

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Seeing the Heart” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for January 8, 2017. The lesson is found on page 37 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



She looked beautiful. There’s no doubt about that. Especially for a woman heading to age 50, she looked pretty amazing. She needed more clothes on, for sure, but she looked fantastic.

The problem wasn’t how she looked in this case, but it was how she performed. Let’s all take just a moment to have a bit of sympathy for Mariah Carey, shall we? I mean, are we allowed to have sympathy for a woman who’s made millions of dollars by selling millions of records in her pop singing career that now spans three decades? Let’s just say that we are. Poor Mariah suffered technical difficulties in her performance on one of the most popular showcases of musical talent on television, *Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve in Times Square*, ending up basically giving up on singing and apologizing to the crowd, who seemed somewhat oblivious to her struggles (no doubt having their critical faculties somewhat impaired by the typical indulgences that occur in Times Square at that time of year).

The event was deemed a “performance train wreck” by the *New York Times*, and even several days later people were still talking about—or rather, slamming—the singer’s actions and her subsequent Twitter comments on the subject. For others, this just seemed a fitting end to a strange and somewhat distressing year.

Certainly, no one can question Mariah’s talent, with her five-octave range and her history of successful songs. But for this one moment, unfortunately displayed for all to see, she didn’t quite hit the right note.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:

Imagine you had been in Mariah’s high-heeled, glittery shoes that night. What would you have done?

Some people are beautiful simply because of the way they look on the outside. What are some other qualities that you consider to be beautiful in a person? Have you ever known a person who was physically beautiful, but not attractive because of their character flaws?

Why is it important not to judge someone based on how they look? What can you learn about a person through how they act when things go wrong?

It’s true that the world we live in often measures people by what they look like on the outside. But we’re going to see today that God cares about what people look like on the inside.