

Games You Can Pray

*...and loads of other prayer activities and ideas
for children, youth and families*



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Games You Can Pray!

Introduction

I've been on a 40 year journey encouraging children, youth and families to enjoy prayer. There have been many highs and quite a few lows along the way. This journey has taken me to 73 countries. All of the prayer ideas you will read here have been tried and tested. Some of course become favourites and have been used more than others.

I do not lay claim to inventing all these prayer games and activities and you can read the list of persons that need to be acknowledged. Most often it was a collaboration of a few persons that produced these ideas. Most of these folks were working alongside me at the time through the YWAM movement or as we partnered in events like Spring Harvest, Creation Fest or taking young people and families on mission trips.

At the outset it may be worth asking the obvious *"isn't it frivolous to talk about prayer in the realm of play and games? Aren't you making a sacred activity mundane, cheapening a sacrament? Are you not simply using a gimmick to get children praying?"* With all my heart I believe this is not so! Holy Spirit, our Helper, is very ready to help our feeble attempts. He is less religious than we can be. He knows our hearts, our inner desires. He above everything is the enabler to help us grow godly inner motivations that will result in heart-felt prayers.

Play is God's idea and play and games are excellent ways to learn and grow. Why can't we employ them to grow in our ability to listen to and talk to God? Games are often best enjoyed together so what better way to develop unity without which our prayers stand little chance of success!

Wake up Church!

All too often prayer has a bad press among children. Some children are frustrated with it. They want to pray but they don't know how to get going. Other children are bored with prayer; they only hear adults praying in large sound-bytes which they could never copy. Many children receive Bible teaching on prayer but it remains theory with little experience, let alone testimonies of answers and breakthroughs!

We may believe in the PUSH principle (pray until something happens), but all too often stop short before something does happen.

Too often prayer is not adequately taught or modelled in local church. It takes praying adults to make praying kids! Let's show our children how to pour out their hearts to God (Psalm 62), how to wrestle with Him in intercessory prayer and how to listen to His voice and to obey.

How do children and young people pray? The short answer is not like adults! Adults may be used to lengthy prayers, profound silences, heads bowed and still bodies. Adults may need a few minutes to prepare, to become still and focus. Young people on the other hand often need to be thinking and doing, to use their hands as well as engaging their minds. They find moving their bodies helps them converge on the task. When they pray out loud their prayers are often brief and specific and to the point!

Why Games?

Games are learning tools and they are fun! They also vary from physical and energetic to quiet and reflective and they include individual and team options. There are games best for

outdoors and others more suited to the kitchen table. There is a game for every occasion, wet weather or dry. Games provide an endless possibilities to suit the group of young people with whom you are working. We also find games are a natural part of kids' lives, so when they see a favourite one being used as a means by which to pray, they are intrigued and receptive. We choose games according to what we are focusing our prayer on. For example, a game of cricket can make praying for India more real; or take the party game of eating chocolate while wearing hat, gloves and scarf, using a knife and fork, why not substitute with Turkish Delight and pray for Turkey.

The use of "games" in the title "Games You Can Pray!" is in it's widest sense. A game is structured play. Some of the games included are well-known party games. Some of the games were invented to help children read prayers aloud and so break the sound barrier. Hearing our own voice whilst praying can be a major hurdle for many. Games help people relax! Many of these activities encourage children to formulate their own simple prayers. We could have included all sorts of games like Football, Volleyball, Cricket, Basketball, Hockey. It's fairly easy to make these well-known sports into prayer activity. Perhaps in the next edition they will be added... The following creative suggestions – I think you'll find about 123 for praying with children and young people also work with adults and in all-age settings. These ideas have been well tested in camps, mission trips, small cell groups, large all-age worship gatherings, festivals such as Spring Harvest with 8-11s and Prayer Spaces in Schools.

They are only meant as ideas from which to develop your own creativity. They are not magic formulas! Develop your own ability to design creative prayer activity! Create with God! Listen to Holy Spirit. Have fun and above all else pray!

What we are not trying to do is to complicate matters so that in the end we do not pray. The game is merely the vehicle to enable us to pray better or learn to do so.

These ideas are like priming the pump of prayer in young lives and families. Perhaps after they have caught the spirit of prayer then there is less need for these ideas. These can be the encouragement to get started.

In the end kids catch it from us. If you don't like prayer then that is what you'll pass on.

Hearing Gods Voice.

At the end of this resource are lesson plans and ideas for teaching young and old on prayer itself. Please continue in a dialogue with me and others at www.ywamwildfire.com where we are trying to increase our blogs and other resources in this whole area.

I am coming from a theology of children that see their spiritual capacity as similar to adults. Children and youth can know God and make him known.

Our movement has long taught on hearing God's voice and intercession. Not everyone is comfortable or used to this terminology. I love Rachel Turners phrase 'catch and chat'. Use that if it helps.

So let's get started. Create with God! Have fun and above all else pray! As Rev Edwin Gunn, my Pastor and friend used to say, "Prayer works, prayer is work and prayer leads to work!"

100 plus Prayer Games, Ideas and Activities

Ropes

Here are just a few ideas to get you started using ropes or string.

