

Pre-watching activity

Study the poster and answer the following questions:

- (a) Based on the poster, what do you think the film *Bend it like Beckham* will be about?
- (b) Do you think the **tagline** for the film is effective?
- (c) Would this film poster persuade you to watch the film *Bend it like Beckham*?

Sequence 1, exposition, 00.00.00-00.06.00

- (a) The **opening sequence** of a film usually introduces the main characters. Based on your viewing of the opening sequence of *Bend it like Beckham*, who do you think are the main characters in this film?
- (b) The **opening sequence** of a film usually reveals the setting of the film. Based on your viewing of the opening sequence of *Bend it like Beckham*, what information do we get about the time and the place in which this story is set?
- (c) The **opening sequence** of a film often contains clues about what the film will be about. Based on your viewing of the opening sequence of *Bend it like Beckham*, what do you think this film will be about?
- (d) The film opens with a **fantasy sequence** where Jess imagines herself scoring a goal for the football team Manchester United. Do you think this is an effective opening? Explain your answer.
- (e) Based on the opening sequence, what similarities can you identify between the characters Jess and Jules?

Sequence 2, Jess tries out for Hounslow Harriers and begins playing for the team, 00.06.01-00.19.30

How films tell stories: focus on the David Beckham poster as a narrative device.



versus



One of the advantages of reading a book over watching a film is that we often get a better insight into a character's innermost thoughts and feelings by reading a book, especially if the writer uses **first person narration**.

In a film it is more difficult to show what a character is thinking. Can you suggest any ways that a director can overcome this difficulty? List your suggestions here:

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Answer these questions in your copybook.

In sequence 2, we see Jess talking out loud to her poster of David Beckham.

- (a) What thoughts and feelings does she reveal when talking to the poster?
- (b) Do you think that the poster is a clever way of revealing Jess's inner thoughts?

- (a) In this sequence we meet the character Joe for the first time. Based on your first impression of him, what type of character do you think he is? Remember P-Q-E
- (b) Jess is reluctant to tell her parents that she has joined Hounslow Harriers. Why do you think this is?

Sequence 3, Jess comes into conflict with her parents, 00.19.31-00.26.06

- (a) Why do you think Jess's mum disapproves of her playing football? Give two reasons why and give evidence to support each reason.
- (b) Do you think Jess is right to continue training with Hounslow Harriers? Explain your answer.

How films tell stories: focus on the use of montage as a narrative device

A montage is a sequence of edited shots in a film that help to show the passing of time and develop the story. There is a montage at the end of this sequence that shows the daily life of Jess and Jules playing for Hounslow Rangers over a short period of time.

- (a) As the montage is shown the song 'Move on up' by Curtis Mayfield plays in the background. What type of atmosphere does the music help to create?
- (b) How does the viewer know that time is passing during this montage?
- (c) Do we get any information that helps to develop the plot? List examples.

Sequence 4, culture clash, 00.26.07-00.32.27

Viewing activity

In this sequence there are many references to the traditions and values of Indian culture. In the space below, make a list of the different aspects of Indian culture that we encounter in this sequence:

Example: Jess tells the girls in the changing room that Indian girls are not allowed to play football.

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- (a) Describe the relationship between Jess and her sister Binky. Is it a relationship of support or a relationship of conflict or a mixture of both? Explain your answer.
- (b) In this sequence Jess comes into conflict with the values and traditions of Indian culture. Make a list of her actions that bring her into conflict with her culture.

Sequence 5, relationships develop, 00.32.28-00.44.00

Focus on: Jules v. Jess

As the plot develops, Jules and Jess become close friends. Compare the personalities and lives of the two girls. What similarities do they have? What are the differences between them?

Similarities

Differences

- (a) Do you think that Jules is a good friend to Jess? Explain your answer.
- (b) Based on watching this sequence, do you see any potential for conflict in the relationship between Jules and Jess?
- (c) Describe the misunderstanding over the incident at the bus stop. What insights does it give you into Indian culture and values?
- (d) Why do you think Joe came to visit Jess's parents? Does he genuinely care for Jess or is he just interested in having the best players on his team?
- (e) What kind of racist prejudice did Jess's dad experience when he moved to England?

Sequence 6, trip to Hamburg, 00.43.20-00.50.05

How films tell stories: focus on the use of camera angles

At the beginning of this sequence there is a montage showing the highlights of the girls' trip to Hamburg (before the dramatic events in the nightclub!). The montage slows down to show a penalty shoot out at the end of the football game.

The director makes clever use of camera angles to create tension and drama in this scene. Watch the clip containing the penalty shoot out. Write down the different camera angles you see (e.g. close up, wide angle). Describe what you see in each shot.

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How does the use of these camera angles add to the drama/tension in the scene?

(a) Do you think Jess was right to go on the Hamburg trip without telling her parents?

I don't think Jess was right to go on the trip...Even though her parents are strict on soccer and other things; I think it's only because they care for her and don't want her to get hurt. They moved to England so Jess could have a good life; they did it for her. I think Jess was selfish here and I have sympathy for her parents.

(b) In the nightclub scene, how does the director clearly show the love triangle that has developed between Joe, Jess and Jules?

(c) Why do you think a bond has developed between Joe and Jess?

(d) Is Jules right to feel betrayed by Jess when she sees her with Joe outside the nightclub?

Sequence 7, family bonds, 00.50.05-00.54.59

(a) Do you feel sympathy for Jess's parents at this point in the story? Explain your answer.

