



## J.B. Priestley

*John Boynton Priestley lived on the Island from 1933 to 1959, first at Billingham Manor then at Brook Hill House.*

J.B. Priestley was born in Bradford in 1894 and after being educated at Belle Vue Grammar School, he went to work for a wool firm called Helm & Co. It was whilst working here that he started writing at night; he had some of his articles published in newspapers as far away as London and he later moved south.

He served in the World War I and experienced many injuries – in 1916 he was buried alive by a trench

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(in Chillerton) between 1933 and 1959. Due to the fact that he loved socialising with friends and family, he hosted great parties and was nick named 'Jolly Jack' for his bubbly character. However, to those who did not know him particularly well, he came across as rather gruff.

During his time on the Isle of Wight, he wrote many of his works, including *An Inspector Calls*, which is one of his best-known plays and a classic of the mid-twentieth century.

### Before your visit...



- ▶ Research the life of J.B. Priestley: where he lived, marriages, publications, political leanings etc.
- ▶ Draw a time line with key aspects of his life, and how they link to historical events happening at the same time.
- ▶ Write a potted bibliography in so many words.
- ▶ Listen to parts of Priestley's *Delight*:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtclGy2IINA>  
Write about your own delights in life. Perhaps use the titles 'Delights of my Childhood', or 'Regrets'.

- ▶ Explore the use of radio as a major source of communication during Priestley's working life. Consider how, without images, the emphasis was purely on words and sound to convey meaning.



## On-site Activities

*Priestley was well travelled and wrote about the places he visited including his own impressions.*

- ▶ Walk up to the Long Stone in Mottistone which Priestley's wife, Jacquetta, worked to excavate.
- ▶ Write up notes on your impressions of the Isle of Wight so far. Include descriptions of locations in an entertaining style that could be published on a tourism website like [www.myisleofwight.com](http://www.myisleofwight.com) or broadcast on radio without the luxury of images. Try to counter any negative comments with positive ones.



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## Back at school...

- ▶ Look at the tradition of letter writing for airing thoughts and opinions and compare with the blogs of today. At this time, people didn't have the technology we have today. They wrote letters to each others to express their feelings and let their friends know what was happening in their everyday lives. The slower pace of life meant that people could sit and take the time to craft a letter. They also did less in their lives so could focus on the things they did do. Imagine you have moved away from your friends to a new town. Write a letter to a friend of your choice describing your feelings and the things you have been doing in your new town.
- ▶ Complete the notes made on site about your impressions of the Island as writing to entertain. This could also be completed with a view to read, record and broadcast.
- ▶ Any travel writing about the Island could be submitted to Red Funnel Ferries who may consider publishing it.