Maps

Using a rope/string/wool or masking tape make a map of your nation (or another nation!) or shape of your city, town or village. Depending on how large you draw it you'd have a pin point where schools are or business, or churches etc. Here are ideas on ways to use this idea.

Stand Outside the Map!

You could stand or kneel around the edge of the rope and face inwards asking God to bring a wave of His love to the nation, or bring in workers for the harvest field. I love getting everyone to blow together (it's like praying for God's wind or ruah to come!).

Stand Inside!

You could all stand inside the map and pray for cities, villages, schools or whatever you want! All pray out loud together! We call this Korean style praying but the Koreans claim they got it from the Welsh revival of 1903.

Face Outwards!

You could all be inside the shape and face outwards asking God to raise up people from your nation or city to go into missions abroad!!

Tea Lights (safer to use battery ones)

Use candles to highlight areas inside the rope map such as cities or make a cross shape or similar symbol to help focus your prayers.

Tug Of War

If you've got access to a bigger, tug of war type rope then why not have a tug of war competition between two teams! After you play pray for a situation in the world where countries are being torn apart because of civil war or drugs problems!

Braid Wool, String or Thread

Plait or weave together and as you do pray for unity in the churches and between pastors and church leaders. Friendship bracelets would work great too.

Chairs

Stand on chairs or benches (kids love this one but be safe!)

Pray for Christians in your city or nation to be bold in witness and love for the Lord Jesus. Why not think of a nation in the world where it is really tough to be a believer and ask God to give them special boldness!!

Someone Sit

Put a child or whomever you want to pray for on a chair and with some strong volunteers "lift them up before God" (literally!!). Pray fast or as long as you can keep them lifted up!

Doors and Windows

Ask the children to go and stand in 2's or 3's in open doorways in your house or building and for 2 minutes pray for God to "open up doors and windows of opportunities" for the

gospel to spread. Again focus into which nation or city you are asking God to do this!

Use the Architecture

Balconies

Fill buckets of written prayers (perhaps raindrop shapes) and have children pour out the prayers as you sing a song asking for God's blessing to fall. You could also write prayers onto paper aeroplanes and throw them all around the congregation.

Pillars

Use pillars in your church building to hang prayers on. Or wrap paper prayer chains around them. Possible themes for prayer are foundations, strength, unity in the church, God's word and his promises.

Circle Praying

The ancient Celtic Christians based in the British Isles liked to pray in circles. This modern one does too! Circles speak of equality and unbroken friendships..

Amen!

Why not invent your own way to say Amen! Here's one to try to get you started.

Football Team style

All in the circle put their hands in and start low and soft and rise to a crescendo:

AaaaaammmmmmeeeennnnNNNNNN!!!!

Opposites - take out and put in

Ask the group to be still for 30 seconds and think of negatives we are asking God to take out from our lives, churches, communities etc. Share back some of the thoughts and impressions. Maybe someone said "fear". So you could say something like:

"Lord we ask you to take Fear from our lives!" (and as you say it everyone reaches in with one hand to grab hold of the fear. Mime it. All throw it out of the circle.

Now we all think of the opposite of fear, which the Bible says is "love".

"Lord we ask you to put in a new love and courage into our lives!" (act it out again this time taking your hand from outside the circle and putting this new quality into the circle!)

After each prayer you could do the Amen! prayer as above.

Lap Sitting

All stand in a circle facing the same direction. Count to three and all sit down on the lap of the person behind you. Keep your hands free! This is possible with very big groups of people but the secret is sitting slowly and gently together! Don't panic! It is also important that at the start you are in a perfect circle with no jagged corners and love.

* Prayer idea - ask someone to pray that God would help us all live in unity with one another.

Pass the Parcel

Here's a very traditional game we all love to play at parties.

Divide your group into smaller groups of 10 or so. Wrap a nice gift like some sweets (Swiss chocolate if praying for Switzerland!) in several layers of paper. On each layer write a prayer request or something to do as individuals, in twos, all together as a group. Play music and pass the parcel! When the music stops the person holding the parcel gets to

unwrap one layer and read out the prayer activity!

You can have really fun with this game, giving crazy ideas or challenges to do. Of course you can put in a sweet or candy with each new instruction and layer that is opened up. About 7-8 layers will be enough normally. Here's just a few ideas.

- * stand on one leg and shout "God is good all the time" x 3.
- * Write out Matthew 28 on a piece of paper and stick onto a layer. Person who opens the parcel reads the verse. Then they can play "Duck, duck, goose" once but change it to "disciple, disciple, go!" Go around the group and the one they tap on the Shoulder has to chase them back to their place.
- * whole group have to make the shape of 'an arrow'. The person who opened the parcel that time reads out a final prayer, "Dear Lord, fire us out to reach and find the lost, lonely or afraid. Help us all to work together in unity to do this!"
- * On a tray have some cups of water ready. One the instruction paper write, 'Dear Lord, we ask that you fill us with your love and power. May the Holy Spirit make Jesus more real to us all' The person who opens up the parcel reads this aloud as everyone takes a drink together.
- * One the next piece write 'everyone curl up on their own into a little ball. Close your eyes too.' Ask everyone to be very quiet for 45 seconds and think of people in their family or town who feel very lonely or afraid. Pray for them to know Gods love and comfort.

