

Juno

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| Author/ Director | Diablo Cody/ Jason Reitman |
| Released in | September, 1, 2007 |
| Price | 6,50€ |
| Language | (American) English |
| Length | 96 minutes |
| Summary | <p>The film <i>Juno</i> tells the story of 16-year-old Juno MacGuff who discovers she is pregnant after she and her best friend Paulie Bleeker had sex together. Not wanting the baby, Juno makes an appointment for an abortion at a local clinic. Due to a pro-life activist outside the clinic, the rather weird clinic staff and the fact that babies have fingernails, she leaves the clinic and decides against an abortion. Since Juno does not feel ready for being a mother, she and her friend Leah search for some adoptive parents. In the <i>Pennysaver</i>, they find the ad of Mark and Vanessa Loring, a successful, wealthy couple who want to adopt a baby. Luckily, Juno is supported by her stepmother Brenda and her father Mac with whom she meets the Lorings for the first time. Living in a nice neighbourhood in a neat luxurious house Mark and Vanessa seem to be the perfect parents for Juno's unborn child. In the course of time, Juno starts visiting their house recently; mostly to hang out with Mark with whom she shares tastes in music and films. Although Paulie Bleeker, the father of the baby, is clearly in love with Juno, she keeps him at a distance, saying the sex with him happened out of boredom. Only, when she finds out he asked another girl to go to prom with him, her jealousy and emotions are revealed. In her frustration, she visits Mark, who – while romantically dancing with Juno – confesses that he is going to leave Vanessa. Furiously, Juno wants to leave the house, however, Vanessa stops her and Juno has to watch the Loring's relationship falling apart. Back in the car, Juno bursts out in tears; yet she returns to the Loring's house leaving a note for Vanessa. After these events, the teenager and her father have a conversation about relationships and love, which makes Juno realize that she is actually in love with Paulie Bleeker. Telling him so, Paulie accepts her apology and they end up kissing. Shortly after that, Juno gives birth to the baby who is then claimed by the adoptive mother Vanessa. In the baby's nursery, Juno's note is pinned to the wall, stating: "Vanessa, if you're still in, I'm still in. – Juno." The film finishes with Juno being back to normal life, playing the guitar with her boyfriend Paulie Bleeker.</p> |
| Structure | Four parts, structured by the seasons: autumn, winter, spring and summer, i.e. from the point of time when Juno discovers she is pregnant until she gives birth to the baby. |
| Characters | <p>Character relationship diagram for Juno:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leah (top) Brenda and Mac (top right) Paulie Bleeker (right) Juno (center) Vanessa and Mark Loring (left) <p>Relationships are indicated by lines and symbols: a vertical line connects Leah and Juno; a diagonal line connects Brenda and Mac to Juno; a horizontal line with a red heart above it connects Juno and Paulie Bleeker; a horizontal line with a yellow lightning bolt below it connects Juno and Vanessa and Mark Loring.</p> |

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| Topics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of growing-up • Teen pregnancy • Being an outsider • The sexual education system of the U.S. • Cinematography/ Film analysis |
| Helpful Secondary Literature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cody, D. <i>Juno. The Shooting Script</i>. New York: Newmarket Press, 2007. • <i>Juno. Close Up</i>. Paderborn: Schöningh Verlag, 2012. DVD. • Hegerfeldt, A. „Jason Reitman, <i>Juno</i> (2007).“ <i>Teaching Contemporary Literature and Culture.Film. Part II</i>. Vol.3. Ed. S. Peters et al. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2013. 405-419. Print. |
| Language | Although Juno’s language is full of sarcastic, ironic comments, that are possibly a bit hard to understand for some pupils, the story line is still clear and understandable. The characters do not talk very fast nor do they have a certain dialect that could cause problems. |
| Suitable Age | Grades 9-12, i.e. pupils up from the age of 15/16 |
| Activities | <p>Literary aspects of the film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plot, Characters, Motifs • Dramatic structure of the film <p>Film analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of technical terms (camera adjustments, editing, stylistic devices [metaphors, motifs, costumes, etc.] • Analysis of key scenes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How is teen pregnancy depicted? What is Juno scared of? How is this presented in terms of cinematography? ➤ How can you tell Juno is “different” from the other teenagers around her? Does Juno suffer from being an outsider? ➤ Analysis of relationships: Mark&Vanessa, Juno&Paulie, Juno&Mark. How are the those people’s relationships presented at the beginning/at the end of the film? How do the characters and their relationships develop? How are these progresses presented in terms of cinematography? |
| Teachability Pros | <p>+ funny and witty story about a serious topic</p> <p>+ film presents life of a teenager: pupils can possibly identify with Juno and her situation</p> <p>+ Language not too hard to follow; offers insight into American English; use of metaphors</p> <p>+ offers various topics for lively discussions (teen pregnancy, abortion, adoption, importance of supportive family & friends, friendship, first sexual experiences, relationships, etc.)</p> |
| Teachability Cons | - length of film: Watching the whole film at school would need two full 45-min. lessons – yet: the pupils could watch the film at home and key scenes could be discussed in class |
| Overall Evaluation | In my opinion, the film <i>Juno</i> is highly suitable for the classroom. Since the use of media in the classroom becomes increasingly relevant, this film offers a wide range of camera adjustments, editing, stylistic devices to work with. Film analysis can be linked with literary aspects. Moreover, the film is entertaining and serious at the same time, thus providing the spectators with various topics that are worth discussing. |