

A Discussion Guide

based on

SEXY GIRLS

How Hot Is Too Hot?

BY
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INTRODUCTION

Let's get real. Every girl wants to look good. What's more, every girl wants the attention of that cute guy she's had her eye on. For many girls, looking sexy is the key to getting that attention. And herein lies the problem. What a teen girl wears says a lot about who she is. But does she know that? Does she stop to think that she's advertising with every outfit she puts on? Take a look at the girls in your youth group and in your church. Do they know what they are *really* saying about themselves? Wish you could talk to them honestly and openly about the message they are sending to the opposite sex?

The *Sexy Girls* discussion guide can help. It offers four complete sessions that coordinate with specific chapters from my book *Sexy Girls: How Hot is Too Hot?* Through activities and questions, we'll take a look at this thing called "modesty". We'll find out why God cares about what's in a girl's closet. We'll learn to make good decisions on style. And by the time we're done, your girls will have learned to understand their bodies and how guys look at them (and they are looking!)

Please note: *Sexy Girls* was written by a girl, for the girls, about a girl issue. As such, I highly recommend that this study be led by a girl instead of a guy. If you are a male youth director or pastor who thinks this study would benefit your group, I suggest that you ask a trusted adult woman to lead the group instead of yourself. I also recommend that you use this guide over a four-week period, tackling one session each week. That gives you plenty of time to prepare and gives your girls plenty of time to read. And please feel free to use these activities and questions to sculpt your own discussion. You may find that students come with enough questions to fuel an hour's worth of conversation. Or you may need to rely on the questions provided here to keep the discussion rolling. How you want to use these questions is up to you. Just remember: the goal is to generate a healthy discussion about modesty—not to simply "get through the list of questions provided."

It's almost time to get started. But first, here are some helpful hints about using this guide in a group setting.

BEFORE YOU START

At its heart, *Sexy Girls* challenges women to dress in a way that's attractive, but also sexually pure. That's a huge challenge—not just for teens, but for adult women as well. If you're the adult leading this study, you've just taken on more than the role as discussion leader: you've just become a role model in this area of appropriate dressing too.

So before you start the study, we highly recommend that you read through the book and take an honest appraisal of your own clothing style. Keep in mind the standard of Ephesians 5:3—that there should not be even a *hint* of sexual immorality in the way you dress. Does your wardrobe live up to this standard or do you have some clothing that God would consider inappropriate?

Don't be ashamed or frustrated if you find that some inappropriate clothing has made its way into your closet. Just be faithful to God's calling and make the necessary changes to portray an appropriate style. Yes, it's painful to make changes to your image, but the girls in your study group won't rise to the challenge of modesty if you aren't willing to do it yourself. So be open and honest with your study group about the changes you've made and why. Seeing you rise to God's standards may be just the inspiration they need to do the same!

GROUP RULES

Remind your girls that this study group is a place where people are to be valued and respected. We suggest that you share these simple group rules with everyone before you begin.

- » Practice confidentiality. What's said in the group stays in the group.
- » Respect other people's views, even when they are different than your own.
- » Listen. Listen. Listen. Don't be the one who does all the talking. Let others have a chance to share their views as well.
- » Don't interrupt. Wait your turn to talk.

TIPS FOR LEADING A DISCUSSION

Here are a few ideas to help you keep your discussions rolling in a meaningful way:

- » Prepare. Make sure you've read through the book chapters for each session. As you prepare for the sessions, consider one or two personal anecdotes you may be able to share during the group's discussion.
- » Be yourself. Thank students for sharing their thoughts and opinions, but don't feel that you need to agree with every one. Be honest with your students about the lessons you've learned in your own experiences—even if they may not be what your students want to hear!
- » Encourage students to go deeper. When someone gives a simple response, ask them follow-up questions such as "Why do you feel that way?" "What do you mean by that?" "Tell us more."
- » Allow for silence. Remember your students haven't read the questions ahead of time and they may need some time to process a response. Allow for about seven to ten seconds of silence before saying anything further, even when it makes you feel uncomfortable. If necessary, you can reword the question or move on to another topic.

