**Reflection task: read a summary of each act and highlight any information you could nto remember.**

**Plot Summary Act One**

• The Birling family (Arthur, Sybil, Sheila and Eric) and Gerald Croft, are having a meal to celebrate the engagement of Sheila and Gerald.

• Arthur Birling makes a toast. In it, he informs the younger members of the family that their future looks bright and that it is important to look after themselves. Priestley makes use of dramatic irony to undermine Arthur Birling – Birling says there won’t be a war and talks about the success of the Titanic.

• Just as Mr. Birling says, “a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own”, the doorbell rings. Shortly after, the maid shows Inspector Goole into the room.

• The Inspector explains that a young woman has died after drinking bleach. He questions Mr. Birling, who admits to having her sacked after she was involved in a strike at the factory. The Inspector then questions Sheila, who admits to having the girl sacked from Milwards because she was jealous that the girl looked better in the dress she liked than she did.

**Act Two**

• The Inspector’s attention falls on Gerald. When questioned, he admits that he knew the girl. After meeting her at the Palace Music Hall in Brumley, Gerald set her up in the flat of a friend and they became lovers. After a happy period, it came to an end and Eva / Daisy left Brumley and went to the seaside. After the questioning, Gerald goes for a walk.

• The Inspector questions Mrs. Birling next. She admits that the girl came to her charitable organisation and asked for help, as she was pregnant and could not ask the father for money. Mrs. Birling believes the girl is putting on graces and is offended that she uses the name “Mrs. Birling”. She therefore persuades the other members of the charity to refuse her request. Mrs. Birling is defiant and refuses to accept she did anything wrong. She tells the Inspector that the father of the child is to blame and it is the Inspector’s “duty” to arrest him.

• Instead of leaving as Mrs. Birling hoped, the Inspector waits to “do his duty.”

Act Three

• Eric returns to the house and into the firing line. He knows that his secret is already out but does explain what happened – he had an affair with the girl and she fell pregnant. He offered to marry her but she declined, knowing that he didn’t love her. Eric gave her money to begin with, which he stole from his father’s business. When she realised the money was stolen, she refused to take any more.

• The Birling family appear to have learnt their lesson and seem sorry for what they have done. The Inspector tells them that we all have to look after each other and that there are plenty of other people in the world like Eva Smith. He then leaves

. • Shortly after, Gerald Croft returns from his walk. He brings into doubt the identity of the Inspector (having spoken to a policeman who has never heard of him) and even explains that it is possible that Eva Smith never existed.

• Quickly convinced by Gerald’s arguments, Mr. and Mrs. Birling decide that it was a joke and laugh the whole thing off. They have not really learnt anything.

• Eric and Sheila are not so easily swayed. They argue with their parents that this doesn’t change anything – they are still responsible for the terrible things they did.

• The telephone rings – it is for Mr. Birling. A young woman has just died at the infirmary and a police inspector is on his way to the house.

• The play ends on this bombshell.