

Educator Study Guide: *Adolescence* Episode 3

■ Learning Objectives

- Identify how dialogue can be used to reveal complex character psychology.
- Analyze shifting power dynamics and their dramatic impact.
- Evaluate portrayals of masculinity and adolescent identity formation.
- Reflect on institutional systems and their effect on vulnerable youth.
- Encourage critical thinking about the role of media, social pressures, and digital behavior in teenage development.

■ Screenwriting Takeaways

1. Dialogue as a Diagnostic Tool

This episode relies almost entirely on conversation between Briony and Jamie, revealing character depth, history, and trauma.

2. High Drama, Low Budget

Minimal locations—primarily a secure centre—are used to stage intense emotional stakes.

3. Power Dynamics

Shifts in control between Briony and Jamie keep the audience and characters off balance.

4. Subtext Mastery

Much of the emotional weight lies beneath the surface. The unsaid speaks volumes.

5. Writing Difficult Conversations

Topics like consent, shame, and anger are explored with nuance and restraint.

■ Classroom Themes & Prompts

1. Masculinity and Identity

Jamie's concept of masculinity is challenged by his experiences at home and online.

Prompt: How does the episode critique traditional masculinity?

2. Trust and Vulnerability

Briony works to gain Jamie's trust, navigating the tension between empathy and assessment.

Prompt: Can a psychologist truly remain objective?

3. Teen Psychology and Isolation

Jamie craves acceptance but pushes people away.

Prompt: What does this reveal about adolescent mental health?

4. Digital Life and Real-World Consequences

The story explores the repercussions of sexting and online cruelty.

Prompt: How does social media affect self-esteem and consent?

5. Institutional Systems and Justice

Jamie's placement in a secure centre reveals gaps in youth rehabilitation.

Prompt: Does the system protect or fail vulnerable teens?

■ Suggested Essay Topics

- Compare the use of subtext in **Adolescence** to another drama or play you've studied.
- Explore the ethical complexities of Briony's role. Can she remain neutral while also caring?
- Analyze how the script challenges or reinforces stereotypes about young offenders.

■ Footnote

The term 'teleplay' is an older industry label for what we now commonly call a television screenplay. The form follows a traditional script format, tailored for episodic storytelling.