

OBJECTIVE	Each young woman will establish standards for her own marriage.
PREPARATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Picture 15, Yoked Oxen (62233), located at the back of the manual.</li> <li>2. Provide a pencil and paper for each young woman.</li> <li>3. Prepare a poster that says: "Marriage is perhaps the most vital of all the decisions and has the most far-reaching effects, for it has to do not only with immediate happiness, but eternal joys as well." (Spencer W. Kimball)</li> <li>4. Optional: Prepare the handouts suggested at the end of the lesson.</li> <li>5. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.</li> </ol>
SUGGESTED LESSON DEVELOPMENT	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Story</p> <p>Explain that a prominent and well-respected businessman was once asked what factors had contributed to the twenty-five years of success he and his partner had enjoyed in their business relationship. "There have been many contributing factors," he said, "but if I were to single out one, it would be that I chose a good partner. This decision was not left to chance or speculation, as many business ventures often are. I sat down and made a list of the qualities and characteristics my future partner must have. I needed to know that he had the same beliefs, standards, and goals for the business that I had. After all, this was not to be a short-lived relationship. I had to look for some time, but when I found someone who met these tough standards and shared my goals, we formed our business. We have had both lean and prosperous times, but through it all we remained committed to the standards we had established, we pulled together, and each did his part to make the business work."</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Ask the young women to suggest some of the requirements this businessman may have established for selecting a partner.</p> <p>Point out that we have the opportunity of selecting a partner for a far more important partnership than a business venture. Ask the young women what they think you are referring to. (Marriage partnership.) Write on the chalkboard: <i>An eternal, happy marriage partnership.</i></p> <p><b>Righteous Standards Guide Us in Selecting a Marriage Partner</b></p> <p>Teacher presentation</p> <p>Explain that unfortunately, many people spend more time in choosing a business partner, a home, or even an automobile than they do in selecting a marriage partner. Perhaps this is because it is easy to fall in love and let our emotions dictate our actions. We may later find that the person we have fallen in love with may not really meet the standards we hoped for in a marriage partner. A hasty marriage, like a risky business deal, can end in a painful divorce or an unhappy family life. Many times this sorrow could have been avoided from the beginning if standards had been set and followed.</p> <p>Poster</p> <p>Display the poster you have prepared. Explain that President Spencer W. Kimball said: "Marriage is perhaps the most vital of all the decisions and has the most far-reaching effects, for it has to do not only with immediate happiness, but eternal joys as well" (<i>Marriage and Divorce</i> [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], p. 11).</p>

Activity	Give the young women pieces of paper and pencils. Ask them to make a list of characteristics they hope to find in their future marriage partners. Ask the young women to keep the list to be referred to later in the lesson. Remind them that since they will marry those whom they date, this same list should serve as a guide in dating.
Teacher presentation	Explain to the young women that they will spend eternity with their marriage partner. They should establish standards in the most important areas to guide them in choosing this person. One such standard is found in the scriptures. Ask each young woman to find and read 2 Corinthians 6:14.
Picture and discussion	Ask the young women if they know what the term “equally yoked” means. Display the picture of yoked oxen.
Teacher presentation	Explain that animals such as oxen and horses are used in many parts of the world to perform heavy tasks such as pulling wagons and plowing fields. A yoke, which is a wooden beam, links the animals at the necks. It was soon discovered that if these animals were “equally yoked” or balanced, each could do its part and pull its share of the weight. If they were “unequally yoked” or unbalanced, they could not work well together as a team. One animal would go ahead or pull most of the weight himself, while the other one would lag behind and get a very sore neck. This concept can be applied to marriage. There are some aspects of marriage in which a couple should be equally yoked. One of these is religious belief.
Discussion	<p>Ask the young women in what other areas a couple should be equally yoked before they contemplate marriage. Some of their answers might include moral standards, Church activity and service, goals for family and education, interests and backgrounds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What might happen if couples are not equally yoked in these areas?</li> </ul> <p>Point out that every person has a different personality and different talents. Everyone must learn to give and take with their partner, and marriage partners can complement one another with their differences. However, there are some areas where compromise is not a good solution. What is most important is that a couple is yoked together equally in eternal goals and headed in the same direction. Each partner needs to pull his or her own weight in the marriage relationship.</p>
Teacher presentation and discussion	<p>One young woman had as her most important standard the question, “How does a young man feel about the Lord?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would the answer to this question be a guide in the selection of a marriage partner?</li> </ul> <p>Explain that another young woman desired that her future husband not have a quick temper like her family members had had while she was growing up. Another young woman recognized that her family had given a lot of service to the Church and had received many blessings because of this. She set a standard that her future husband would be willing to give this same kind of service and encourage his family to do likewise. Another young woman had to evaluate whether she could be a supportive wife to a young man who was contemplating a demanding professional athletic career. She had to decide if this career would allow her and her husband to meet the standards of family life that she had set for her marriage.</p> <p>Ask the young women to share with the class some of the standards they are looking for in a marriage partner.</p>

