

Middle School

March 18, 2018

Smart Listener

If you have an Amazon Echo Dot or Google Home, you're in good company.

These helpful, home assistants were the number-one gift during the 2017 holiday season. Nearly 50 million smart speakers have found homes in the U.S.

True, voice assistants can be helpful and are fun, family-friendly technology; however, some users are still unsettled by them.

The speakers use hear-everything microphones that listen for their wake phrases, "Hey, Google" or "Alexa . . ."

But critics point out that these home assistants are also spying. Those always-listening microphones could be collecting data about your family fights, jokes, or secrets to share with the government or marketing firms.

Case in point: audio recordings collected by an Amazon Echo device have already been used as evidence in a murder case.

Discussion Questions

- Do you have a smart speaker? What does it mean it's "always listening"? Does that freak you out a bit?
- Talk about how a smart device is like prayer. How do we know God is always listening? What does Psalm 145:18–19 tell us about God? What does it mean to "call on Him in truth"?

