

# Teenage Pregnancy and Abortion

## **Class and course background**

Advanced learners (Prima), monolingual.

They have not talked about the topic in particular yet, but they are familiar with a lot of related vocabulary.

## **Starting the lesson**

The sequence of lessons starts with a brainstorming prompted by a picture of a pregnant youth. Afterwards the teacher explains that the following lessons will be concerned about teenage pregnancy and abortion.

One task will consist of a discussion in class (“arena dispute”): four groups will represent different points of view concerning teenage abortion.

A final task will make the students write their own statement about the topic. It will be marked and all the statements shall be brought together in a booklet.

## **1. Priming (Pre-Task)**

### **Brainstorming** (10 min)

The teacher presents a picture of a pregnant teen (*cf. transparency*). Students are to think of one word they associate with the picture. The teacher puts all the words down around the girl on the transparency. In class students discuss their ideas.

The outcome is a draft mind map which will be expanded later.

### **Ordering/Sorting/Allotting to given categories** (15 min)

The students are given ten statements on abortion. They have to look at the statements and give each one a mark from 1 to 4, according to the given scale (*cf. handout 1*). Afterwards they discuss their marking in groups of about four and decide on a group rating.

The outcome is a short dispute on points related to abortion which at this stage will not be discussed in plenum. It raises students’ awareness of the various possible points of view.

## 2. Tasks

### Task 1: “Arena Dispute” (65 min)

#### 2.1 Task (20 min)

Teacher forms four groups. The teacher assigns to each group a different point of view on abortion. The students are given several website links related to these attitudes. They are to browse/read through these websites and write down arguments supporting their position. This task is to be done individually.

- in favour of abortion from a teenage point of view:  
[http://www.pregnancy.com.au/my\\_story.htm](http://www.pregnancy.com.au/my_story.htm)
- pro-choice from the point of view of a politician:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/the\\_westminster\\_hour/6097228.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/the_westminster_hour/6097228.stm)  
includes a listening
- against abortion because of psychological difficulties:  
<http://www.teenbreaks.com/abortion/girlswhoaborted.cfm>  
and the following pages
- against abortion because of medical reasons:  
<http://www.teenbreaks.com/abortion/complicationsgirls.cfm>

#### 2.2 Planning (15 min)

In their groups, students collect and compare their arguments and prepare for the “arena dispute”. As a group they have to be able to defend their point (here regardless of their personal opinion).

#### 2.3 Report (30 min)

The teacher starts the “arena dispute” by asking the groups to present their positions. After this initial phase the discussion begins and as far as possible the students discuss the issue and the teacher only intervenes if there is a lull in conversation.

The outcome is a lively debate in favour and against abortion based on a thorough study of the authentic material listed above.

**Task 2: “YouTube Film”** (45 min)  
(alternatively or additionally to task 1)

2.1 Task (15 min)

The teacher provides the students with a link to a YouTube film (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOcRbrylq4M>, duration: 4 min). In pairs the students prepare a list of Karen’s and Rachel’s arguments in favour or against letting one’s parents know about their plans to abort. The outcome is a list of pros and cons of informing parents on one’s abortion plans.

2.2 Planning (5 min)

In pairs they discuss Rachel’s and Karen’s position and compare it to their own opinion.

2.3 Report (25 min)

In pairs students produce a short written comment/response of about five sentences to the YouTube film which they post on the website afterwards. As their homework the students read their classmates’ postings. The outcome consists of the students’ postings on youtube.com.

### 3. Focus on language

#### 3.1 Analysis (15 min)

The students are given a worksheet with category headings. Based on what they have been working on so far they fill in vocabulary items they have come across (*cf. handout 2*). Discussion and completion is to be done in class.

The outcome is a complete vocabulary mind map.

#### 3.2 Practice (30 min + homework)

The students read a newspaper article and fill in a corresponding vocabulary worksheet (*cf. handout 3*).

The students write a short essay (ca. 200 words) stating and justifying their opinion on the topic. The teacher collects and corrects their texts which students revise. Finally the teacher produces a booklet with the corrected texts to be handed out to the class.

The outcome is a booklet which is distributed to every student.

### 4. Optional activity

Go and watch the film “Juno” together at the cinema.

