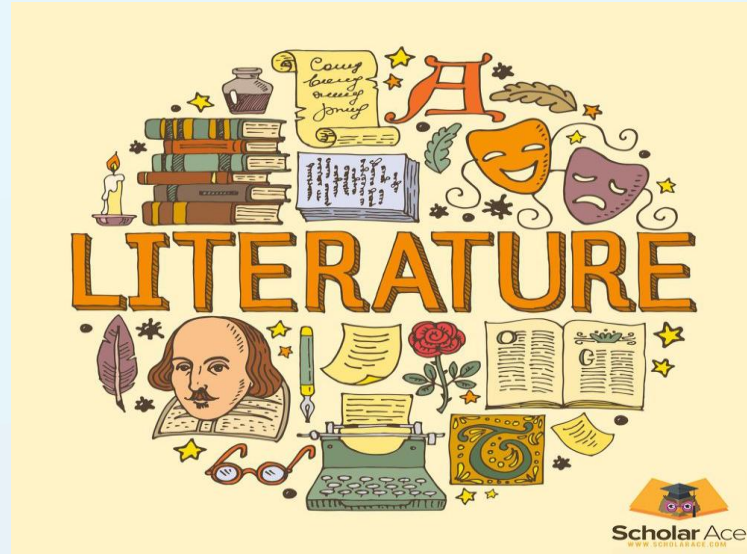




JAMES
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English Literature

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MACBETH REVISION THEMES



Tutoring
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Features of tragedy



Narrative sequence of Macbeth

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Feature	Description
Anagnorisis	A group of characters who narrate the play.
Peripeteia	Mental blindness.
Ate	An event that sets the tragedy to begin.
Hamartia	The revelation of a fact not previously known.
Chorus	A satisfactory ending that restores the order of society.
Complicating action	An action that has an outcome that is the opposite of the intention.
Catharsis	The protagonist's fatal flaw.
Hubris	The protagonist's overbearing arrogance

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Feature	In Macbeth
Anagnorisis	In V.viii Macduff uses an imperative to tell Macbeth to 'Despair thy charm!' and that he was 'untimely ripped' from his 'mother's womb'. Ironically, given his association with evil, Macbeth cries 'curs'd be the tongue that tells me so, for it hath cow'd my better part of man.' The visceral violence of the imagery in Macduff's declarative echoes both Lady Macbeth's observations on motherhood and the killing of Macduff's family. It is this point of anagnorisis that forces Macbeth to confront the delusion he has been clinging onto as the equivocation of each of the witches' prophecies has been revealed. This point of the play serves then as the final point in the tragic decline of Macbeth: he had previously lost his reputation, honour, wife, and titles, now, in a cyclical reference to I.ii, Macbeth has lost his courage. His head was, to a Jacobean audience's view, metaphorically lost in I.iii when the witches' predictions entered it; it is physically lost in an extra-diegetic decapitation at the end of this scene.
Peripeteia	In IV.i. Macbeth says he'll 'make assurance double sure' by having Macduff and his family killed so that he can't harm Macbeth. This generates peripeteia as it is this failed attempt of Macduff's life that motivates him to kill Macbeth.
Ate	Banquo suggests, "to win us to our harm, / The instruments of darkness tell us truths only to betray us in the end"; Macbeth says that "this supernatural soliciting cannot be ill, cannot be good." Shakespeare presents Macbeth as regarding the witches as being paradoxically both good and bad for him. His lack of clarity on where witches sit in the chain of being and outside god's kingdom is exposed by Banquo's noble certainty and demonstrates not just Macbeth's ate, but also a religious certainty that James I would have approved of in early 17th century England.

