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**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

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## **Explicit lyrics warnings on online music**

**21st December, 2011**

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

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# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

A new scheme has been put into place online to warn parents of explicit lyrics on music downloads. There has been a similar warning on CDs and DVDs for many years. It is now the turn of songs that are available for purchase on the Internet. Apple's iTunes Store has led the way online for several years by stating whether or not a download contains words unsuitable for children's ears. It places the word 'explicit' next to songs parents need to be warned about. It also puts the logo 'clean' next to songs that people might mistake for being explicit. The warning for explicit lyrics will now appear next to music and video files on sites such as Amazon and Napster. This will allow parents to monitor whether their children's music is too old for them.

The scheme was set up by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI). It comes after calls from parents concerned about the increasing volume of songs available online that contain foul, explicit or offensive language. BPI chief executive Geoff Taylor said: "We know that the parental advisory logo on CDs and DVDs has been a useful tool for parents.... We believe that parents need the same guidance when their children are downloading or streaming songs or videos online, so we have extended the logo to digital music services." Singer Jamelia said she worried about what her two children listen to online and agreed that the logo "gives parents the ability to quickly and easily judge whether a song or music video is right for their child".

# WARM-UPS

**1. EXPLICIT LYRICS:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about explicit lyrics. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*scheme / warning parents / music downloads / unsuitable / logo / monitor / concerned / foul language / chief executive / streaming songs / agreed / judge*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. BAD LANGUAGE:** Complete this table and share what you wrote with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote again.

Bad language from	What would you think?	What would you do?
a 5-year-old		
a 16-year-old		
your mother		
a singer		
a politician		
a shop assistant		

**4. EXPLICIT:** Students A **strongly** believe explicit lyrics should not be allowed to be sold on the Internet; Students B **strongly** believe disagree. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. OFFENSIVE:** Which of these do you hate hearing or seeing bad language? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner. Put the worst at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- songs
- movies
- newspapers
- graffiti
- computer games
- spam mail
- documentaries
- CD covers

**6. LYRICS:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'lyrics'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Songs containing bad language have been banned from online stores.  | T / F |
| b. There were warnings on online music before they were on CDs.        | T / F |
| c. Apple's iTunes placed warnings on its songs many years ago.         | T / F |
| d. The download site Napster has refused to put warnings on its songs. | T / F |
| e. The 'explicit' warning comes because of complaints from parents.    | T / F |
| f. An industry spokesman said warnings on CDs had had no effect.       | T / F |
| g. A singer said she was worried about what her children listened to.  | T / F |
| h. The singer thinks the 'explicit' logo is a good idea.               | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. scheme    | a. puts         |
| 2. explicit  | b. enlarged     |
| 3. suitable  | c. established  |
| 4. places    | d. satisfactory |
| 5. monitor   | e. graphic      |
| 6. set up    | f. disgusting   |
| 7. concerned | g. check        |
| 8. offensive | h. plan         |
| 9. extended  | i. power        |
| 10. ability  | j. worried      |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. A new scheme has been                  | a. the way             |
| 2. There has been a similar               | b. music services      |
| 3. Apple's iTunes Store has led           | c. is too old for them |
| 4. songs that people might mistake        | d. guidance            |
| 5. monitor whether their children's music | e. put into place      |
| 6. the increasing volume                  | f. language            |
| 7. foul, explicit or offensive            | g. of songs            |
| 8. parents need the same                  | h. warning on CDs      |
| 9. extended the logo to digital           | i. judge               |
| 10. the ability to quickly and easily     | j. for being explicit  |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A new scheme has been put (1) \_\_\_\_\_ place online to warn parents of explicit lyrics on music downloads. There has been a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ warning on CDs and DVDs for many years. It is now the (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of songs that are available for purchase on the Internet. Apple's iTunes Store has led the way online for several years by (4) \_\_\_\_\_ whether or not a download contains words unsuitable for children's ears. It places the word 'explicit' next to songs parents (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to be warned about. It also puts the logo 'clean' next to songs that people might mistake for being explicit. The warning for explicit lyrics will now (6) \_\_\_\_\_ next to music and video files on sites such as Amazon and Napster. This will (7) \_\_\_\_\_ parents to monitor (8) \_\_\_\_\_ their children's music is too old for them.

