

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Learning About Our World” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for July 12, 2020. The lesson is found on page 37 of *Young Teen Teacher* by 21st Century Christian.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Years ago, it was the ice bucket challenge. And there were flash mob, bottle-flipping, ten-year, mannequin, Kiki (and other TikTok dances), cinnamon, levelup, glowup, fliptheswitch, and trick shot challenges, among thousands of others. In each of these social media challenges, one person demonstrates some action or behavior or look, and then challenges others to do their own version. It’s thought of as a fun way to interact with friends (or strangers) and to somehow create a sense of togetherness, even where no actual togetherness might exist.

We get such a flood of communications coming our way these days via TV, email, YouTube, Twitter, TikTok (although that one may be going away soon!) and other outlets, it’s hard to filter out what’s important to pay attention to and what isn’t. How do you decide what to participate in and what not? Does participating in these challenges somehow connect you with other humans? Does it show your individuality, or does it just make you a copycat? Does it spark creativity and originality, or does it just satisfy a need to do something popular and blend in?

Romans 12:2 tells us to not be conformed “to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (NIV). How could you possibly use social media challenges to be transformed or to transform others? What will you do this week to renew your mind (and not just refresh your profile)?

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

What are some challenges you’ve heard of that stand out to you? Why do those stand out?

What are some stories (about sports, celebrities, music, politics, etc.) that you follow regularly to see what is going on or what developments have happened? Why do you follow those stories?

Do you think it’s important for Christians to know about what’s going on in popular culture? Why or why not? Are there areas of social media that you consider more legitimate or beneficial than others? How do you make that distinction?

One of the best examples of a Christian who was also well informed about the world and its popular trends was the apostle Paul. When he was in Athens, Paul’s understanding of his world benefited him in three ways. Let’s look at those three ways.

NOTE: The Scene is going away! The last installment of The Scene will come out at the end of August this year. However, we are excited to bring a new youth curriculum to you, which will offer more opportunities to learn about God and our world together. Find out more about this new curriculum from your Encounter supplier.



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