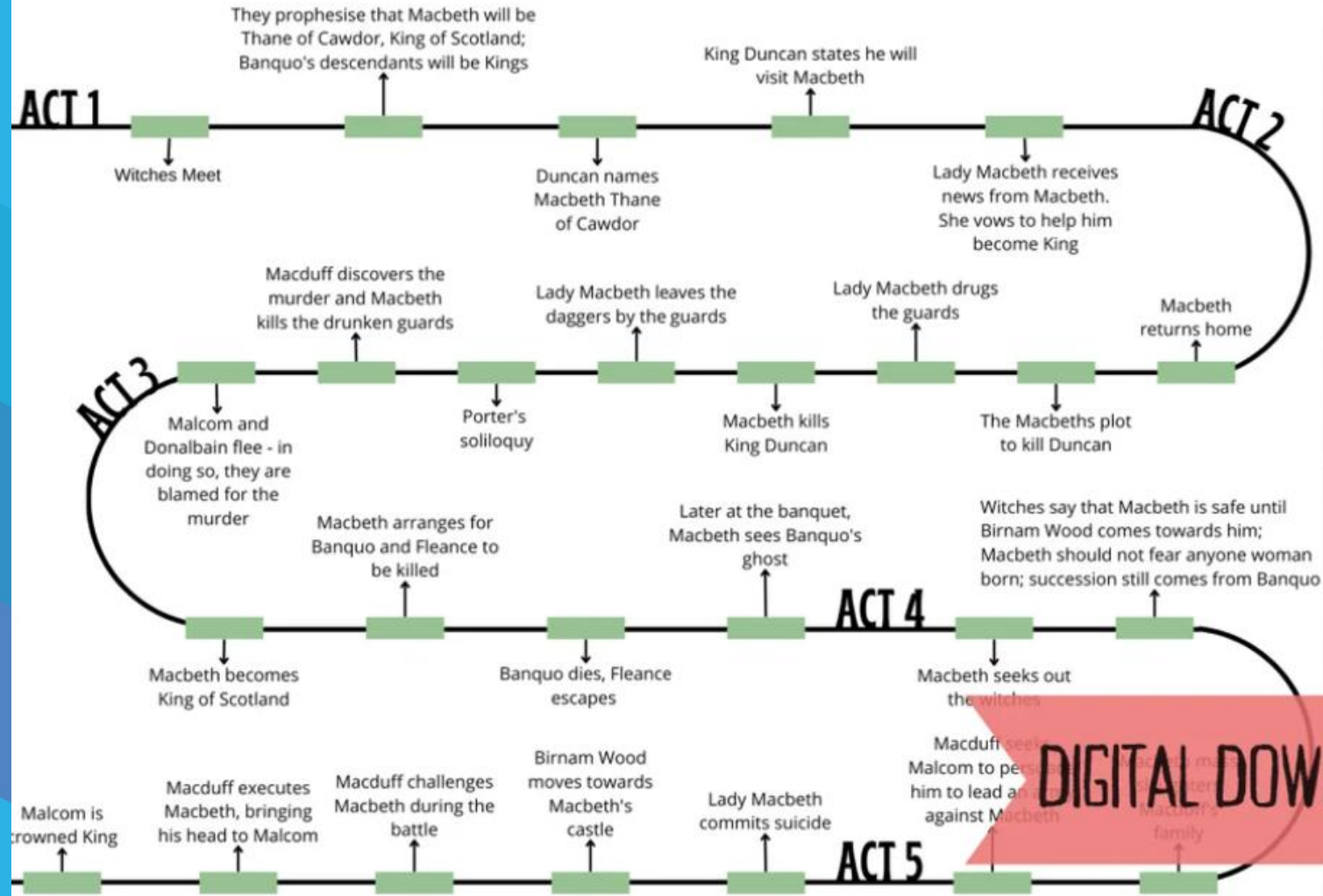
Hamartia	Macbeth's hamartia can be argued to be a range of aspects of his personality - or perhaps a composite of these. A traditional interpretation highlights his greed and ambition outside of the restrictions of the chain of being; one could argue that the love he has for his wife also subverts gender normative behaviour in Renaissance England in that he values her above his religious conscience and so this could be his hamartia; perhaps also his delusional hubris both that he could successfully be king and escape retribution for regicide could be considered.
Chorus	The witches are a close approximation of a chorus both outlining sequence ("By the pricking of my thumb, something wicked this way comes") but also enigmatically alluding to the thematic conflict in the play ("Lesser than Macbeth but greater").
Complicating action	This could be when the witches first tempt Macbeth in I.iii., it could be Lady Macbeth manipulating him in I.vii, but the point of no return is the extra-diegetic regicide of Duncan between II.i and II.ii.
Catharsis	Macbeth's death resolves the issues of the play and is just punishment delivered in revenge by MacDuff. His decapitation ('behold where stands. The usurper's curs'd head'), provides a cyclical reference to the death of the traitor Macdonwald in I.ii. The anagnorisis described above completes the cathartic end of the play.
Hubris	Macbeth's ate is not only a symptom of his hubris, it is perhaps a cause of it. At the start of V.v. Macbeth uses a hubristic imperative as demands 'Hand our banners on the outward walls!' in an effort to demonstrate his nonchalance regarding the threat of Malcolm and the English. His hubris is quickly eroded though and he demonstrates a range of emotions through V.v. culminating in the almost nihilistic impotence of the imperatives, "Blow wind! Come wrack! At least we'll die with harness on our back."