Sardines

The name for this activity comes from the small fish that get packed tightly together in tins! An old UK favourite where a few people are sent off to hide anywhere they want to. The rest then have to go find them and when they do join them in their secret hideaway. It gets more and more crowded as more people discover them! Idea is to remain as undercover as possible. This is good game in which to pray for the persecuted church in many nations or the underground church in China!

The initial people who go off to hide take a nation or situation to pray for and the rest need to find the one that matches their paper. If all the pieces of paper arrive then that team gets a special reward! Think of it as smuggling bibles in etc!

Safeguarding notice. Because of the going off to hide, play this with only the young people hiding etc

Group Shapes

Divide into groups of 6/7. Leader calls out a shape that the group then needs to form using their bodies e.g. 'Church'. The Leader then asks the group to pray for the church. Leader may suggest what to pray for more specifically (pastors, leaders, unity,).

Other ideas of shapes and related prayer topics:

Umbrella For God to send the rain of the Spirit to us, the city etc

Throne Make Jesus Lord of your life again!

Family Pray for protection on the family, marriages etc

Machine Pray for people to have jobs and be able to earn money

For justice in the workplace; for Christians in business to be blessed and protected.

Fruit

Ask God to grow the fruit of the Spirit in our lives

Net

Pray for the unreached and lost in your city, nation, school

Pray for friends by name!

Heart

Pray for the love of God to be experienced or for Gods people to have clean hearts.

Use your imagination. There are loads of shapes out there!

Relay Races

There are so many possibilities in this category!! Here are a few!

Fishing

Make some paper fish and put them in bin bags full of other junk stuff (not too messy however!). On the fish write names of the children's friends or you could pray for. Or pray for politicians or unreached peoples!

Flap A Fish

An alternative idea is to race your fishes. Use a folded newspaper to flap a paper fish from A to B. As each person completes their flap the team huddles together to pray for a minute and then the next team member has their turn.

Jig-Saw Puzzles

Make jig-saws from maps or photos/pictures of what you are going to pray about. Simply cut the image into several shapes. Each person runs and gets a piece and then the team have to complete the picture and then pray for 2/3 minutes!

Eating

Each team is in a circle praying for a nation or people and each person in turn has to run and get something to eat and then return to the team and the next person runs. First team to finish the food wins!

Charades

Leader has a list of prayer needs in the church or group. First person runs to get one of these. They then act it out. When the team guesses correctly they have to pray for 60 seconds. Then the next person runs to the prayer leader to get the next prayer clue and then act it out silently for the group!

Chopsticks

Use Jelly Babies or another small candy! Divide the group into teams and give each team a pair of chopsticks and small bowl, which they place in the centre of the group. Place a large bowl of Jelly Babies in the centre of the room. When the time starts one person from each team runs to the Jelly Babies and picks up one and brings it back to the bowl in their group. As they put it in the bowl they shout:

"Another worker/missionary for _____!" You could name nations of the earth or cities in a nation or people groups you know about. The chopsticks are then passed onto the next person. Allow about 2 or 3 minutes. At the end count up the total number of Jelly Babies each team got and announce the winner. Then get the whole group to stand in a circle and together pray for the total number of missionaries to be released into the nation etc.

Intercession Drama

Standing in the Gap Act out what prayer and intercession is!

Stand God on a chair and have 3 people represent a city, person or nation. Ask people to represent Christians who stand in between God and the place! But have one place not represented at all! Have someone play Satan who tries to put the believers off from their praying! The Christians use their authority to make Satan flee. He then notices that no one is standing in the gap for that city or person over there. He turns his attentions on it and

no one is there to intervene! Help people see their responsibility to be people who stand in the gap!

A Famous Prayer with Movement

This is an old Irish prayer from the 6th Century, based on a prayer traditionally attributed to St. Patrick. Some movements were put to it by Rev. Philip Noble from Scotland who was studying North American Indian sign language.

“May the Road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine bright on your face
and the rains fall softly on your fields.
And until we meet again,
may the Lord hold you in the hollow of his hand.
Amen!”

* YouTube actions available: World-Changing Families YouTube channel

Balloons

Modelling balloons

Make long shapes that the young people write on their prayers. Then link (squeeze and twist!) them altogether into a huge balloon chain! Chains can be positive or negative and you can make your prayer focus accordingly!

Balloon Cage/Prison

Twist long inflated balloons into a cage shape (you'll need at least 16 balloons for this so give yourself time to prepare...) You could pray for those in prison for their faith like the persecuted church or you get the prisons to represent those things that hold people in bondages of one kind or another. Put people into the balloon cage to stand in the gap for whomever you are praying for.

Ordinary balloons

Write prayers on small pieces of paper, fold them and put them down the neck of the uninflated balloon. Inflate and tie them. Put on some music and everyone throws their balloon onto the air! Have a party and throw your prayers up to the Lord! When the music stops each person takes a balloon and bursts it! Warn people it will be noisy! Then expect complete quiet with everyone praying what is on their paper!