The scheme was set (9) \_\_\_\_\_ by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI). It comes after (10) \_\_\_\_\_ from parents concerned about the increasing volume of songs available online that contain (11) \_\_\_\_\_, explicit or offensive language. BPI chief executive Geoff Taylor said: "We know that the parental advisory (12) \_\_\_\_\_ on CDs and DVDs has been a useful tool for parents... We believe that parents need the same guidance when their children are downloading or (13) \_\_\_\_\_ songs or videos online, so we have (14) \_\_\_\_\_ the logo to digital music services." Singer Jamelia said she worried about what her two children listen to online and (15) \_\_\_\_\_ that the logo "gives parents the ability to quickly and easily (16) \_\_\_\_\_ whether a song or music video is right for their child".

*turn*  
*appear*  
*whether*  
*into*  
*allow*  
*similar*  
*stating*  
*need*

*foul*  
*calls*  
*up*  
*extended*  
*judge*  
*logo*  
*agreed*  
*streaming*

## **LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps**

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

A new scheme has been put into place online to warn \_\_\_\_\_ lyrics on music downloads. There has been a similar warning on CDs and DVDs for many years. It is \_\_\_\_\_ songs that are available for purchase on the Internet. Apple's iTunes Store has \_\_\_\_\_ for several years by stating whether or not a download contains \_\_\_\_\_ for children's ears. It places the word 'explicit' next to songs parents need to be warned about. It also puts the logo 'clean' next to songs that people \_\_\_\_\_ being explicit. The warning for explicit lyrics will now appear next to music and video files on sites such as Amazon and Napster. This will allow parents \_\_\_\_\_ their children's music is too old for them.

The scheme \_\_\_\_\_ the British Phonographic Industry (BPI). It comes after calls from parents concerned about the \_\_\_\_\_ of songs available online that contain foul, explicit or offensive language. BPI chief executive Geoff Taylor said: "We know that the \_\_\_\_\_ logo on CDs and DVDs has been a useful tool for parents.... We believe that parents need the \_\_\_\_\_ when their children are downloading or \_\_\_\_\_ or videos online, so we have extended the logo to digital music services." Singer Jamelia said she worried about what her two children listen to online and agreed that the logo "gives parents the ability to quickly \_\_\_\_\_ whether a song or music video is right for their child".

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'foul' and 'language'.

<b>foul</b>	<b>language</b>
-------------	-----------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• place</li><li>• turn</li><li>• way</li><li>• ears</li><li>• mistake</li><li>• old</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• set</li><li>• volume</li><li>• foul</li><li>• tool</li><li>• extended</li><li>• child</li></ul>
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# STUDENT EXPLICIT LYRICS SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

Write five GOOD questions about explicit lyrics in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# EXPLICIT LYRICS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'explicit'?
- c) What do you think about what you read?
- d) What are your thoughts on explicit lyrics?
- e) Do you think lyrics can be too explicit?
- f) Do you agree with the 'explicit' warning on online music?
- g) Do you think the warning will have any effect?
- h) Do you think explicit lyrics encourage bad behaviour?
- i) Why do so many songs nowadays contain bad language (compared to the past)?
- j) Is explicit language a sign of artistic development?

*Explicit lyrics warnings on online music – 21st December, 2011*  
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# EXPLICIT LYRICS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think there's a need for lyrics to be explicit?
- c) Won't kids download the song because it has 'explicit' next to it?
- d) People can get arrested for using bad language in public, but singers can use it in their songs. Is this OK?
- e) What do you think of foul language?
- f) Do you use foul language?
- g) Can parents really monitor what's on their children's iPod?
- h) Do you think bad words in English are bad?
- i) Do you agree with the BPI that parents also need guidance?
- j) What questions would you like to ask a songwriter who uses bad words?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

A new scheme has been put (1) \_\_\_\_ place online to warn parents of explicit lyrics on music downloads. There has been a similar warning on CDs and DVDs for many years. It is now the (2) \_\_\_\_ of songs that are available for purchase on the Internet. Apple's iTunes Store has led the (3) \_\_\_\_ online for several years by stating whether or not a download contains words unsuitable for (4) \_\_\_\_ ears. It places the word 'explicit' next to songs parents need to be warned about. It also puts the logo 'clean' next to songs that people might mistake (5) \_\_\_\_ being explicit. The warning for explicit lyrics will now appear next to music and video files on sites such as Amazon and Napster. This will allow parents to monitor whether their children's music is too old for (6) \_\_\_\_.

