

MUSIC TO MY EYES



1. List **three** words that best describe music videos.

2. How often do you watch music videos?
 - ☐ Every day
 - ☐ Three or four times a week
 - ☐ Once or twice a week
 - ☐ Once in a while
 - ☐ Never

3. How do you decide if a particular music video is **appropriate** or **inappropriate**?

4. Name a popular music video that you've seen and how it would rate on a scale of **1-10** (1 being **totally appropriate** and 10 being **that was the epitome of filth**).

5. How would you respond to the following—**A** (always), **S** (sometimes), or **N** (never)?
 - ___ Music videos don't make much sense to me.
 - ___ Teenagers don't take videos as seriously as parents.
 - ___ Music videos have nothing to do with the song.
 - ___ Music videos exploit women.
 - ___ Parents should watch videos to better understand teenagers.
 - ___ Music videos are too violent.
 - ___ Music videos are fun to watch.
 - ___ Watching music videos affects my values.

6. Check out one of the following Bible verses, and summarize it in your own words.
 - Galatians 5:13
 - Ephesians 5:15-17
 - Philippians 4:8
 - Colossians 2:8

MUSIC TO MY EYES [m u s i c v i d e o s]

THIS WEEK

Teenagers today see music videos almost everywhere—on TV stations (like VH1, MTV, CMT, etc.), in advertisements, in movies, and on the Internet. There's no doubt that music videos are a huge part of today's visual, interactive culture.

With all these changing factors, it's important to talk about what videos your kids watch, how they are influenced by them, and how they can make decisions about them in the future.

OPEN

You could do several different things to open this discussion—

- Videotape or rent some music videos. Check out TV stations like MTV, VH1 (pop & more), or CMT (country). Be sure to preview the entire tape and all videos before you show them to your group.
- Videotape some commercials from TV that have music videos in them. Most music TV stations will have them, as well as prime time sitcom stations. Show them to your group. Did they like the video ad or not? What did the music video have to do with the advertisement?
- Download some videos from the Internet (www.mp3.com). These usually aren't as clear as the TV, but they show how accessible music videos are on the Internet!

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Ask the kids to share their choices. Make a list of their descriptions for all to see, dividing them into two columns—positive and negative.
2. Ask for a show of hands to find out who watches music videos the most and the one who watches the least. Do they watch them on TV, computer CD-ROM, or on the Internet?
3. Discuss their ideas and reach a group consensus. You might want to ask why it's important to be discerning about what they watch.
4. Today's teens have grown up with music videos. Don't assume that they understand why some of the choreography, imagery, or lyrics of some popular videos are wrong or harmful. You may have some explaining to do as various videos are discussed.

It may be helpful for you to watch a video count down show the week of the discussion. These songs will most likely be brought up and your kids will respect your opinions more if you are familiar with what they are watching.

5. Have the kids take a stand corresponding to their votes and share their opinions. Remember to listen carefully to their opinions, without attacking those that may be questionable.
6. You may want to assign the passages to paraphrase and read to the others. How do these verses apply to music videos?

THE CLOSE

Music videos are seen everywhere and are easily accessible. Close by discussing the impact that the music has when your kids can see it and listen to it at the same time.

Your kids must make wise decisions about which videos to watch. Communicate that they have choices about what they put in their minds and bodies. It's important to make the best use of valuable time. Do your kids think watching videos is a good use of time?

Finally, music videos interpret the songs for us—is this good or bad? Does this limit your kids' imagination by controlling their own private interpretation of a song? Do your kids think about a song differently after watching a video? How does it change the meaning for them?

MORE

- There's a fine line between mainstream and Christian bands today. Some Christians bands have crossed over to mainstream (Sixpence None the Richer and Jars of Clay). Some are mainstream bands that write songs that reflect Christian values (sometimes not intentionally) or reference to God. Other bands have Christian members in them, regardless of their music.

Discuss with your kids about what they think classifies a Christian band. What do they think about Christians in mainstream bands? What about those artists that cross over into mainstream music?

Check out *Plugged In* magazine www.family.org/pplace/pi/ (Focus on the Family) or check out www.YouthSpecialties.com for information and links to find discussion topics and latest news on teen culture and Christian music.

- Play a song for your group to listen to. Ask them to write down what they think about the song. What is going on in the song? What do they think the song is about? What pictures can they see in their head? Then show them the video. How does watching the video change their interpretation of the song? How did "seeing" the music change the song?