Helium Balloons

Either put a small piece of paper with a prayer written on it into a pre-inflated balloon or you could attach a written paper "tail" or write onto the balloon itself. Then fill with helium and let go praying as you watch it disappear.

Paper Shapes

Writing prayer responses onto shaped paper that responds to your teaching themes can be very helpful! These prayer shapes could be taken home, placed in a bible or diary or put up on a wall or part of your scenery.

Hearts

When teaching on Gods love or relationships

Crosses

When teaching on Jesus' death, forgiveness

Human Body

When teaching on the lost or evangelism or praying for others

Fish

The lost, evangelism

Clouds/Rain

God's provision or blessings or dreaming with God

Tear Drop

Things that bring sadness to the heart of God or bring compassion into our own hearts.

Key

Pray for the persecuted church or where we want to see breakthroughs.

Nation Shapes

A great way to pray for the nations of the world is to make shapes of the countries. It's a fun quiz and great for our education and geography. Children can draw and colour in prophetic words and images as prayer.

Anyone know this one?



Knock the Cans Down!

Discuss what strongholds are operating in your nation or city. Write these on paper and stick onto empty coke Cans and take it in turns to throw beanbags at the Cans. When one Can (representing a stronghold!) falls then the group prays for that issue! Keep repeating as long as there are Cans left!

Archery

Soft archery is a fun way to pray with young people and families. Like the above you could aim at cans. What we've done is to use normal targets and each number or ring hit means the shooter goes over to a table and picks up the corresponding prayer topic. They pray for a few minutes and the can join the queue again.

Soft archery equipment is available from Decathlon.

Wide Game Praying

Praying for the Persecuted or Underground church - This one is best done on a camp or retreat where you can be outside. Playing in the dark makes it even more fun! It could even last 45 minutes to an hour!

Two teams with secret headquarters well spaced out on the field, park etc. Idea is to capture the other teams 'treasure' (scriptures written on pieces of paper and put into toilet paper holders!) and take it back to your own centre. Each centre is a 2 metres square area that only the opposite team can get into and remain safely in until they try to escape with one piece of treasure. Each team wears a differently coloured wool arm- band easily seen on the upper arm. If this gets pulled off or broken during the game then the player has to go to get a replacement in the "hospital"!

Meanwhile a group of leaders/adults act as secret police. They are the only ones with torches if you play in the dark and they operate in a middle zone of the playing area. They can catch from both teams and send people off to the "prison" where they have to pray for 2 minutes before being released or back to the hospital if they need a new arm- band! In the prison they are given a prayer sheet. It's good fun if they have to say things out loud like "Jesus is Lord!" (-3).

Start and finish the game with a whistle or other loud noise and the winners are the team with most points! 'Treasures' are worth each 50 points (make as many or as few as you'd like for the game). Every new arm-band is 5 points off and capture by the police is plus 100 points. But only tell them this at the end as a surprise!!

Newspaper Wars

Newspapers are often full of bad news and reports of fighting in the world. Ask the children or young people where they know such conflict is taking place. Collect lots of newspaper! Divide the group into two teams facing each other. Give each team some paper and when the whistle blows or the music starts each team has to throw the paper over to the other side. To win you have to have the least amount of paper left on your side when the time is up! At the end of the time get into groups and pray for a war-torn part of the world where ethnic conflicts are happening.

Pray the News

Get hold of a local or national newspaper.

Please check the contents of the paper beforehand and be age appropriate for your group. Cut up sections or whole pages and give to each group. Ask them to pray into each of the stories or articles, asking Gods kingdom to come into that particular situation, where maybe people are hurting or angry etc.

Take Home Ideas

Mustard Seeds

Give every person a small mustard seed or equivalent seed. Put somewhere safe and use as a reminder to pray this coming week. Go outside and throw it into the wind or plant somewhere.

Plant some sunflower seeds in small pots and water regularly. Each time you do so, pray!

Walk the Land

Cut out a paper shape of your foot and write a prayer for your school or college. It could be "Your Kingdom Come!". Wear it for a day or so inside your shoe or socks. Say it quietly under your breath each time you feel it.

Wear a Plaster or Bandage all day

This is a great way to focus on people who are suffering or in distress and can really help us appreciate the health we do enjoy. As well as spending a day praying themselves young people could even get their friends to write prayers onto the bandage.

Human Knots

Divide group into 8 – 10 participants. Each person closes their eyes and puts both hands into middle of circle. Ask them to join hands with 2 other people making sure they aren't the ones on either side of them. The team now will be in a knot.

Ask them to pray together (a challenge in itself as everyone will be feeling stretched and squeezed!) for God to bring his freedom into the situation you are praying into. After praying for a minute ask the team to undo the knot without letting go of their hands. The result will be a circle shape (occasionally it will be a figure of eight).

At the end one person thanks God for hearing their prayers.

Pass the Squeeze

All hold hands in a circle and pray for the Gospel to spread fast, that Christians would have courage to share their faith. Now leader starts a squeeze that is passed from one person

to the next. Aim is to do this in the least possible time. Have a few tries.

