

Exploring Prayer: Perspectives and Purposes

Learning objective: To understand the diverse ways people express prayer and the significance it holds in the lives of believers.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of world religions to provide thoughtful, well-reasoned answers. You may use the word bank to help you express your ideas.

Prayer is a central practice for many people around the world. It can take many forms, from silent meditation to vocal chanting or written requests. People pray for various reasons: to give thanks, to ask for guidance, to seek comfort, or to express their connection to the divine. Different religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Sikhism, have unique traditions, postures, and spaces for prayer, yet they all share the goal of personal or communal spiritual connection.

Word bank: Meditation · Gratitude · Intercession · Devotion · Ritual · Reflection · Petition · Communion

1. Max the monkey is curious about why people pray. Can you name three different reasons why a person might choose to pray? (3 marks)

2. Pip the bookworm caterpillar has noticed that prayer happens in many places. Explain the difference between 'private prayer' and 'communal prayer'. (2 marks)

3. Nova the owl wants to know: Why do you think some people use physical actions, such as kneeling, bowing, or using prayer beads, when they pray? (2 marks)

4. Describe one way that a person might express gratitude through prayer without using any spoken words. (2 marks)

5. If a person feels that their prayers are not being answered, how might this affect their faith or their future prayer practice? Provide a thoughtful explanation. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a quiet, peaceful space where a person might go to pray or reflect. Include symbols or items that represent comfort or spiritual connection to you.



Extension challenge: Research a specific prayer tradition from a religion you are interested in. Write a short paragraph explaining the history behind this tradition and how it is performed today.