



Philosophical Enquiry for KS2

The Power of Prayer

Could your prayers be answered?

<p>Philosophical Content</p>	<p>Possible Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: Prayer, Faith, Worthiness, Power, Pleading • EPISTEMOLOGY: Belief, Doubt, Evidence, Cause, Effect <p>Example Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did God answer Sofia's prayer about the test? • Did God not answer Sofia's prayer about the cat? • How can we tell if a prayer has been answered? • Why aren't some prayers answered? • What is a prayer? • Does prayer work? • Why do people pray?
<p>Philosophical Method</p>	<p>Thinking Moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONNECT (i.e compare) and DIVIDE (i.e. contrast) the examples in the story. QUESTION the reasons for prayer and the accounts we give of if or when prayer works. NOTICE if this topic arouses strong feelings in you or your classmates. <p>Facilitation Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotion-Detection, Temperature Checking, Debate Spotting and Stirring**
<p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle of chairs • Passing Pom-pom, flash cards, flip chart / white board, pens
<p>Timings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider splitting this session over two lessons

* This is the metacognitive language of *Thinking Moves A-Z* by Dialogue Works. For more info see <https://dialogueworks.co.uk/thinking-moves/> or ask us about our accredited Thinking Moves Training.

** A list of this language for facilitation accompanies these resources.

1. PREPARATION		10 min
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Ethos: If necessary, briefly establish or reiterate your class expectations. E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We're always asking questions ○ We share what we really think ○ We care what other people think too ○ We give reasons for our opinions ○ We're not scared to disagree ○ We often change our mind ○ We speak one at a time ○ We encourage speakers by listening and looking at them 	
Warm Up	In pairs: What kinds of things do people pray for and why?	
2. STIMULUS		30 min
Stimulus Part One	<p>It was late, but Mexico City still bustled with people. Streetlights lit up the sky and car horns sounded in the street outside. Inside, however, it was peaceful, and Sofia was safe in bed curled up with her cat Diego. She lived in a little apartment with her mama and brother Mateo. Her family didn't have much money and she had few toys, but her cat was all she needed. They had found him as a tiny bedraggled kitten abandoned in a storm drain and nursed him back to health. He was now a scruffy strong little tom cat and she loved him with all her heart. She hugged him because she was nervous. She couldn't sleep for worrying about her spelling test at school the next day. She looked up at the little icon hung on a nail above her bed and prayed: <i>'Dear God, tomorrow is my spelling test. Please help me to do my best. Help me to get a good mark and make Mama proud of me.'</i></p>	
Thinking Time	In pairs: Did God answer Sofia's prayer?	
Stimulus Part Two	<p>The next afternoon Sofia walked home from school with a big smile on her face. All her spellings were right ten out of ten! God has answered her prayer.</p> <p>As she turned the corner of her street, she saw her brother wandering on the pavement outside their building, looking under cars and in rubbish bins. As she got closer, she could see he had a very serious expression. <i>'It's Diego'</i> he said. <i>'He's gone missing, we've looked for him everywhere'</i>.</p> <p>Sofia know Mexico City was a big dangerous place. A little lost cat could easily be lost or killed. That night Sofia cried as she prayed. <i>'Dear God, please, please, please bring my little cat home safely... I am heartbroken without him.</i> Sofia prayed the next night, and the next. She lit candles in the cathedral and knelt down with her hands clasped tightly together. But Diego didn't come home.</p>	

Thinking Time	In pairs: Did God answer Sofia's prayer?	
3. QUESTIONS		10 min
Quick Question	Begin with a quick question for the group to discuss. From this initial discussion, do some 'Question Detection' i.e. listen out for interests that may form the basis of further questions. Did God answer Sofia's prayer?	
Quality Question	If the quick question still has everyone engaged, keep going! If it's time to move on, try this: From this initial discussion, offer the group a 'Question Selection' i.e. propose three questions based on matters raised so far and invite them to choose which question they'd like to discuss in more detail. Write them each on a whiteboard and invite the group to 'Vote with their Feet'. Your questions could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we tell if a prayer has been answered? • Why aren't some prayers answered? • What is a prayer? • Does prayer work? • Why do people pray? 	
This is a good point to take a break		
4. DIALOGUE		30 min
First Thoughts	Paired discussion.	
Collecting Ideas	Facilitated whole-group discussion gathering a range of responses.	
Getting Focused	Facilitated whole-group discussion, identifying and exploring key emergent idea(s).	
Digging Deeper	Possible emerging considerations (to look for or introduce as challenges) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should all prayers be answered? Are there things we ought not to ask for? • If God doesn't grant prayers, is there any benefit in praying? • Can we answer our own prayers? • Are some people more deserving of having their prayers answered than others? • Is answering some prayers and not others fair? 	
Final Thoughts	As a final round, a chance to hear from everyone on their final thoughts from the discussion. Depending on time, go around the circle once, hearing from everyone. Alternatively, if pressed for time, hear from a few volunteers.	
Emotion Detection	Ask the students to write about moment in the conversation that has aroused strong feelings, either in themselves or others.	

5. REFLECTION		10 min
Reflection on the Method	Ask for volunteers to talk about what they NOTICED about the emotions experienced during the enquiry.	
Reflection on the Method	Ask the group to CONNECT those emotions to particular topics that were raised.	

Next Steps	The story of King Midas, someone whose wish (prayer) was granted, but fared badly because of it. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nn8YGPZdCvA
-------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

© 2018 (Revisions made in 2020) Grace Lockrobin of Thinking Space
All Rights Reserved

Thinking Space c.l.c.
Public Philosophy Projects

101 Beechwood Road, Sheffield S6 4LQ
info@thinkingspace.org.uk
www.thinkingspace.org.uk

twitter.com/Thinking_Space_
facebook.com/ThinkingSpacePhilosophy
instagram.com/Thinking_Space_