Musical Arches

You can use well-known songs with some people scattered around the room in pairs making arches with their arms. As the music plays everyone else dances in and through these pairs. When the music stops the pairs have to catch people who then have to say what they are thankful to God for. An obvious song for this would be the old favourite "I will enter His Gates with thanksgiving in my heart!" Any uptempo song will work.

Freedom Tag

One person chases others around the room and when he or she catches them they have to stand still with their legs apart. While they wait to be freed by somebody crawling between their legs they must pray for a friend or family member who needs Jesus' power to bring them freedom.

Pray Scripture

One of the most powerful ways to pray for each other is to take a passage from the Bible. Let's choose as an example Psalm 23. Read the Psalm a few times out loud together. Each person chooses one line or phrase or verse. There are all sort of ways to proceed. If your group is about 16 persons or more then make two circles, one inside the other. The inner circle faces outwards and the outer circle faces inwards. Put some music on and get each circle to move in different directions. When the music stops each person finds one person facing them. Now for the next two minutes pray that line or phrase over the other person. It takes just a wee bit of practice to make a prayer out of the phrase. Here's one example. If the two words you get were "the Lord", then you might pray. "Father God, thank you that you are Lord and in control. Help Gemma trust you and be secure that you are in control of her life. Help her out you first this week in everything she does...."

Faith like Potatoes

You may have read the book by Angus Buchan or seen the powerful movie it was made into. Well it inspired this fun way to pray and bless each other. We have used this with hundreds of youth groups across the UK. Blessing prayers are so powerful.

First each person makes two closed fists with their hands. When you want to bless someone else you go to them and place your two fists on top of their fists. Then you bless them looking into their eyes. "I bless you with His joy and peace this week in your school life...."

It's always powerful to see many moving around the room doing this for each other.

Word Association

I find this is really powerful with a group who want to seriously pray!! Get the kids to sit in a circle and choose a volunteer to start. Give the first person the first word of the prayer, ie. Dear, then going round in a clockwise direction the next person says the next word in the sentence, building up the prayer as you go round the circle one word at a time. You finish when the last person says Amen. And then you can start again if you want, and perhaps give a new topic.

Soaking Prayer



Create a beautiful quiet space with drapes, blankets, cushions, Christmas lights, music. Gazebos are great for this! Encourage people to lie out on the floor or get

comfortable. Meditate on a verse from the Bible. Listen to the worship music. Listen to God.

Drumming and Percussion

Use buckets and anything that can get you sounds, from bass to mid- and high-range end of sounds. When you are into a rhythm start experimenting with rapping out Bible verses and then move into prophetic declarations.

Glass Painting Prayers

Collect empty jam jars. Your local art store can advise you on proper glass painting materials. Great finishing touch is to put candles inside to shine out your prayer. These also make great Christmas gifts. Alternatively you can buy bottles online and put in the special string lights available these days.

Beads and Bracelets

Again these can be bought online or at your local art and crafts shop. You can buy letter beads as well as endless shapes and colours. Thread the beads onto the leather making a chain or bracelet and as you wear it for the rest of that day or month every time you look at it, it's a reminder to pray for whatever the beads represent. Of course the alphabet beads can spell, out names of people or nations etc.

Smoke machine

Get the kids to lie on the floor and then switch on a smoke machine for a while. The cloud that you create is to symbolise God's presence. The kids then pray for God's presence to come in a situation either in their lives or some particular need you are aware of as a group.

Cracking Codes

End Bible Poverty

I find that 7-11s love this one. The purpose is to pray for Bibles to be available in different languages. You will need to invent a code and then put some simple messages into the code. An example of a code is making a=z, b=y or a=1, b=2. Or use Morse Code or another language like Russian, Arabic or Braille!

Put the prayer requests into code too! Wycliffe could give information about Bible translation work. Get into 2s and 3s to pray that the Bible will be available in many languages.

Great Visual Aids to grab attention

Flashpaper

This is special paper available from magic suppliers. I use www.missionmagic.com. Each person is given a small piece of flash paper. Ask them to hold the paper and imagine the paper is their confession and being sorry for their sin. Put all the papers in a metal pan and burn! This will make quite a visual statement!

Burn it away

If you don't have flash-paper you can still use normal paper to write prayers of forgiveness towards others, repentance or thanking God for his Son. Be careful with fire and if indoors check the fire procedures and if there are any sprinklers in the room!

Dissolving Paper

Same as above but instead of burning you place this special paper in a bowl of water and see it disappear!

Change Bag

This is a special magic prop you must buy. You can put prayers in the bag and see them disappear and change into answers.

Be a little Boulder!

I have recently acquired a couple of large artificial boulders. I use them everywhere. Schools, churches, conferences. Some of the ways I use them is to get children standing in them being thankful nonstop for 30 or 45 seconds. No hesitation or repeats allowed. not easy to do!

UV Praying

You will need white paper, fluorescent highlighter pens and a UV torch. Darken out a room or gazebo.

