

# Guard Your Playlist

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Moral Issues for Teens · Media & Technology · game  
**Clean or Polluted?** · built on **Philippians 4:8, Proverbs 4:23, and Romans 12:2**

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Your students swim in sound. Earbuds at breakfast, playlists in the car, beats under homework, and lyrics looping in their heads at bedtime. Music is not the enemy — Genesis 4:21 names Jubal as father of all who play the lyre and pipe. God gave the gift. The question is stewardship: what goes into the ears goes into the heart, and what fills the heart comes out in the life. This session is not anti-music. It is pro-discernment: turn off mind pollution, learn to love clean songs, and expose the works of darkness instead of entertaining them.

## Before you teach anything, pray.

Some students defend every song they love; some already feel guilty and will shut down if you only preach bans. Ask the Spirit for clarity without contempt — wisdom that leads to filters, not a shame spiral. You are teaching discernment, not confiscating every speaker.

## The heart of the lesson

Music is powerful. It inspires, motivates, controls moods, catches attention, and calls to action. The brain responds to melody and rhythm; words ride that wave straight into memory. That is why warnings about popular music are not only about four-letter words (Ephesians 4:29) — it is also about messages that glorify sin: drinking, drugs, sexual immorality, violence, rebellion, disrespect for authority, suicide, occult themes, and more (Mark 7:20–23; Galatians 5:19–21; Ephesians 5:3–5). Songs with ungodly messages have no place in a Christian playlist—whether the style is old or new.

*What goes in your ears trains your heart — guard your playlist.*

Symptoms in a 12–14 life: singing along to filth without thinking, mood matching angry or hopeless lyrics, defending "it's just music" while attitudes shift, playlists that celebrate lust or rage, and no room left for worship because the feed never stops. Proverbs 4:23 commands guard your heart above all else. Philippians 4:8 sets the filter — true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable.

Romans 12:2 refuses the world's mold. First John 2:15–17 warns against loving the world; Ephesians 5:11 commands exposing works of darkness, not entertaining them.

## *Would you invite Jesus to press play on this track?*

### PROVERBS 4:23

"**Keep your heart with all vigilance**, for from it flow the springs of life."

### PHILIPPIANS 4:8

"Finally, brothers, **whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable...** think about these things."

## How the session flows

- 1 Name the power.** Music as God's gift and brain influence. ~8 min
- 2 Teach clean vs. polluted.** Lyrics, messages, heart, worldliness. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** "Clean or Polluted?" on screen. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** In class or take-home practice. ~15 min
- 6 Close with action.** Prayer and one playlist change for the week. ~8 min

Screen for the game, printed cards and worksheets, pens. You do not need to list every artist by name — teach filters students can apply to any genre or platform.

## Leading it, part by part

### Name the power

Ask: what song has been stuck in your head this week? How did it make you feel — pumped, sad, angry, numb? Let them answer without turning it into a public playlist audit. Land this: music is a gift from God (Gen. 4:21) and a tool that shapes the mind. Be honest that beats and hooks are designed to stick. That is not paranoia — it is stewardship.

### Teach clean vs. polluted

Walk through five filters from Scripture. **Gift, not guilt:** music itself is not bad; enjoy songs that do not promote sin. **Power of words:** Ephesians 4:29 — no corrupting talk; lyrics train attitudes.

**Messages, not just curses:** Mark 7:20–23 — sin we entertain slowly becomes sin we normalize; rebellion, lust, violence, and occult themes pollute even without swearing. **Heart guard:** Proverbs 4:23; Philippians 4:8 — what enters the ears enters the heart. **Worldliness:** Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15–17; Ephesians 5:11 — do not love the world's soundtrack; expose darkness, turn it off, learn to like clean music.

Teach hope: worship, hymns, gospel, classical, and wholesome secular songs can bless. Encourage students to build playlists that honor God, skip what fails Phil. 4:8, and help friends choose better — not with smug lectures, but with courage and kindness.

### Play the game

Run "Clean or Polluted?" twelve to fifteen minutes. Round 1 sorts listening habits; Round 2 anchors Bible principles; Round 3 tackles earbuds, peer pressure, and worship pushed aside; Round 4 drills key verses. Bridge afterward: points are fun; a guarded heart is the win.

### Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Promise plainly that nobody is collecting it. Give five quiet minutes for students to name one song, artist, or playlist habit they would change if Jesus heard their library — without saying it aloud to the room. Protect the silence.

### Worksheet

Reinforce Philippians 4:8, Proverbs 4:23, and Romans 12:2; T/F on lyrics and worldliness; one playlist boundary for the week. Pairs or homework both work.

### Close with action

Invite each student to delete or skip one polluted track and add one clean song that points toward God. Pray for students whose playlists feel owned by rage, lust, or despair. Offer leaders for students who want help rebuilding what they listen to.

## Take it further

- According to Genesis 4:21, is music itself bad? What does that teach about God's gift?
- How does music influence thoughts, moods, and actions?
- What does Ephesians 4:29 warn about the words we listen to?
- Why is it dangerous to entertain music that glorifies sin? (Mark 7:20–23)
- What sinful behaviors are often promoted in popular music?
- What does Proverbs 4:23 say about guarding the heart — and how does that apply to playlists?
- How does Philippians 4:8 guide music choices?
- Why should Christians avoid loving the world's music? (Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15–17)
- What does Ephesians 5:11 command regarding works of darkness?
- How can you encourage others to choose music that honors God?

## A final word

Teens need better soundtracks than the world sells. Give them permission to love music and courage to turn off what pollutes. The goal is not silence — it is a heart that sings truth. When they learn clean vs. polluted, they can still enjoy beats — but the playlist won't rewrite their soul.