story she told at first – about a husband who'd deserted her – was quite false. It didn't take me long to get the truth – or some of the truth – out of her.

Inspector: Why did she want help?

Mrs Birling: You know very well why she wanted help.

Inspector: No, I don't. I know why she needed help. But as I wasn't there, I don't know what she asked from your committee.

Mrs Birling: I don't think we need discuss it.

Inspector: You have no hope of not discussing it, Mrs Birling.

Mrs Birling: If you think you can bring any pressure to bear upon me, Inspector, you're quite mistaken. Unlike the other three, I did nothing I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation. The girl asked for assistance. We were asked to look carefully into the claims made upon us. I wasn't satisfied with the girl's claim – she seemed to me not a good case – and so I used my influence to have it refused. And in spite of what's happened to the girl since, I consider I did my duty. So if I prefer not to discuss it any further, you have no power to make me change my mind.

Inspector: Yes I have.

 Mrs Birling: No you haven't. Simply because I've done nothing wrong – and you know it.

**5. Mrs Birling’s Story**

**TASK #5 –** How does Mrs Birling speak to the Inspector at the end of this extract? What does it imply?

**TASK #3** – ‘I did nothing I’m ashamed of’ – How is Priestley using Mrs Birling to help promote socialism to his audiences?

Challenge: explain how this links to conscience, capitalism and social justice.

**TASK #2** – How does Mrs Birling attempt to gain control of the situation here?

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

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