The young people or families write their prayers onto the white paper and then go into the dark area in small groups to speak out their prayers. The UV is amazing as the effect is very strong. We have used this to pray for the persecuted church or vulnerable groups in our communities who need to be highlighted.

M&M praying



Prayer for your teacher and ask God to bless your school



Pray for the leader of your church asking God to protect them



Pray for someone in your family that you'd like God to bless



Ask God to send his Holy Spirit to (your town)



Pray for a friend of yours that needs to know God loves them very much



Pray for someone else in this Group

Put some M&Ms on a saucer. Close your eyes and reach out to take one. Open your eyes to see who or what you are to pray for. OR simply choose what you'd like to pray for.

What about Football, hockey, rugby, basketball or volleyball?

Can you pray with these games? Answer is yes because we've done it.

A basic idea is to have two sets of prayer requests ready on each side of the pitch. When a goal is scored then the team who scored go to one set of prayer instructions and the other team go to the other side.

Think of an animal

A great, fun way to encourage.

Ask people to find a partner. Ask everyone to close their eyes and think of an animal. 30-45 seconds is plenty of time. Next everyone shares with their partner what animal they imagined. Now ask everyone to be quiet for 2-3 minutes and think about the animal their partner chose. Ask God to give you an encouragement or word for the other person using the picture of the animal they chose.

What game would God play with you?

Ask everyone to get comfy for about 2-3 minutes. Now ask God this question and why? Share back in small groups.

Piggy Back praying

What we mean by this is that we must teach our youth or children to focus in prayer on a particular topic. To piggy back means we pray 'on top of the prayer' before us. When everyone focuses in on an area for prayer we learn to go deeper and prayer becomes more effective.

Environment

Whether it's 24/7 or Prayer Spaces in schools many of us love creating environments conducive to prayer and intercession. We are convinced our investment over the years in drape, simple lighting, water features has been very worthwhile.

Giant Floor Map of the World

Another investment was to purchase a massive pvc floor map of the world. It's 5x7 metre. If you live in the Coventry/Nuneaton area please come borrow it.

Leap of faith

Making a faith declaration can be very powerful. "Lord I trust you for the future!" or "Lord I will go where you lead me!". Make it safe for a young person to jump from a stable table. You'll need to make steps up to the table as well. For example of the topic is 'war in Syria' first person prays out a prayer about the second person We've had them jump onto cushions as well as the arms of safe adults.

Wrist rope escape

Two persons are tied together with rope around each wrist. The aim is to try and escape without cutting the rope or slipping it off your wrists. Answer is on YouTube. Jesus said, "The truth will set you free!" Before they are allowed to be set free the two persons must pray together for Gods Kingdom to come to some situation you've decided beforehand.

Treasure Hunting

This way of listening to God for clues and then going out into our towns and cities to find the people He wants us to serve has become very popular among many churches. The inspiration came from the book by Kevin Dedmon called The Ultimate Treasure Hunt.

Relay Batons

Have fun getting folks to run a race passing a baton (you can improvise here!). As I write this it will be the Japan Olympics next year in 2020. It's time to pray for a move of God in the nation of Japan! Another idea we've used many times is to pray the Good News will be proclaimed from one generation to another just as the baton is passed from hand to hand. This is great to with all ages together.

Praying for the Persecuted Church

Blindfolds, tape for the mouth, rope for wrists and heavy buckets to carry like in forced

labour camps are all very visual and powerful sensory aids to help with praying for the persecuted church's round the world. Open Doors or Barnabas Fund are two of the organisations with loads of great stories and details to help fuel your praying.

Pray Ekballo

Ekballo is a Greek word meaning 'to send out' or 'to cast out'. In Luke 10 Jesus tells his disciples to pray that the Lord of the Harvest will send out or ekballo workers into the harvest field. It's a key to prayer today, that we will see a new missions movement that will complete the Great Commission of Matthew 28 and Mark 16.

Appendix 1.

Hearing God's Voice

I am part of the YWAM movement. YWAM is like a family of global ministries held together by common purpose, values and relationships. I belong to one of those families called KKI or King's Kids International. A key value that God has put into the very fabric or DNA of the movement we refer to as 'hearing Gods voice'. Jesus himself said, "I can do nothing but what the Father shows me." This dependency on taking time to listen to God and know his heart and mind is what we aspire. It was a lady from New Zealand called Joy Dawson whom God used to teach and refine some of this heart. From this came principles of prayer, intercession and hearing God speak, that have been instilled into the mission. KKI have used these principles with children and young people of all ages and particularly in the context of short-term mission teams. Young people the world over lovingly refer to this process as "steps of intercession" or "Heart Prep".

The 5 steps or principles outlined briefly below are not some magic formula to having a great prayer time. They certainly are foundational truths! We can say that we have witnessed some truly amazing times as young people and children have been honest and open with each other ready to forgive and be forgiven.

It is my conviction that revival would shake both church and nation if we adhered and followed daily these principles.

1. Be thankful
2. Be sorry
3. Be filled
4. Be quiet!
5. Be ready and expectant for God to speak.

Let's look at these a little more in depth.

Be thankful!