(b) Binky advises Jess to marry an Indian man and avoid becoming attached to men outside her own culture. Do you think this is good advice? Why/why not?

(c) In what way is Joe's relationship with his dad similar to Jess's relationship with her parents?

Sequence 8, coming out, 00.55.00-01.00.14

How films tell stories: focus on genre

Bend it like Beckham belongs to the genre of comedy-drama. There are many funny moments throughout the film. The character of Jules's mum in particular creates a lot of humour in the film.

Before you watch this sequence, create a list of some of Jules's mum's funny moments so far in the film:

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Watch the scene where Jess comes to Jules's house. Explain how the character of Jules's mum creates humour in this otherwise tense scene.

Sequence 9, discrimination on the pitch, 01.00.16-01.07.48

Focus on: theme of prejudice/discrimination

There are many examples of **prejudice and discrimination** throughout *Bend it like Beckham*. What are the different types of prejudice/discrimination that we encounter in the film?

List any examples you find as you watch this sequence of the film.

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- (a) In this sequence we witness some development in the relationship between Jess and her father. How would you describe the relationship between Jess and her father up to this point in the film? Do you think Jess's father understands his daughter better as a result of what happens in this sequence? Explain your answer.

- (b) The sequence ends with a dilemma for Jess: her sister's wedding is to be held on the same day as the football final. In your opinion, should Jess prioritise her sister's wedding or the upcoming football match?

Sequence 10, Jules's conflicts, 01.07.49-01.11.37

Focus on: Jules's conflicts

Throughout the film so far, Jules's hot-tempered nature has brought her into conflict with many characters. Can you think of any characters she has been in conflict with?

List three conflicts Jules has that occur during this sequence and state what the conflict is about:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Which of the conflicts seems the most intense at this point in the film?

Which of the conflicts seems the least likely to be resolved?

Which conflict seems the most likely to be resolved?

- (a) **Character sketch:** Write a description of the character of Jules. Identify at least three characteristics to describe her and use examples from the film to support your points.

Sequence 11, Jess's dilemma, 01.11.37-01.19.15

How films tell stories: intersplicing/ intercutting

This sequence makes use of the technique of **inter splicing or intercutting**, where different scenes are interwoven throughout the same sequence. In this sequence we see scenes of preparation for and celebration of Binky's wedding intercut with scenes of British suburbia and a football match.

As you watch this sequence, write down examples of Indian culture and traditions that you observe:

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Explain how the technique of **intersplicing/intercutting** helps to show **contrast** in this sequence.

- (a) Jess is presented with a number of dilemmas in this sequence. List the dilemmas that she faces.
- (b) How does the technique of intersplicing help to highlight Jess's dilemmas in this sequence?
- (c) How does the director create a positive image of Indian tradition and culture in this sequence?

ACTIVITY: Write a diary entry for Jess in which she discusses her feelings and emotions about the dilemmas she faces in this sequence.

Sequence 12, climax, 01.19.16-01.26.28

How films tell stories: the climax

In this sequence, the plot reaches its climax with Binky's wedding and the cup final being played out simultaneously. The climax of any plotline contains the height of the action and is likely to be filled with drama and tension.

The director makes use of a number of techniques of film-making to add to the drama and tension of this sequence. As you watch this sequence, write down examples of the techniques of film-making utilised by the director:

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- (a) Jess receives support from Tony and her father in this sequence. Are you surprised by how these male figures are so willing to support her? Explain your answer.
- (b) Jess shows some **character development** in this sequence. How do you think she shows that she has grown as a person in this sequence?
- (c) Tensions ease between Jess and Jules in this sequence. How does the director show that the conflict between them is moving towards resolution?

Sequence 13, family tensions, 01.26.29-01.31.58

- (a) Throughout the film, Jules and Jess have many shared experiences in their family and person lives. Based on the events of this sequence, what do Jules and Jess have in common with one another? Where do their experiences differ?
- (b) This scene contains many moments of tension, particularly Jules's mum's confrontation with Jess. How does the director help to lighten the mood during this sequence?

Sequence 14, conflict resolution, 01.31.59-01.35.38

Focus on: Tony

Tony is a minor character in the film *Bend it like Beckham* but he still plays a significant role in Jess's life. Think about the ways in which Tony's life experience is similar to that of Jess. Make a list of the similarities that exist in their lives.

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Having watched this sequence, what do you think of Tony's attempt to help Jess fulfil her career in football? What does this tell you about his character? What are the other ways in which Tony has been a support to Jess throughout this film?

- (a) In this sequence, the main conflict in the plot between Jess and her parents is resolved. Explain the following:
- the conflict that exists between Jess and her parents
 - what change occurs to resolve the conflict
 - do you think the resolution of the conflict will be a lasting one?

Sequence 15, Resolution, 01.35.39-01.41.51

How films tell stories: the ending

In this sequence, the plot reaches its final resolution. The resolution of a plot should tie up any loose ends in the plot line and leave the reader with a sense of a positive or negative ending.

As you view this sequence, write down the techniques or events that clearly indicate that this sequence contains the resolution of the plot:

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- (a) How is the plot line of the relationship between Joe and Jess resolved in this sequence?
- (b) How does the resolution of the relationship between Joe and Jess show development in the character of Jess?
- (c) Do you think that Joe and Jess's relationship has the potential to work out in the long term?