

Downloading Music

LESSON GOALS: Help students understand the virtues of integrity and respecting others' property; see the connection between copyright protection and creativity; understand the civil justice system's role in deterring illegal activities. Read the introductory narrative, and then discuss the questions below.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the reasons so many people are downloading music without paying?
2. What is the purpose of copyright law?
3. Do you agree with the decision of the recording industry to sue downloader's?
4. If we didn't have copyright laws and artists and recording companies weren't assured that they would be paid for their work, do you think artists would strive to create as much music?
5. Do you agree that downloading copyrighted music without paying for it is ethically the same as stealing a pair of shoes from a sports store? How do you define stealing?
6. Do you think downloading copyrighted music lessens our integrity? How do you define integrity?
7. If the recording industry had been responsive to consumers by developing an inexpensive downloading service, do you think most people would have used the legal service—or would they still download illegally for free?

WRITING OPTIONS: Should people proven to have violated copyright laws through music piracy be held responsible for their actions by being convicted and punished? Why or why not? Given what we have discussed in this lesson, has your view on illegal downloading changed? Explain.

EXTENSION PROJECTS

1. Conduct a survey of parents asking: "Is illegal downloading of music stealing?"
2. Should parents be held responsible for the illegal downloading activities of their children?
3. Organize a class trip to your local music store. Ask, "What effect does music downloading have on your sales?"
4. Have the class research getting something copyrighted: www.copyright.gov/
5. Investigate the landmark Supreme Court decision in which freelance authors wanted compensation for works they had previously written which were being offered in a new form on the Internet.

LINKS

How File Sharing Works - <http://computer.howstuffworks.com/file-sharing.htm>

Future of Music Coalition www.futureofmusic.org/

University crack down - http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2006/oct/14/universities_crack_down_illegal_downloads/

Legal websites - <http://www.educause.edu/legalcontent>

Adapted from:

CHAPTER 5: Fostering the 8 Strengths of Character—Outcome 1

<http://www.livingwisdomschool.org/howtoapply/qs-pars-ask/research/Smart%20&%20Good%20High%20Schools.pdf>

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