Introduction

- » Include everyone in the discussion. If it seems like the same two or three students are responding to all of your questions, look for ways to bring others into the conversation. Some students may need a little encouragement to share their thoughts and opinions. Invite them to talk by saying something like “Lisa, I’m curious what you think about this too,” or “Sara, I’d love to hear what you have to say about that.” Be sensitive to their feelings, though. If the student has nothing to say or looks extremely uncomfortable, give them an out by moving on to someone else.
- » Be a good listener. The goal is to have a true discussion, not just a “talk” by the group leader. Avoid putting words in the students’ mouths or overreacting to comments that you may not agree with. Try asking “mirror” questions that challenge students to clarify or affirm what you’ve heard. For example, say “What I hear you saying is this. Is that what you mean?” or “So what you seem to be saying is this. Would you agree?”
- » Bring God into it. Pray for the students before and after each session. Ask God to direct your discussion and be open to the Spirit’s leading. It may be that he takes you in an unexpected direction, so don’t get too hung up on “the plan.” If students are genuinely interested and engaged in a healthy side topic, let the conversation go, saying a silent prayer for God to be working on their hearts as you go.

SESSION ONE

YOUR ACCIDENTAL IMAGE

OPENING ACTIVITY: CELEBRITY WATCH

Supplies Needed: several celebrity news magazines (People, Entertainment Weekly, etc.) scissors, glue sticks, paper, pens

Divide your girls into groups of three or four and give each group a couple of magazines, a scissors, glue stick, pen, and some paper.

Tell each group to look through their magazines and cut out pictures of popular female celebrities. Once they've created a pile of pictures, have them pick 5–6 celebrities they think are the most popular with teens. They should glue those pictures to a piece of paper and then do an analysis of what the celebrity is wearing. Tell them to rate this celebrity on the following "Sexy Scale" and write the corresponding number next to the picture:

- 1 = Very Sexy Girl: likes to be risqué, pushes the envelope sexually
- 2 = Sexy Girl: dresses in a sexually suggestive way
- 3 = "Innocent" Sexy Girl: tries to portray a "good girl" image, with a hint of sexuality beneath the surface
- 4 = Girl Next Door: dresses attractively, but not in a way to attract attention to herself sexually
- 5 = Anti-Sexy Girl: dresses in sloppy, careless, clothing that disguises her femininity

After about ten minutes, gather the groups together and have them share their results. Ask the following questions as groups take turns sharing their results:

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » Do any of the celebrities you picked tend to dress differently than the way they were portrayed in your photo? If so, what number on the "Sexy Scale" would you give them for the way they *usually* dress?

- » Based on your results, would you say that most female celebrities today portray a sexy image or something else? Why do you think they choose to portray the image they do?
- » Do you think it's ok to dress sexy? Why or why not?
- » On the 1–5 scale we used, where would you say most of the girls in your school dress? Give some specific examples of clothing that would fit into each category.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 9–57.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTERS 1–3

1. Do you think most high school girls portray an image that is consistent with who they really are? Why or why not?
 - » What kinds of things affect a girl's image in a positive way? What things affect it in a negative way?
2. Discuss this quote from p. 33: "Guys are visual creatures. They are turned on by what they see."
 - » Can you think of any examples of how guys tend to be more visual than girls?
 - » If it's true that guys are turned on by what they see, then how do you think current fashion trends impact them?
 - » How does it make you feel to know that guys of *all* ages notice what girls wear, not just the teen guys?
3. What does God have to say about a person who leads someone into temptation? (Check out p. 34 if you're not sure.)
 - » Who should have more responsibility? The guys—to control their minds even if they see sexually suggestive clothing? Or the girls—to dress in appropriate clothes so the guys aren't tempted to impure thoughts?
 - » Is it fair to hold a girl accountable for what a guy is thinking when he sees her in sexy clothes? Why or why not?