The scheme was (7) \_\_\_\_ up by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI). It comes after (8) \_\_\_\_ from parents concerned about the increasing volume of songs available online that contain (9) \_\_\_\_, explicit or offensive language. BPI chief executive Geoff Taylor said: "We know that the parental advisory logo on CDs and DVDs has been a useful tool for parents... We believe that parents need the same (10) \_\_\_\_ when their children are downloading or streaming songs or videos online, so we have extended the logo to digital music services." Singer Jamelia said she worried about what her two children listen to online and (11) \_\_\_\_ that the logo "gives parents the ability to quickly and easily (12) \_\_\_\_ whether a song or music video is right for their child".

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |                |               |                |               |
|-----|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) at         | (b) by        | (c) with       | (d) into      |
| 2.  | (a) timetable  | (b) turn      | (c) turntable  | (d) turning   |
| 3.  | (a) way        | (b) how       | (c) why        | (d) which     |
| 4.  | (a) childrens' | (b) childrens | (c) children's | (d) child's   |
| 5.  | (a) from       | (b) of        | (c) for        | (d) far       |
| 6.  | (a) it         | (b) them      | (c) theirs     | (d) they      |
| 7.  | (a) set        | (b) sat       | (c) sit        | (d) site      |
| 8.  | (a) screams    | (b) whispers  | (c) phones     | (d) calls     |
| 9.  | (a) fool       | (b) foul      | (c) fall       | (d) fail      |
| 10. | (a) guided     | (b) guarded   | (c) gradient   | (d) guidance  |
| 11. | (a) agreeable  | (b) agree     | (c) agreed     | (d) aggrieved |
| 12. | (a) judge      | (b) juror     | (c) clerk      | (d) accused   |

Explicit lyrics warnings on online music – 21st December, 2011

# WRITING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit\\_lyrics.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1112/111221-explicit_lyrics.html)

Write about **explicit lyrics** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

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# HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about online music. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. GUIDELINES:** Make a poster with guidelines for parents about their children, online music, and explicit lyrics. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. EXPLICIT LYRICS:** Write a magazine article about explicit lyrics. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against it.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to a music company boss. Ask him/her three questions about explicit lyrics. Give him/her three of your opinions on them. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. F      c. T      d. F      e. T      f. F      g. T      h. T

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. scheme    | a. plan         |
| 2. explicit  | b. graphic      |
| 3. suitable  | c. satisfactory |
| 4. places    | d. puts         |
| 5. monitor   | e. check        |
| 6. set up    | f. established  |
| 7. concerned | g. worried      |
| 8. offensive | h. disgusting   |
| 9. extended  | i. enlarged     |
| 10. ability  | j. power        |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. A new scheme has been                  | a. put into place      |
| 2. There has been a similar               | b. warning on CDs      |
| 3. Apple's iTunes Store has led           | c. the way             |
| 4. songs that people might mistake        | d. for being explicit  |
| 5. monitor whether their children's music | e. is too old for them |
| 6. the increasing volume                  | f. of songs            |
| 7. foul, explicit or offensive            | g. language            |
| 8. parents need the same                  | h. guidance            |
| 9. extended the logo to digital           | i. music services      |
| 10. the ability to quickly and easily     | j. judge               |

## GAP FILL:

### Explicit lyrics warnings on online music

A new scheme has been put (1) **into** place online to warn parents of explicit lyrics on music downloads. There has been a (2) **similar** warning on CDs and DVDs for many years. It is now the (3) **turn** of songs that are available for purchase on the Internet. Apple's iTunes Store has led the way online for several years by (4) **stating** whether or not a download contains words unsuitable for children's ears. It places the word 'explicit' next to songs parents (5) **need** to be warned about. It also puts the logo 'clean' next to songs that people might mistake for being explicit. The warning for explicit lyrics will now (6) **appear** next to music and video files on sites such as Amazon and Napster. This will (7) **allow** parents to monitor (8) **whether** their children's music is too old for them.

The scheme was set (9) **up** by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI). It comes after (10) **calls** from parents concerned about the increasing volume of songs available online that contain (11) **foul**, explicit or offensive language. BPI chief executive Geoff Taylor said: "We know that the parental advisory (12) **logo** on CDs and DVDs has been a useful tool for parents.... We believe that parents need the same guidance when their children are downloading or (13) **streaming** songs or videos online, so we have (14) **extended** the logo to digital music services." Singer Jamelia said she worried about what her two children listen to online and (15) **agreed** that the logo "gives parents the ability to quickly and easily (16) **judge** whether a song or music video is right for their child".

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d    2 - b    3 - a    4 - c    5 - c    6 - b    7 - a    8 - d    9 - b    10 - d    11 - c    12 - a