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### **We Must Remain True to Righteous Standards**

Teacher presentation	<p>Explain that the young women should evaluate their own lives and make sure they are living up to the standards they expect in a future partner.</p> <p>Elder David B. Haight related a story of a young woman who had set the standard of marrying a young man who had the same high morals she did. She maintained this high standard for herself throughout her dating experiences.</p> <p>“I recall the testimony of a young lady at a stake conference in which she told of her dating years. Her mother had helped her to understand the pitfalls. Now a young wife . . . ,</p>
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she could look at her husband sitting on the stand at Church . . . and be proud of him, remembering their wonderful courtship and relationship: married in the temple, nothing to hide, no regrets. She told how they were tempted. But their goal was the temple. They knew the difference between a pure kiss and necking. They knew that virtue is lost by degrees. Their plans were carefully thought out, avoiding the parked car on a lonely road and the late hours alone" ("The Uttermost Part of the Earth," in *Speeches of the Year, 1978* [Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1979], pp. 168–69).

Discussion

- What good things happened because this young woman followed the standard she had set?

Story

Elder Marvin J. Ashton related a story of a young woman who set a standard of a temple marriage and was blessed because she followed her standard:

"[A] present-day member of a stake presidency said to me, 'My wife had much to do with this call which has now come to us. When we were dating, I was inactive in the Church. I gained the courage one night to ask her if she would marry me. To this proposal she didn't say yes and she didn't say no. She said, "Where?" I spent the next number of months squaring myself around so I could take her to the temple. She had made her plans, and I loved her enough to rechart my course to coincide with hers. I knew what to do and where I had to go if I wanted to travel at her side' " ("Yellow Ribbons and Charted Courses," *New Era*, July 1981, p. 16).

Discussion

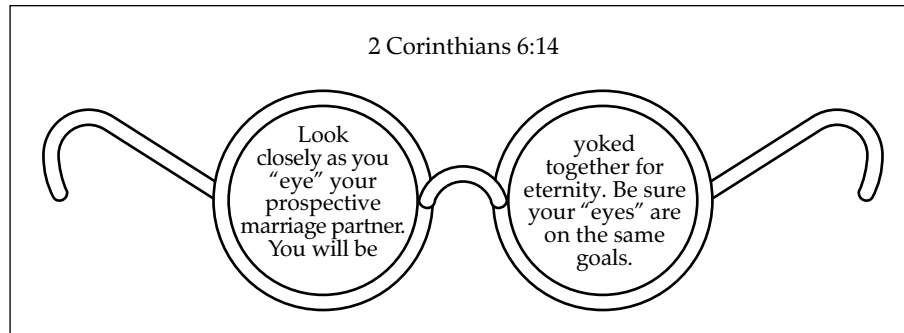
- What might this young woman's marriage have been like if she had not remained true to her standards?

### Conclusion

Refer once again to the poster used in the second section of the lesson. Emphasize the importance of setting righteous standards so that each young woman can be equally yoked in a happy, eternal marriage relationship.

Optional handout

If you have prepared handouts for the young women, distribute them.



Activity

Ask the young women to refer once again to the list they made at the beginning of the lesson. Now that they have heard the lesson, ask them to reevaluate their list or add to it. Ask them to save these lists in their journals and refer to them often as guides in their dating relationships and marriage decision.