

Ways of Connecting: Understanding Prayer

Learning objective: To explore the concept of prayer within different religious traditions and reflect on its significance for believers.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Think deeply about the different ways people express their faith.

Prayer is a way for religious people to communicate with the Divine. While every faith has unique customs, prayer often serves as a moment of stillness in a busy life. For some, like Ellie's friend in the historical village, prayer is a silent, internal reflection done in total solitude. They might close their eyes to find peace or express gratitude for the day's events. In other traditions, prayer is a communal experience. People gather in beautiful buildings to recite ancient words together, creating a shared sense of belonging. Some believers use physical movements, such as kneeling or bowing, to show humility and respect. Others might use prayer beads, counting them to help maintain focus during their meditation. Whether spoken aloud or kept as a private thought, prayer is often a way to ask for guidance, offer thanks, or find comfort during difficult times. It is not always about asking for things; frequently, it is simply about pausing to appreciate the world and one's place within it.

Word bank: devotion · reflection · tradition · gratitude · solitude · communal

1. List two different ways that people might physically show respect or maintain focus during prayer, as mentioned in the text. (2 marks)

2. According to the text, is prayer only used to ask for things? Explain how you know. (2 marks)

3. Why might someone choose to pray in a communal setting rather than in private solitude? (2 marks)

4. What might happen to a person's sense of community if they stopped attending communal prayers? (2 marks)

5. Do you think prayer is an essential part of life for a religious person? Justify your answer using evidence from the passage. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a quiet, peaceful space where someone might go to reflect or pray. Include symbols that represent calm and focus, such as a candle, a window with a view of nature, or a soft rug.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the experience of praying alone versus praying in a large group. Create a short poem or a persuasive paragraph explaining why someone might choose one method over the other.