**Extract Question**

Mr. Birling’s manner is that of annoyance and impatience in this extract. He tells Eric to “just keep quiet” and warns him not to “get excited”. He sees the whole affair as somewhat beneath him - he does not see it necessary to spend his precious time fretting over what he views as a quite trivial event. He also rather pointedly mentions the status of Gerald’s parents to the Inspector, as though that alone will be sufficient to discount him and his family from the enquiry. This shows he holds firm belief in the prestige and influence held by the upper classes, and the stigma attached to the working class; this is demonstrated by his referral to Eva as a “wretched girl”. Mr. Birling also sees things in a very black-and-white way. He believes the case to be “perfectly straightforward” – he is seemingly incapable of realising the depth of the situation and therefore the complexity of it. Whether this is due to ignorance or incapacity is unclear.

Mr. Birling’s “impatience” in the extract reflects his impatience for socialist views and those who believe in them – just as he has no time in his life to consider the welfare of others, he has no time for it in conversation. He dismisses the Inspector’s questions and argues in an imperious, haughty manner (“I don’t see that it’s any concern of yours”). This reveals his selfish, self-centred nature and arrogance. He also reacts with “surprise” when the Inspector questions his decisions – yet another example of his egoism. He also cannot see the logic behind the Inspector’s thoughts about the causes of the girl’s suicide. He doesn’t understand those of a lower class than him, he is ignorant enough to believe them incapable of possessing complex emotions or feelings like pain and heartbreak. He finds it difficult to believe that someone of the working class would want anything other in life than a job and a wage, however small that wage may be.

It is clear from this extract that Mr. Birling fancies himself as somewhat of an expert at business, and perhaps life in general. He says he had given Eric and Gerald “a little good advice” - he himself is proclaiming it as “good” is evidence of his inflated ego. He also deems his judgement to be mostly if not entirely accurate, for example, when he guesses Eva to be “country-bred”. He also believes everyone to be of the same opinion as him - he states things as though they are obvious, such as when he says “I refused, of course”, as though his reasoning was apparent. Mr. Birling is also very commanding and rather insolent; he tells the Inspector they “needn’t go into all that” and tells him he doesn’t “like that tone”.