4. Consider this quote from p. 37: "Guys don't take sexual girls seriously . . . They are so clouded by your body parts that they won't see you for the amazing girl that you are."
 - » Do you think guys treat girls differently depending on whether they dress sexy or not? If so, how are they treated?
 - » Which girls get more attention from guys: Girls dressed sexy or girls who don't dress sexy? Which girls get more respect?
 - » What kind of guy do "sexual girls" tend to attract?
5. Why do you think girls want guys to find them sexy, even if they aren't planning to have sex?
 - » How is this like false advertising?
6. Who gets hurt when girls dress sexy?

7. Ephesians 5:3 gives God's standards about sexuality: There must not be "even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity. . ."
 - » Is God's standard too high? Is it really possible to avoid even a "hint" of sexual immorality with current fashion trends?
 - » Can you think of any clothing styles that your church or school generally accepts, but that still have a "hint" of sexual immorality?
8. On p. 55, Hayley says, "God esteem definitely has more power than self-esteem." What's the difference between God esteem and self-esteem?
 - » What's different about a person who tries to build God esteem rather than their self-esteem?
 - » How does this play out when it comes to a girl's decision about dressing sexy or not?

SESSION TWO A Closer Look at Your Accidental Image

OPENING ACTIVITY: \$100 CHALLENGE

Supplies Needed: paper, pens/markers, scissors, glue sticks, several catalogs/magazines

Divide your girls into groups of two to four for this activity, giving each one several pieces of blank paper, along with some scissors, a glue stick, and a pen or marker. Give half of the groups the “Second Glance Challenge” and the other half the “Blend-Into-The-Wall Challenge” as outlined below. Give groups about ten minutes to complete their task and then bring them together to share their results.

THE SECOND GLANCE CHALLENGE

Imagine that you have been given the opportunity to earn \$100 for every time you can get a guy to do a double-take and check out your body during the course of a single day. Using the catalogs/magazines and the rest of your supplies, create a “plan of attack” with pictures and comments about the clothing, makeup styles, and other strategies you would use to make the most money in this challenge.

BLEND-INTO-THE-WALL CHALLENGE

Imagine that you have been given the opportunity to earn \$100 for every time a guy passes you by without even noticing that you’re a girl. Using the catalogs/magazines and the rest of your supplies, create a “plan of attack” with pictures and comments about the clothing, makeup styles, and other strategies you would use to make the most money in this challenge.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » What's worse—dressing provocatively so guys will check out your body or dressing so sloppy or carelessly that people don't even notice your femininity?
- » What are the dangers of both of these strategies?
- » What kind of guys would the "Second Glance" girl and the "Blend-Into-The-Wall Girl" attract? Do you think either of their strategies would help them find true romance? Why or why not?

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 59–117.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTERS 4–9

1. Do you agree with this statement: "Any piercing or tattoo that is strategically placed on a sexual part of your body achieves only one thing: it gets sexual attention" (p. 65)?
 - » What kinds of tattoos or body piercing do you think are appropriate for a Christian woman? What kinds are inappropriate and why?
2. What do you think Hayley means by this quote on p. 62, "To make yourself a sexual object is to kill a part of you that was created expressly for relationship"?
 - » How can sexy clothes, tattoos, and piercing actually work against a girl's romantic dreams?
3. What are some healthy motives for wearing make-up? What are unhealthy motives?
 - » What practical advice would you give to a girl who wants to wear make-up in an attractive, but not sexually suggestive way?
4. How do you think plastic surgery and liposuction affect our culture's standards of beauty?
 - » In what situations would you say plastic surgery is a good thing? In what situations is it an unhealthy thing? Why?
 - » How do you think God views plastic surgery and liposuction?
5. Consider this quote: "Don't let your exterior become your obsession or the cost could prove to be your interior life." (p. 78) How do you think this happens?
 - » How can a girl tell if she's become too obsessed with her exterior?
6. Do you think it's important for a girl to have some Christian friends in her life? Why or why not?
 - » How do you know when a friendship has crossed the line into unhealthy territory and needs to be cut off?

