

## Juno



### **Suitable for:**

GCSE Citizenship/PSHE

### **Film details:**

Cert. 12A, Running time 96 mins

Juno MacGuff is not your usual teenager; smart and sharp-tongued, she stands out from the usual High School crowd. After losing her virginity with her friend Paulie Bleeker, she finds herself pregnant and decides to find a suitable couple to adopt the baby.

### **Consequences**

When we meet Juno she is buying a home pregnancy kit. The narrative of the film is concerned with how she will deal with the results of the test. Teenage pregnancy is a theme that is dealt with in many films and there are many ways to tell the story of a teenager in this situation.

Think of three different ways you could tell this story. In all cases, the initial information that you have to develop the story from is the summary sentence – Teenage girl (16) falls pregnant, she wants to continue at school, we see her go through a process of decision-making, resulting in her final choice.

When developing your ideas for the different approaches to this story think about the following:

- **setting** - what happens if you locate the story in the UK, or Italy, or anywhere else in the world?
- **time** – how does the period in which the film is set impact on the choices available to your character?
- **relationships** – you could change the relationships that your main character has with her friends, family and boyfriend. Do you want the teenage girl to be the protagonist?
- **visual style** – could changing one of the above help you to determine a visual style for your film? Think about the options available to you: it could be filmed in black and white, or hand-held camerawork could be used more prominently, for example. What are the connotations of these choices? What other choices are available to you, and how do they make meaning?

Once you have three ideas choose the one that you like the best and think about the following:

- Who are the target audience?
- How will you reach them?
- Develop a tagline for your film.

In your class/group pitch your ideas. Think about which film you'd like to see and why.

## **Juno and Representation**

The character Juno brings together many different issues of representation.

- **gender** – is she a typical teenage girl? Does she conform to a particular stereotype? Have you seen characters like her in other films? Think about extracts of dialogue and specific scenes to support your answer.
- **youth** – how does her pregnancy impact on our expectations of her? Do you expect her to become more mature? Did you find her credible? Is there a tension between these different aspects of her identity because of her pregnancy?

Choose one other character (or group of characters) from the film and consider how they are represented.

- Is what we see stereotypical, or are our expectations subverted in any way?
- Do you feel any of the characters in the film are underdeveloped?
- Would you like to have seen their actions and choices more fully explored?

Come up with ideas for an additional plot strand involving one character you felt was underdeveloped where more information about that character and their background is revealed. Share your ideas with a group and choose one plot strand to present to your class.