

AP  
Kahn  
SMC  
Summer 2009

**Specific Goal:** To explain to the audience how music reflect a person's personality.

**Thesis:** Today I will discuss how music choice mirrors the human personality in adolescence, interpersonal relationships and the ways people use it..

- I. When you look at your friends MP3 player, do you think about how the music they download reflects them as a person or even relates to you?
- II. Often, the music a person listens to reflects a person's personality
- III. Because I plan to go back to school for music after I graduate, I find a great interest in how the music I listen to describes me.
- IV. Today I will discuss how music choice mirrors the human personality in adolescence, interpersonal relationships and in the ways people use it.

**Transition:** First let's begin by discussing how music reflects the emotions of the most unpredictable class of human: the teenager.

**Body:**

- I. Music is an important part of a adolescence's life.
  - A. During these developmental years, the music a teenager listens to can say a lot about how they are handling their transition into adulthood
    - 1) According to *Music Preferences, Personality, Style and Developmental Issues of Adolescence* by Kelly Schwartz from *The Journal of Youth Ministry* 2004, teens who have a preference for "heavy" music such as classic rock, hard rock, or heavy metal often feel the need to express "hyper-individualism...and an escape from unwanted moods or feelings" (p41)
    - 2) The same source states, adolescence who listen to "light music" such as pop, dance, and emotional music express greater trust in their peers and freedom from colleague pressures but experience issues with bodily development and self-esteem (p48)
    - 3) Finally, she explains that those with eclectic tastes fall in the middle and listen to music according to their mood and circumstances. (pgs 49-50)
  - B. Teens also shape their personal social relationships by using music.
    - 1) *Adolescence Music Preferences and Personality* states that those who have a "desire for variety, intellectual stimulation, and aesthetic experiences" prefer a more obscure type of music. (IBID)
    - 2) Another example from *Adolescence Music Preferences and personality* states that an extrovert will prefer something which leads to a higher mental arousal level than introverts who prefer something less stimulating.

**Transition:** I have discussed how music can say a lot about a developing teenager and now I will discuss what music says about the populous in general.

- II.** The music we listen to can often help us shape our interpersonal relationships.
  - A.** More often than not, we use the subject of music as an icebreaker when meeting new people.
    - 1)** As you can see from this graph from *Message in a Ballad* from *Psychological Science* by Peter Rentfrow and Samuel Gosling, 2005, nearly 60% of participants spoke about music as a main subject upon meeting other people as opposed to other subjects such as movies and books. (p238)
    - 2)** According to the same source, music serves as a way for people to more fully understand one another's personality. (p241) (IBID)
  - B.** People deliberately use music as a deciding factor in a person they are forging a relationship with.
    - 1)** According to *Message in a Ballad*, people naturally make assumptions about who a person is by the music they listen to. (IBID)
    - 2)** A second study showed that people were nearly accurate with assessing someone's openness, value of imagination and world view simply by listening to their top 10 songs. (IBID)

**Transition:** I have explained how people use music in interpersonal relationships and now I'm going to explain how they use music for themselves.

- III.** Depending on personality, people use different types of music in different ways.
  - A.** A more intellectual person uses music more for stimulation rather than emotion.
    - 1)** A study featured in an article from *The British Journal of Psychology* entitled: *Personality and Music* (pgs 1-2) By Adrian Furnham found that a more intellectual person focuses on structure and composition.
    - 2)** The study showed that these individuals are more open to new experiences (IBID)
  - B.** An Introverted person is more likely to experience music for emotional reasons.
    - 1)** According to *Personality and Music*, this kind of person would be more likely to listen to music to regulate emotions. (IBID)
    - 2)** The study shows that these people tend to be more emotionally unstable than the extroverted person. (IBID)

**Conclusion:**

- I.** Today I have discussed with you the role of music in the lives of adolescence, interpersonal relationships and the ways people use it.

- II.** Music may be a way for people to find out about others they are interacting with.
- III.** For others, it is a way to express emotions such as happiness or frustration.
- IV.** As music major I personally find it fascinating.
- V.** So, next time you pick up your friend's iPod, don't hesitate to think about how music mirrors their personality.

## References

- Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Furnham, A. (2007, May). Personality and music: Can traits explain how people use music in everyday life? *British Journal of Psychology*, 98(2), 175-185. [Retrieved July 20, 2009] from Academic Search Premier data base.
- Rentfrow, P., & Gosling, S. (2006, March). Message in a Ballad. *Psychological Science*, 17(3), 236-242. [Retrieved July 20, 2009] from Academic Search Premier data base.
- Schwartz, K. (2004, Fall2004). Music preferences, personality style, and developmental issues of adolescents. *Journal of Youth Ministry*, 3(1), 47-64. [Retrieved July 20, 2009] from Academic Search Premier database.