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SESSION ONE





## WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THE MIRROR?

*Note: If you are using this guide for an eight-session retreat, this session will be used to welcome the girls in attendance and set the tone for the weekend. If you are using this guide as an eight-week curriculum, this session will serve as a kickoff for the remainder of the study.*

**THE GOAL:** To begin to build unity among your group and introduce the universal nature of beauty struggles among girls.

### **SUPPLIES NEEDED:**

1. Human bingo sheet
2. Small gift for each girl (optional; small group leaders may choose something for team unity, such as matching T-shirts, bandanas, glow-in-the-dark jewelry)
3. Large sheets of sketch paper (one for each girl)
4. Art supplies: markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.
5. A copy of *Graffiti: Learning to See The Art in Ourselves* for each girl
6. Journals for each girl and pens
7. Name tags
8. CDs, player
9. Equipment/space for break time games; or plan a different activity

### **GETTING READY:**

1. Read chapter 1 in *Graffiti*.
2. Preview study guide materials.
3. Set up/decorate large livable space for your group.
4. Prepare name tag/arrival station.
5. Purchase lots and lots of yummy snacks!



## ***Greeting***

Take some time to greet the girls who have attended your Graffiti event. Introduce yourself and the other adult leaders. This would be a great time to announce small group assignments.

Groups can be assigned in advance or just before the retreat begins if you did not require preregistration. There are lots of ways to assign your groups. You can do it based on age or grade, church affiliation, or something more random like favorite color or sport. I would not recommend letting girls choose their own groups as this can cause hurt feelings and prevent your participants from mingling with one another.

Encourage your small group leaders to be enthusiastic about their group assignments and to be prepared with a small gift for each girl in their group (suggestions above). Let the girls know that this event is about girl time and that they should feel free to be themselves. Give them a preview of the weekend by sharing part of your beauty testimony or having another adult prepared to share, but keep it light for now. This is the time for lots of fun and giggles. They will have time for more serious conversations soon.

## ***Game: Icebreaker (10 minutes)***

It is possible that the girls who attend your Graffiti event won't all know each other. Even if they do, it is important to get them talking and interacting as soon as possible. After welcoming them, do a few icebreaker activities. You can choose from the examples below or create your own.

### ***Cooperative Musical Chairs***

Have your students form a circle of chairs and then remove one chair. Much like traditional musical chairs, students will move in a circle around the chairs until the music stops. However, unlike the original game, once the music stops, the person without a seat is not out. Someone must make room for her by sharing her chair. Then, remove another seat and keep playing. Before long, the girls will be getting close to each other, literally, as they all try to fit into fewer and fewer chairs.

### *Mimic*

Have students form a circle facing each other. Then choose one person to leave the room while the group chooses a leader. The leader's job is to make movements for the rest of the group to mimic. Examples could include snapping, licking her lips, sticking out her tongue, or hopping on one foot. The leader will start with one movement and change her movements frequently. The job of the rest of the group is to mimic the movements of the leader without revealing who the leader is. The volunteer should be brought back into the room and placed in the center of the circle. Her job is to watch the group and try to figure out who the leader is. It is a game of concentration and body language that is sure to produce a giggle or two.

### *Human Bingo*

This will require some prior planning. You will need to create a bingo card with different characteristics that might be found within the group listed on the card. Examples could include: only child, straight-A student, cheerleader, shy, outgoing, has her driver's license, ate fast food today, etc. Come up with an even number of characteristics and list them in squares like a bingo card. Students must mingle and find someone who matches each characteristic. You can play four in a row, four corners, or blackout, just like bingo. Have small prizes ready for the winners.

### ***Art Activity: Self-portrait (30 minutes)***

*Objective: To create a self-portrait. To begin to highlight that we don't always see ourselves accurately.*

Tell the girls that they each need to create a self-portrait. Assure them that artistic ability isn't important, but that they should do their best to portray themselves as accurately as possible. Instruct them not to put their names on their self-portraits. Let them sprawl out on the floor and visit while they create. It is a good idea to play some music during this time. Some girls will finish relatively quickly. Other girls will take more time to create. Encourage them to use their free time to visit with one another and continue getting to know one another until everyone is finished.

### ***Who's Who? (10 minutes)***

Gather up the self-portraits and mix them up as much as possible. Ask your girls to sit in a circle. They are going to guess which self-portrait goes with which girl. Hold up each self-portrait and ask who they think created it. If you have a very large group, just choose ten or fifteen examples. If time allows, let a few girls explain why they drew themselves the way they did.

Use this game to segue into the first teaching session. Explain that for many of us, the way we look and the way that we feel about ourselves is a touchy subject. Most girls struggle to embrace their beauty and worth. Assure them that this weekend is designed to apply God's truth to the area of their beauty and to equip them to see themselves in a new light.

### ***Chapter 1 (30 minutes)***

As a group, read chapter 1 of *Graffiti: Learning to See the Art in Ourselves*. This chapter is Erin's testimony of her own struggle with beauty and identity. This would be a great time to have a couple of other adult leaders or girls share their beauty testimonies. Ask them to prepare their testimonies in advance. The purpose of this time is to expose some of the specific struggles that girls are subject to in the area of beauty, and to highlight that the individuals who are attending your event are not alone in their struggle.

### ***Alone Time (15 minutes)***

Chapter 1 concludes with Erin encouraging her readers to write a letter to God about their beauty struggles. Provide time for the girls to do this after you finish reading chapter 1. Each girl will need a journal for the weekend. Pass out their journals at this time, and encourage them to spread out and read Erin's instructions. Play soft music and give the girls plenty of time to think deeply about this task. After you sense that most of the girls are done with their letters, bring them back into the large group and ask if anyone would like to share what they wrote. After a few girls have shared, move into a time of group prayer about the weekend.

### ***Small Group Discussion (15 minutes)***

- ▶ What do you hope to learn about during our time together?
- ▶ What specific areas of your beauty are difficult for you to accept?
- ▶ Can you identify with Erin's testimony? Which parts were particularly meaningful to you? Which parts do you find it difficult to identify with?
- ▶ What do you think the Bible says about your beauty?

### ***Journal Pass (20 minutes)***

At the conclusion of each small group session, girls will write affirmations in each other's journals. Have each group sit in a circle and pass their journals clockwise. Ask the girls to write a few words of affirmation in each person's journal as it is passed. Affirmation can be about elements of each girl's physical, emotional, or spiritual self. They will have many opportunities to repeat this activity, so affirmations should be brief. The purpose of this activity is to heal some of the beauty wounds that have been inflicted through criticism and harsh words offered by others. Research indicates that it takes seven compliments to undo each negative comment we have heard about ourselves. At the end of the weekend, each participant should hear many, many words of affirmation through this exercise and other activities.

### ***Break (30 minutes)***

After each group has concluded their small group activities, move into a time for just plain fun. Roll out the snack food and have the group participate in a high-energy game. You'd be surprised how much your girls will love playing an old favorite like kickball, volleyball, or hide-and-go seek. Keep the energy level high—you don't want your gang getting sleepy before session two!