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- Lancelot Andrews (a bishop and scholar and contemporary of Shakespeare) described the people involved in the failed plot to blow up parliament in the following way: "'Be they fair or foul, glad or sad (as the poet calleth Him) the great Diespiter, 'the Father of days' hath made them both.'" Shakespeare echoes these words in the witches' speech from A1 S1.
- The play was performed in 1606, two years after James I ascended to the throne (he is supposed to be a descendent of Banquo and so Banquo is portrayed as a noble character).
- James I published a book called 'Demonology' that explored witchcraft.
- James I's wife (Princess Anne of Denmark)'s ship nearly sank due to a storm when sailing to Edinburgh to meet James. He executed 30 women in Berwick who he accused of making the storm due to witchcraft. In I.iii the witches plot to make a ship 'tempest tossed'.
- The porter references the Jesuit plotter 'Father Garnet when he says the equivocator 'could not equivocate to heaven' (II.iii)
- 'Look the the innocent flower but be the serpent under it' (I.v) is an allusion to the medal the Protestant Dutch struck to celebrate the discovery of the Catholic gunpowder plot.
- The 'two-fold balls and treble scepters' Macbeth sees in the 'glass' (IV.i) reference James I being king of England and Scotland (Wales only gets a scepter for being a principality and not a kingdom).

A Christmas Carol

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Structure

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The novella is set out in five Staves. This is an unusual structure that mimics the way a musical piece is put together. The Staves follow the action of the story with the first stave setting the scene, the middle stave showing the turning point for Scrooge and the final stave concluding the story by presenting him as a changed man.

Carols and the five staves

Carols are songs that are popular at Christmas time and usually deal with stories of Christ's birth or with themes associated with the festive season. Some carols focus on joy and the spirit of giving to others.

The structure of Dickens's novella uses a similar structure to a song to present a moral tale of transformation.

Three ghosts

The structure of the three ghosts showing the past, present and future appeals to readers on many levels. The number three is significant in fairy stories, religious tales and in traditional myths and legends. Characters are often faced with three choices, granted three wishes, or given three opportunities to change. Scrooge is shown his past, the present and a possible future and then finally finds the willingness to transform.

- the structure links to the theme of Christmas by reflecting the shape of a typical carol
- it has a clear beginning, middle and end through which we see a character's transformation
- the structure of three ghosts, showing the past, present and future, appeals to readers
- Scrooge's redemption in the final stave leaves the reader with a sense of both completion and possibility

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	How?	Why?	Effect?
Clear narrative voice	Dickens uses a narrative voice that offers opinions on the characters. For example 'Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge!'	The narrative voice is entertaining and instructs the reader how to feel about Scrooge.	We trust the narrator and know instantly that Scrooge is a man who is miserly and unpleasant.
Simile	When Dickens first presents Scrooge he describes him as 'Hard and sharp as flint'.	The simile likens the character to something that the reader can recognise.	We see that Scrooge is tough and unbreakable.
Dialogue	Dickens reveals the characters through the things they say. Scrooge famously uses the words 'Bah!' and 'Humbug!' in response to Christmas wishes.	The simple words are memorable and show that Scrooge is dismissive about Christmas.	Scrooge's determination to disengage with the spirit of Christmas shows him to be bad-tempered.
Personification	When Dickens describes Scrooge's childhood, he uses personification to emphasise how 'merry' the sound of the young boys is by saying 'the crisp air laughed to hear it!'	The sound of the boys playing and shouting is so delightful that even the 'air' is laughing.	The effect of this personification is to show how everything is affected by the good nature of the children. This contrasts with Scrooge's adult self.
Metaphor	The children 'Ignorance' and 'Want' are used to represent all the poor children in society: 'They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish'.	The children under the Ghost of Christmas Present's cloak are a metaphor showing the effects of greed and miserliness.	The reader, like Scrooge, feels pity for these 'ragged' children and this extends to a sense of responsibility for all the poor and homeless children in society.