Psalm 100:4 says "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise..." Gripping, moaning, grumbling and complaining are not what God wants us to live in. We belie and belittle God himself, exposing how little we trust him. They are the traits that led a whole people to wander in a desert for 40 years, a journey that ought to have taken no longer than 10 days!

Thankfulness unlocks in our young people such wonderful qualities as humility, honesty, gratitude and respect. At the outset of a prayer time it breaks the sound barrier. Thankfulness is first of all an inner attitude but does well to be expressed, and loudly too! Ask everyone to be ready with 1/2 items they are grateful to God for. You may need at first to prime them with some suggestions. Encourage the ordinary everyday things such as a smile in someone else, a mother's attention, food and drink. Be as specific as possible! Now ask for a "machine gun" time of thanksgiving as each person joins in one after the other. No gaps, just quick fire prayer. No long prayers allowed but only 1/2 words! In an all-age setting ask adults to hang back at first until the younger ones are joining in!

Be sorry!

Psalm 24:4 says we need "clean hands and a pure heart" to be in God's presence. I may lead the group in this way "Okay everyone, let's ask God to check our hearts right now. Don't go digging around but allow the Holy Spirit to gently show you any area he isn't pleased with. If it's something between you and God ask his forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 says "if we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse us from all our unrighteousness." If it means going to say sorry to someone else then do it right now if possible. If it is someone else not with us here then agree to the Lord to speak to that person as soon as you get home! Even a telephone call! Jesus' teaching is clear; we are forgiven as we forgive others.

Be filled!

Ask God to fill us afresh with Holy Spirit as He is the Helper, the one who helps us to cry to our Father (Romans 8). You may like as the leader to ask one of the children to lead this prayer! One idea here is to ask everyone to hold out their palms face up and take in a deep breath! He is closer than the very next breath we take!

Be Quiet!

In King's Kids we teach that there are three main voices we hear in our minds and hearts, God's, our own and Satan's. It is a simplistic way of looking at it we know but can help us focus! With some basic teaching we can help young people learn to recognise the voice of the Enemy and his tactics of temptations, accusations and condemnation etc. What is harder is learning to discern between our own voice and ideas and God's voice! In this section we model "silencing the voice of the Enemy" James talks of "resisting the Enemy and he will flee". John 10 says "His sheep hear His voice" So we are saying "Lord we choose to shut out any distractions or influence the Enemy would want to bring to us now and we take authority over him in Jesus name. Lord we choose to listen to your voice right now, trusting in your ability to speak to us.

Be ready and listen

The final principle is to give God time and to wait before Him, thanking Him that he is a God who loves to speak to his children! It's helpful to have a specific question for the group to all ask Father God together e.g. "Father, is there anything on your heart that you want to share with us today about our church, city, community, day of outreach, Sunday school?" Get comfortable for a few minutes and then feedback into small groups or the whole group with bible verses, impressions, pictures people got in there minds. Encourage people to speak out even if what they feel they have is silly or irrelevant. God often speaks with bits of the picture and it is like putting a puzzle together. After getting a sense of what God might be saying don't forget to thank him and pray into what he has revealed.

Appendix 2.

I want to include some teaching outline ideas I have used many times to encourage young people to learn how God speaks and leads us today!

Teaching One: How does God speak?

Aim: to show that God can speak in all sorts of ways.

Welcome:

Game One "Friends?" (3-4 minutes)

Ask for two volunteers who think they know each other well.

Individually whisper the instructions to them quickly after they come out to the front. Tell them to speak to each other at the same time without listening to the other person!

Give them a topic like 'what they do to get ready each morning'. Let them do it in front of the group for a while and then ask the group what is wrong with this picture?

Hopefully they will realise that what is wrong is that they are not listening to each other at all. Surely that is the point of friendship – we make time to listen as well as share!

Learning Point? God is a friend who wants to speak to us if we are ready to listen.

Game Two "Listen Up!" (5-6 minutes)

Warning – this game is noisy!

Ask for any number of volunteers you want. They need to be in pairs. If the group is small enough then everyone can take part. If not we suggest 5 pairs out front demonstrating to the rest. Each pair has to stand with a good distance between them. The idea is to try and understand what the other partner is communicating above all the rest of the noise. You may want half of the group to go first and then swap over. After a while stop to see what they are hearing!

Learning Point? Listening to God takes practice and focus. Other voices may try to put us off.

Game Three "Guard the Keys!" (10 minutes)

This is a classic game we all play at parties. Sit in a wide circle with one person, the Keeper, with eyes closed, sitting in the middle, guarding a set of keys placed beside them. One volunteer, the Thief, is chosen from the circle and has to try to get the keys before the Keeper points at them! If the Keeper points out the Thief then another one is chosen. Complete silence is needed. If the Thief gets the Keys back to their place before being 'caught' then they become the Keeper.

Learning Point? It can help us concentrate on listening when we are quiet.

Bible Exercise: (10 minutes)

In groups or simply by asking everyone together. Make a list of ways God speaks or communicates to people throughout the Bible. Here are some:

Angels Donkey Dreams Preaching Burning Bush Creation Whale Still small voice

Prophets Visions Writing on the wall Signs – Gideon's fleece

Jesus is the 'Word of God' - He is what God is saying.

