



MUSIC TO MY EYES

1. Circle the words below that describe music videos.

exciting

weird

uplifting

non-Christian

boring

funny

depressing

crazy

sexy

scary

sick

helpful

violent

dumb

artistic

surprising

confusing

interesting

dangerous

dishonest

2. How often do you watch music videos?

Every day

Once or twice a week

Three or four times a week

Never

3. Name one of your favorite music videos. Why do you like it?

4. What do you think of the following statements? Answer R (right on), S (sometimes) or N (no way).

Music videos don't make much sense to me. _____

Music videos don't have anything to do with the song. _____

Teenagers don't interpret music videos the same way parents do. _____

Music videos are fun to watch. _____

There's too much sex and violence in music videos. _____

I would like to be in a music video. _____

It's better to listen to music than to watch it. _____

5. What does God say about music videos? Check out **Colossians 2:8** and write down what you think it says.

MUSIC TO MY EYES [music videos]

THIS WEEK

The changes in music and technology, especially in the past 20 years or so, have changed the ways that youth today view and listen to music.

Teenagers today see music videos almost everywhere—on TV stations (like VH1, MTV, CMT), in advertisements, in movies, and on the Internet. Kids can download music video clips from nearly any music Internet homepage.

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.

OPENER

Videotape or rent some music videos. Check out TV stations like MTV, VH1 (pop), or CMT (country). Be sure to preview the entire tape and all videos before you show them to your group. Or 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?

THE DISCUSSION, BY THE NUMBERS

1. Why did they pick the words they did? Ask your kids to explain why they chose them—you'll probably get a variety of answers. Are there more words to describe music videos that aren't on the list?
2. Ask for a show of hands to find out who watches music videos the most and who watches the least. You may find that some don't watch them at all. Then ask them where they watch them the most—on TV? the Internet? On their computers via CD?
3. Ask your kids to give the names of their favorite videos and keep track of them on a whiteboard or poster board. Then ask why they like the videos. Do they like the style of music? Are the graphics catchy? Does the video tell a story? What makes a music video questionable? Point out that your kids are impacted much more by what they see than what they hear.
4. You may want to group the kids together based on their answers. What are their specific reasons for their choices? Ask them to share examples of specific videos that they have in mind. How does listening to the music differ from watching it? What do they like better?

5. Ask for volunteers to share their answers. What does the verse say to them? How do they view music videos in light of this verse?

THE CLOSE

Music videos are seen everywhere and are easily accessible. There's a difference between hearing and seeing the music. How does "seeing" the music change the way they understand the music?

Communicate with your kids that they have choices about what they put in their minds and bodies. Videos aren't necessarily bad, but they often don't reflect Christian values.

It's important to make the best use of time. Time is valuable. Are your students making the best use of the time that God has given them? Do your kids consider watching videos a good use of time?

MORE

- Choose a song that has an accompanying video. In the group, play just the song for your kids 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? What was different from what they thought? Was their perception accurate or not? How did "seeing" the music change the song?
- Watch thirty minutes of videos with your group. Then rate them—by stars or a scale of 1-10—according to a list you've put together with them. Do they support or tear down Christian values? What values are being promoted, glamorized or exploited? Is sex, violence, drug use, or negative behaviors shown in the video? Decide what videos rated the highest and why. Which ones didn't rate well?
- There's a fine line between mainstream and Christian musical groups today. Some groups (such as Sixpence None the Richer and Jars of Clay) have crossed over to mainstream. Some mainstream groups write songs that reflect Christian values (sometimes not intentionally) or refer to God. Other groups have Christians in them, regardless of their music.

With this in mind, discuss with your kids what they think classifies a Christian band. What bands do they listen to that are Christian? What do they think about Christians in mainstream bands, or those bands that crossover to mainstream music?