An Inspector Calls

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Themes and motifs

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Responsibility

Capitalism Vs Socialism

Class

Gender

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Responsibility

	How does Priestley show this?	Evidence	Analysis
Sheila feels socially responsible	Sheila is shocked when she learns that she had a part to play in Eva's death.	<i>"All right Gerald, you needn't look at me like that. At least I'm trying to tell the truth. I expect you've done things you're ashamed of too."</i>	Sheila takes responsibility for her actions and tells the truth. Gerald is being judgemental of her even though he has not yet taken responsibility for his own actions.
Mr Birling does not feel socially responsible	Mr Birling refuses to take any responsibility for Eva Smith's death.	<i>"If we were all responsible for everything that happened to everybody we'd had anything to do with, it would be very awkward, wouldn't it?"</i>	Mr Birling dismisses the idea that we should be responsible for each other, suggesting that such a situation would be 'awkward'.
Eric feels socially responsible	Eric shows that he takes responsibility for his actions in the final act of the play.	<i>"I don't see much nonsense about it when a girl goes and kills herself. You lot may be letting yourselves out nicely, but I can't. Nor can mother. We did her in all right."</i>	Eric clearly shows that he has a sense of social responsibility. Whilst Gerald and Eric's parents are enjoying being in the clear, Eric still takes the matter of Eva's death very seriously. He is even brave enough to tell his mother that she should feel responsible too.
Mrs Birling does not feel socially responsible	Sybil Birling will not take any responsibility for the death of Eva Smith even after she has been questioned by the Inspector.	<i>"I should think not. Eric, I'm absolutely ashamed of you."</i>	In telling Eric that she is ashamed of him she shows that she has learned nothing from the Inspector's investigation. The audience would know that she is in no position to be questioning the behaviour of anyone else given her own treatment of Eva Smith and lack of social responsibility.
The Inspector's lessons	When the Inspector is questioning the Birlings.	<i>"It's better to ask for the earth than to take it."</i>	Here the Inspector is suggesting that it is socially irresponsible to be greedy and 'take' things without permission. This is a

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Capitalism Vs Socialism

BACK TO
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What is Capitalism?

Capitalism is an **economic system** where the **factors of production** (capital goods, natural resources, and entrepreneurship, the skill of setting up businesses) are owned and controlled by **private groups or individuals**. People who **control** these factors set up and own **companies**. Individuals own their labour (they get paid for it).

One motto of Capitalism is “**Greed is good**”. Business owners want to keep their **sale prices low to attract customers** and **compete** with others, so their production costs need to be as low as possible to increase profit. In a Capitalist society, people are **rewarded according to their wealth, not contribution**.

What is Socialism?

On the other hand, Socialism is where the **factors of production** are owned **equally by everyone in society**. Socialism considers the resources’ **usefulness** to people. For example, a Socialist government would **provide services** such as **education** and **health care**. People in society are **rewarded by how much they contribute**. Socialism also ensures that those who can’t contribute to production, such as the elderly, are **still cared for**. There are aspects of socialism within British society: our NHS, free education and benefits system are examples.

Socialism was initially designed in the nineteenth century to **improve the standard of living for the working class**. Poverty is not possible in an ideal Socialist society because everyone has **equal access** to profits and resources such as health care. Everyone owns the means of production, so they **cannot be exploited for their labour** - everyone contributes and everyone benefits.



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AN INSPECTOR CALLS

SOCIAL CLASS

KEY QUOTES AND ANALYSIS



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AN INSPECTOR CALLS

THEMES: GENDER ROLES - QUOTATIONS

WOMEN
RIGHTS
BY B. WACKFORD
M.C. HANFORD

WOMEN
RIGHTS
BY B. WACKFORD
M.C. HANFORD

ES
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CE
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Structure

Also see: [Structure & Chronology - English Lit: AQA GCSE An Inspector Calls](#)

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CALLS MENU

Act 1

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 2

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 3

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 chilling note, leaving both the audience and the Birlings in suspense.

