



PLAY IT

BEANBAG PRAYER PROMPTS

Supplies

Beanbag (or ball)

This activity gives players practice with the different parts of prayer Jesus included in His model prayer.

Directions

1. Explain: Jesus didn't say every prayer had to include words of praise, surrender, request, forgiveness, and protection. But He was clear that God heard and answered prayers that include these things. That's why Jesus included them in His model prayer!
2. Ask players to stand in a circle. Tell them you'll call out one of the parts of the prayer and then toss a beanbag to a person in the circle. That person will say aloud words that fit that part and then toss the beanbag to someone else, who'll do the same. For example, if you call out "Praise," responses might include "You are mighty!" or "You're the King!"
3. Frequently switch out the part of the prayer. If someone can't think of anything to say after 5 seconds, invite the person to toss the beanbag to another player.
4. When you've rotated through all 5 parts of prayer several times, signal for the beanbag to be passed to you. Say, "Amen," and have everyone sit.

After the activity, talk about this:

- What was easy or hard about this activity?
- Which of the 5 parts in Jesus' model prayer—praise, surrender, request, forgiveness, and protection—show up most often in your prayers? Why do you think that's true?
- Which of the 5 parts do you include least? Why? What, if anything, will you do to add this part more often?
- God *always* answers our prayers, but His answer may be "yes," "no," or "not now." Which of those answers to your prayers do you think you get most often? What, if anything, does that tell you about God ... and yourself?



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YES! NO! WAIT!

A quick game can teach a lot about how God answers prayers!

Directions

1. Have everyone join you in one corner of the room. Assign each of the other 3 corners 1 of these words: Yes, No, and Wait.
2. Explain: Our prayers aren't just requests. We also offer praise, express surrender, ask for forgiveness, and let God know we trust Him for protection. But we often do make requests and God always responds to those requests. Sometimes the answer is "Yes," sometimes "No," and sometimes "Wait." We don't always understand why God answers as He does, but we can be sure He hears us and answers.
3. Tell participants you'll read aloud requests you think God has probably received. Participants will weigh in on whether God should respond "Yes," "No," or "Wait." They'll vote by going to the corner that represents their answer.
4. After participants go to corners, ask volunteers to explain why they picked the corners they did. Then read aloud the "Inside Info" section.
5. Between requests, have participants return to the starting corner.

Here are some requests and "Inside Info" to use. Feel free to add your own!

- Request: "God, please heal my pet, Fluffy. I love her so much."
Inside Info: Fluffy is a 9-foot boa constrictor who plans to eat her owner.
- Request: "God, I want to drive, so please help me pass my driver's exam next week and do a great job driving safely."
Inside Info: The person praying this prayer is 7 years old.
- Request: "God, please be with my grandmother who has cancer."
Inside Info: Grandma's cancer can be treated, and if she recovers, she could live another 20 years.
- Request: "God, help! My parachute won't open—make it open now!"
Inside Info: The guy praying this is still on a plane; he hasn't jumped out yet.
- Request: "God I want to do Your will. Please tell me what it is."
Inside Info: This prayer comes from someone who truly wants to please God.
- Request: "God, I need to pass this test. Please help me know the answers!"



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- Inside Info: The person praying this didn't study. At all. Not for one minute.
Request: "God, I need to pass this test. Please help me nail the answers!"
Inside Info: The person praying this studied hard and came prepared.
- Request: "God, please bless this meal and the hands that prepared it."
Inside Info: This person isn't actually thinking about God; it's all about the pizza.
- Request: "God, give me enough money to go on a mission trip to help others."
Inside Info: This person isn't helping anyone at home or in his neighborhood.
- Request: "God, I need friends. Bring me friends."
Inside Info: This is a new person at your school or workplace.

After the game, talk about this:

- How might knowing the Inside Info as well as the request have changed the choices you made? Or wouldn't that have made any difference?
- Because God is all-knowing, He knows how to answer our prayers in the way that's best for us. But how much do you trust that He always answer—and always answers in the way that's best?
- Why do you think many people who pray think of "Wait" as another way of hearing "No"?



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PLACING THE PIECES

Not every prayer needs to include all the parts in Jesus' model prayer. But when we frequently come to God bringing praise, surrender, request, a desire for forgiveness, and trusting Him for protection—that's a good thing. It means we've learned something from the model Jesus laid out for us.

Let's do an activity and discover more about the benefits of having a clear pattern to follow.

Supplies

Jigsaw puzzle (50- or 75-piece puzzles are available at most dollar stores)

Directions

1. Without letting anyone see the cover of the puzzle box, place all the pieces upside down on a table or other flat surface. The plain cardboard side of pieces will be visible.
2. Ask participants to work together to assemble the puzzle—without turning over the pieces!
3. After about a minute, ask whether it would be easier if the pieces were turned over and the box cover available. Pause to make that happen.
4. As participants assemble the puzzle, talk about this: what's a time in life when having a pattern or instructions to follow makes a difference in getting something done?

After completing the puzzle, talk about this:

- How was having the cover picture helpful in completing the puzzle?
- How is having Jesus' model prayer helpful in praying?