7. What makes a girl a tease? What's wrong with being a tease?
 - » On p. 108, it says "things go badly very badly for people who lead others to sin."
 - » In what ways do you think things might "go badly" for a girl who causes guys to stumble by the way she dresses?
8. How does sexy clothing make it more difficult to stay sexually pure?
 - » What's the difference between sex, romance, and love? Which one are you more likely to get with sexy clothes?

SESSION THREE CREATING AN IMAGE YOU LOVE

OPENING ACTIVITY: SEXY POLICE

Supplies Needed: teen magazines, markers, pen, and paper.

Divide into groups of two to four for this activity. Give each group a copy of one of the teen magazines you've gathered for this activity.

Each group should page through their magazine as the "sexy police." They must circle any images that they feel portray inappropriate clothing. (Keeping in mind the Ephesians 3:5 standard of "not even a hint of sexual immorality"). Give groups five minutes with their magazine and then ask them to count up the number of violations they found. Encourage them to keep a tally in the following categories:

- » *Tight Ain't Right*: clothing that hugs the body so closely, it doesn't leave anything to the imagination
- » *Under Exposure*: underwear that shows underneath shirts or above pants, or exposure of body parts b/c girl is *not* wearing underwear beneath her clothes
- » *Cleavage Control*: shirts/dresses that reveal cleavage
- » *Skirt Flirts*: skirts or shorts that are cut too short
- » *Tattoo Trouble*: tattoos or piercing in sexually suggestive places
- » *Anti-Sexy Clothing*: sloppy, dirty, anti-feminine clothes
- » *Other Violations*

Have each group share their tally numbers with each other, and then ask them to go back to their magazines and look for pictures that would receive a "Community Service" award for dressing in an attractive, appropriate way. Have them tear out pages with these pictures on them and tally the total number of appropriately-dressed pictures they find. After about five

minutes, ask each group to share their tally and show at least one of the “Community Service” pictures they found.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- » What was harder, to find sexy clothing violations or to find pictures of girls dressed appropriately? What does this exercise tell us about our culture’s clothing standards compared to God’s clothing standards?
- » What’s more difficult: to notice clothing violations in magazines, or to notice them in your own closet? Why?
- » If someone were to create a magazine of photographs portraying girls from your school, would there be more “Sexy Violations” or “Community Service” awards for the way they are dressed?

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Before moving into further discussion, ask students to share any questions or comments they had as they read pages 121–147.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTERS 10–12

1. What is revolutionary about the ideas expressed in *Sexy Girls*?
 - » How should a Christian’s attitudes and values about fashion be different than the values and attitudes of our culture?
2. On p. 123, it says “God’s goal is not to make you happy; it’s to make you holy. I know that sounds like a rip-off, but the truth is that those who are holy are in a continual state of joy.”
 - » Why does pursuing holiness in fashion sometimes make us unhappy?
 - » What’s the difference between happiness and joy? What’s more valuable?
3. What are God’s standards for holiness when it comes to fashion?
 - » What are some key principles that should underlie a Christian girl’s fashion choices?
 - » How can dressing sexy become an abuse of God’s grace?
4. How do girls usually react to the idea of modesty? How about the idea of dressing “discreetly”?
 - » At its core, what do you think true modesty means? What does it mean to be “discreet”? (Check out pages 133 and 134 for some thoughts on this.)
 - » What misconceptions do you think some people have about modesty?
 - » Can you be modest and discreet and still have a stand-out style? Why or why not?

5. Share with each other the description of your image that you wrote on p. 137. What kind of image are you hoping to portray to the world?

6. On p. 140, it says, "All of us have flubbed up. All of us have been ignorant of God's law in some area or another and messed up because of it."
 - » As you read this book, did any of you discover areas where you've flubbed up in the fashion world?
 - » What have you learned about God's standards through this study that you didn't understand before?
 - » How do you hope to change?
7. Why do you think it's important to share your spiritual struggles and goals with a Christian friend?
 - » What are some good ways to connect with other Christians your age?
8. Using the diagram and questions on p. 145, discuss the guidelines you would make to dress according to God's standards. How hot is too hot?

