

## Tell No One



### Suitable for:

GCSE, AS/A2 French, Media/Film Studies, Citizenship

### Film details:

Cert. 15, Running time 130 mins

Tell No One is a thriller in the classic Hitchcock style – it follows one man's frantic race against time, and possible death, as his tragic past is suddenly and unexpectedly unearthed.

### Trailer

You can view a trailer for the film here: [www.tellno-one.com/flash.htm](http://www.tellno-one.com/flash.htm)

- How are expectations about the film's genre set up in the first section of the trailer? Consider visual and narrative conventions as well as the music used.
- After this first section, there is a marked change in the trailer and a different genre is suggested. What is this second genre, and how is this transition achieved in the trailer? Are elements of any other genres suggested as you watch?
- The end of the trailer refers to the beginning again in some ways. Why do you think it does this? What is the effect of the music and the images in the final moments?
- Consider the use of titles and the lack of dialogue in this trailer for a French-language film. What audience do you think this trailer is designed to appeal to?

## Tell No One and Genre

- This film is a French adaptation of an American novel. What implications do you feel this adaptation has in terms of narrative, scripting and pace, as well as the marketing of the film?
- To what extent does this film conform to any of your preconceptions of French cinema?

## Focus on Narrative

The plot of the film is fairly complex, with a variety of narrative twists leading the audience towards the conclusion.

- To what extent would you agree that one of the key pleasures of this genre of film lies in guessing the narrative outcomes before they are revealed to you?
- Immediately after viewing the film, make a note of the key turning points in the narrative. Does the number of narrative twists employed surprise you, or is this something a modern cinema audience has now come to expect?

## Characterisation

Director Guillaume Canet says of the lead character Alexandre Beck, 'It was very important for me that audiences relate easily to him.' (see website on page 1).

- Do you feel Françoise Cluzet, who plays Beck, fulfilled this objective in the role?
- How do you feel about the hero, Beck, as the narrative progresses? Does your opinion of him change at any point – if so, when and why?

**Tell No One** plays with a range of stereotypes: it employs some filmic stereotypes, such as the assassin, the high-power lawyer, the police officer and so on. At points in the narrative we also see social stereotypes being subverted: for instance, the doctor, supposedly defending his innocence, runs from the police and demonstrates a capacity for criminal behaviour. On the other hand, Bruno, a criminal, is shown to defend the doctor from a terrible miscarriage of justice.

- After viewing the film, could you name any other characters that seem to represent or to subvert a stereotype?
- To what extent would you say these character types, and their behaviour in the film, conform to your expectations of this genre and narrative type?

## The Modern Thriller

- How would you describe the visual style of this film?
- Consider the camerawork during the action sequences. Did you notice anything interesting or unusual in the way these parts of the film were shot?
- How important is the concept of surveillance in this film?
- Do you feel the technologies that feature in the plot make this film strictly contemporary, or could it become a modern classic?