Encourage people to look up these in the Bible and read them.

Extension question (5 minutes)

In what ways has God spoken and communicated to you personally?

Scriptures Search: (10 minutes)

Here are a few suggested Bible verses to look up and read out. Find your own references too. Remember God's word says in Romans 10:17 "faith comes from hearing God's word".

Romans 8:14

Rev 3:20

John 10:27

1 Samuel 3:9

James 1:22

Teaching Two: "Three Voices"

Aim: To understand the differences in the 'inner voices' we can hear in our heads.

Game "Follow the Leader" (5 minutes)

Blindfolded volunteer needs to get from A to B with obstacles in the way. Carrying an egg on a spoon can add another dimension to this game. What the person needs to do is to listen to his/her friend's voice to get to the other side. But not easy to do when there are 10 other voices trying to put them off!

Learning Point – we need to learn to listen to the right voice!

It can sound simplistic but basically there are three voices we need to learn to differentiate between – God's voice, our Own inner voice or Satan's.

Satan's Voice

Some might find this a strange thing to say; that Satan can 'speak'.

But when we realise that Satan lies, tempts, accuses, brings condemnation, deceives, twists the truth and intimidates then it begins to make more sense.

Here are some Scriptures to back these statements up:

Tempter – Luke 4:1-13

Accuses – Rev 12: 7-12; Job 1; Zechariah 3

Deceives – Genesis 3

Intimidates – 1 Peter 5:8

Lies – John 8:44

Satan can bring conviction and cause guilt but his sort leads us to shy away from God and get into useless remorse and feeling despair.

Learning to recognise how Satan speaks to us is important. When we learn to recognise his tactics it can be very freeing too.

Our Own Voice

These are our own thoughts and imaginations. It also includes the conscience which is mentioned many times in the Bible. It is a God-given ability to know when we have done something wrong.

Romans 2:14-15 talks about an inner voice given to all.

1 Corinthians 8:12 describes the weakened conscience (verse 7 describes a seared conscience)

1 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 1:3 makes it clear that a pure or clean conscience is possible to have. Kids and adults can appreciate that we can talk to ourselves in our heads. It is good fun to explore with them!

God's Voice

We have already considered in the first teaching the many ways God can speak to us. The Holy Spirit within each believer is our guide, our Helper; one who can nudge us and

prompt us. He knows us best and uses many ways to try and get our attention!
Jesus in John 14-16 is at pains to emphasize that the Holy Spirit is our Teacher.
It is crucial to make sure young people know that above all God, the Holy Spirit, will
use His written word to lead us and direct us. That is why it is vital to read it and chew on
it! Teaching young people the art of Biblical meditation is an art we desperately needs
resurrected in the days ahead but another book!

What takes practice is discerning the difference between our own thoughts and God's.

What is King's Kids International (KKi)?

KKi is part of the YWAM global family of ministries. Since 1976 it has helped children, youth and families in over 100 nations grow in faith and character and become passionate to make God known. Learning to love Gods word, both written and spoken, is a key value. Learning to bring joy to Gods heart helps faith come alive and moves us from theory to practice. Every year we send out thousands to do what He says, through creative and celebratory arts, intercession teams, community transformational teams and sports.

Check us out at: www.kkint.net

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Very useful websites:-

flamecreativekids.blogspot.com

www.prayerspacesinschools.com

www.24-7prayer.com

www.ahwg.co.uk

Appendix 3.

Fun acrostics or ways to break up prayer into elements.

ACTS method (traditional)

A - Adoration

C - Confession

T - Thanksgiving

S - Supplication

STOP method (Olly and Helen Goldenberg, Children Can)

S - Sorry

Write a sorry on a Stone and put a bucket of water.

T - Thankful

Write your thanks onto balloons and have a party for 3 minutes

O - Others

Pray on your knees for someone else

P - Personal

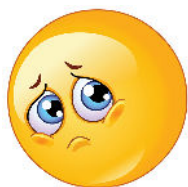
Ask the Lord for one thing you need!



Be Thankful



Be Quiet



V

Be Sorry

Y



Be Ready



Be Filled

PUSH method

Pray until something happens. Why not create a prayer board with your children or youth. Put up your prayer points and each time you meet return to see how God is answering. If it seems nothing is happening ask the Lord why. Model for the children how prayer is often a conversation. We need to learn to wait on the Lord and ask for his will to be done.

Creating atmospheres for young people to connect to God. In local church meetings, camps, local public schools or as families together in home groups.



Quiet Space

Don't be in a rush. Be still. Take time to listen to his voice.

Have your Bible, pen and journal ready to write or draw what you sense Daddy God is saying or showing you.



Joy Space

Take time in Gods presence. Make it a daily habit. Enjoy being with him.

Dance to the music, lie still, paint or make a model.



Action Space

Now go do what he says to you or tells you to do. Let your obedience be the joyful overflowing of your time with him.

In this area pray for someone else and be prayed for yourself. Pray for an overflowing heart to go do what He says and bring joy to His Heart.