Context

1901- Queen Victoria died, King Edward VII, her son, became king. The era changed from the Victorian era and became the Edwardian era.

April 15th 1912- the Titanic sank. Approximately 1,500 people died.

1918- Germany surrenders and WW1 ends. Approximately 8 million lost their lives.

1930s- America is bankrupted which effects the rest of the world. It was named the Great Depression. Adolf Hitler becomes the Fuhrer (dictator) of Germany.

1945- Germany surrenders and WW2 ends. 60 million people were killed including Holocaust victims, soldiers and civilians. This was 2.5% of the world's population.

1910- King Edward VII died and his son, King George V, took the throne.

1914- WW1 broke out.

1920s- A time of prosperity.

1939- WW2 broke out.

Spring 1912- The play is set two weeks before the Titanic sank and two years before WW1 broke out. During this period there was a very strict social hierarchy where the rich and the poor were divided. The rich generally did not care about the poor. The capitalists took charge of the country; there was no welfare system so this was a laissez-faire society.

During WW1 no matter how rich or poor young men were they were forced to conscript to the armed forces and fight the Germans. What do you suppose the implication would be for the characters in the play?

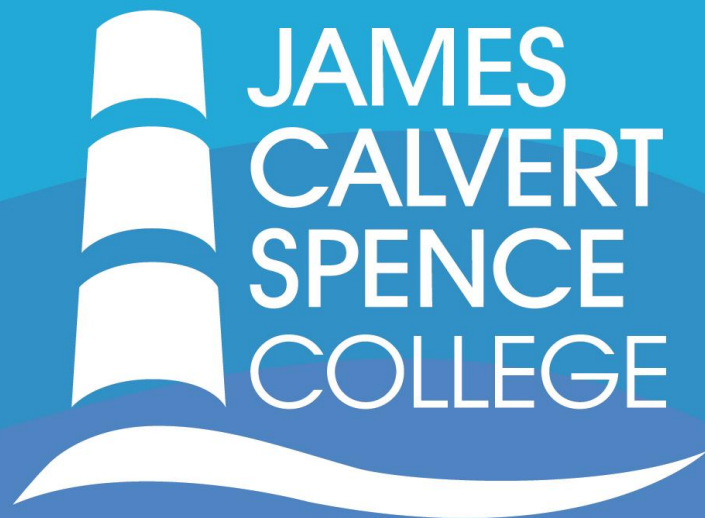
1918- Women were given the vote and although men were still considered the superior gender this was a monumental step for women's rights.

1916- Priestley served during WW1 and was wounded in 1916 by mortar fire. His experiences during the war, like so many other soldiers, changed his perception of society.

1945- 'An Inspector Calls' was published during a time when Britain was in great disorder. People had learnt to 'pull together' during this time they had to take care of one another and this is an important moral message in the play.

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Language in an Inspector Calls



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Character and plot quiz



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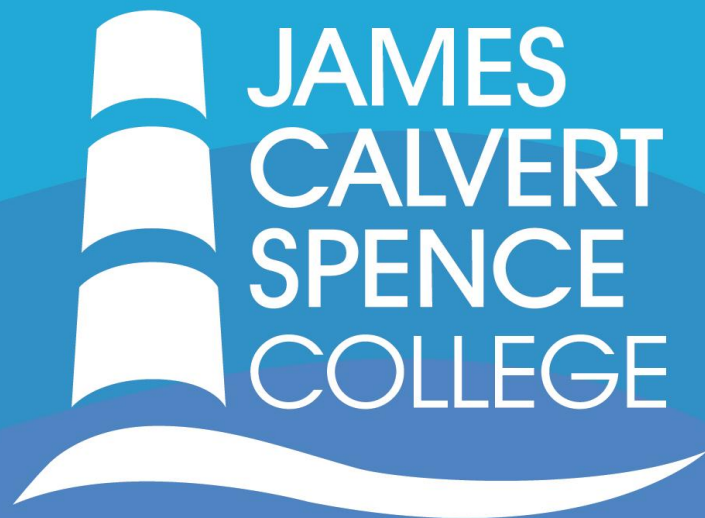
Character and quote matching activity



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Quiz

BACK TO
INSPECTOR
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