

Understanding Prayer

Learning objective: To understand the meaning and purpose of prayer in different faiths.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions that follow. Use full sentences in your answers.

Prayer is a way for people to communicate with a higher power, such as God. For many people, it is a peaceful time to step away from the busyness of the day and focus on their spiritual feelings. Some people use set prayers, which are special words written long ago that are repeated during a service. Others prefer spontaneous prayer, where they use their own words to talk about their feelings.

There are different types of prayer. Some people pray to say thank you for the good things in their lives; this is known as a prayer of gratitude. Others might ask for help for themselves or someone else, which is called a petition.

Prayer can happen in many ways. Some people pray silently in their minds, while others pray aloud in a temple, church, or mosque. Some faiths use specific postures, such as kneeling, bowing, or closing their eyes, to show respect. Whether it is a quiet whisper or a loud song, prayer helps many people feel hopeful, calm, and connected to their faith.

Word bank: meditation · spiritual · petition · gratitude · ritual

1. What are two places mentioned in the text where people might pray aloud? (2 marks)

2. According to the text, what is a 'prayer of gratitude'? (2 marks)

3. Why might someone choose to use spontaneous prayer instead of set prayers? (2 marks)

4. How does the text suggest that a person's body language shows their feelings during prayer? (2 marks)

5. Do you think prayer is more about asking for things or about feeling peaceful? Explain your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a peaceful place where someone might go to pray or meditate.



Extension challenge: Can you find out the names of any specific prayers used in different world religions and write them in your notebook?