SESSION FOUR The Dressing Party

BEFORE THE SESSION

This session will require a little pre-planning for both you and the girls. At least one week before the party, you should plan the following details:

LOCATION

If your group has been meeting in a classroom or another small room, you will need to find a larger location for this event. Try to find a relaxed atmosphere—perhaps a group member’s home or a youth room with cozy couches—with plenty of space for the girls to lay out their piles of clothes. It would also be helpful to have a location with several bathrooms or bedrooms that could be used as changing rooms throughout the evening.

FOOD

If you haven’t been sharing snacks at your sessions before this, now’s the time to start! Set a fun atmosphere with some munchies and sodas for everyone to share. You may want to stick with clear beverages and non-messy snacks so that you avoid any spills or stains on the clothing that will be all around.

INVITATIONS

Set the tone for this unique party by sending out special invitations to the girls in your study group. You may want to create printed invitations on your computer and send them by post, or save time by developing a creative e-mail invitation that you can send to the whole group at once. Be sure to include the date, time, location, and a reminder for them to pack up all their clothes and bring them along.

SUPPLIES

To keep the girls' clothing separate, you may want to bring along some special supplies. Consider setting out a large plastic tote or cardboard box for each girl, labeled with her name, where she can keep her clothing throughout the night. If totes or boxes are unavailable, at least be sure to make a simple paper sign with each girl's name that can be set by her pile of clothes. A few simple organizing measures will save you the headache of having to sort out everyone's fashions at the end of the night.

Second, you will need to make a copy of p. 143, 145, and 147 before the party night. If possible, enlarge these pages to poster size and hang them somewhere at your party location where they'll be easy to read as a group.

Finally, you may want to have a couple of trash bags on hand for items that the girls decide are too sexy or inappropriate to wear.

AT THE PARTY

THE COMMITMENT

Start off your party with a joint commitment to dress in a way that pleases God. Refer girls to your poster of p. 143, read through the commitment together, and then have each girl sign her name on the poster.

THE STANDARDS

Remind your group about the discussion you had last week concerning "How hot is too hot?". Take a few minutes to look at your poster of p. 145 and draw lines on the diagram representing what your group has decided is appropriate. Then move on to the poster of p. 147, reading through the prayer together, and filling in the blank lines about which parts of the body you will keep covered at all times.

THE SCRUTINY

Most of your evening should be spent at this point—trying on and evaluating each other's clothes. Read through the section about the Dressing Party on p. 151 and 152 before you begin, and follow the advice laid out there. Encourage the girls to focus on two goals for the night: honesty and creativity. They should be honest with each other and point out any clothes that violate the standards you have set. But they should also seek creative solutions for any "sexy" clothes they find: with a little ingenuity they may be able to rework some of those outfits into a stylish and more appropriate look.

THE CLOSING

You probably won't have time to go through every item of clothing in every wardrobes, so as your party closes, encourage the girls to apply their new standards to any of the clothes they didn't have a chance to evaluate tonight. (And to future purchases too!)

End the evening with a brief prayer, thanking God for the gift of fashion and creativity, and asking him to help everyone stick to their new standards.

ABOUT HAYLEY



Hayley DiMarco writes cutting-edge and best-selling books for teens including *Mean Girls*, *Mean Girls Gone*, *Sexy Girls*, *Technical Virgin*, *Dateable*, *The Dateable Rules*, *The Dirt on Dating* and *The Dirt on Breaking Up*. Hayley also writes books for former teens including *Marriable* and *Mean Girls All Grown Up*. Her goal is to give practical answers for life's problems and encourage readers to form stronger spiritual lives. Hayley is Chief Creative Officer and founder of Hungry Planet, an independent publishing imprint and communications company that feeds the world's appetite for truth. Hungry Planet helps organizations understand and reach the multi-tasking mindset, while Hungry Planet books tackle life's everyday issues with a distinctly modern spiritual voice. For more information on Hungry Planet including leader resources and online communities that revolve around the books, visit www.hungryplanet.net.