
ARTICLE #13: PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

This article stems from our shared vision that students have a capacity to be used by God and make a difference for His Kingdom right now, where they are. One of the quickest ways that a child can get involved in serving others and making a difference is through prayer. Prayer requires few resources – you don't need a building, or money, or supplies to minister to others through prayer, and yet prayer is the most effective tool in any minister's arsenal!

We recently got together at a staff and volunteers retreat to discuss the way that students can grow in their vision to have an impact for God. After a weekend of prayer and discussion, we landed on the following suggestions. We encourage you to pick a few to implement in your classroom. We would also encourage you to remember the "less is more" philosophy while you implement these; a few ideas carried out very well will make a larger difference than lots of ideas that are pursued half-heartedly.

The goals we are aiming for:

- Give kids a vision for the impact they can have.
- Let the students learn to depend on God (i.e. don't spoon-feed them everything, rather let them learn to ask "Lord, what would you have me do?" and follow their convictions).
- Challenge the adults to get rid of their cynicism.
- Teach children to celebrate and remember instances of God's faithfulness to them.

Suggestions for older classrooms:

- Encourage the workers to be mindful of their opportunity to model a deep relationship with God. Pray deep and heartfelt prayers in front of the students; let your guard down.
- Include the students in the worker's prayer time for the classroom.
- Do a special teaching series on prayer.
- Give student's a special topic to focus on for their prayer time each week. Examples may include: missions, thanksgiving, praise, etc.
- Soak your classroom activities in prayer. Pray as a group before and after the large-group teaching, as well as in small group time.
- Divide students into prayer partners (or 3-person teams) to allow each student more input during times of prayer.
- Take some students on a walk and pray for the spiritual health of the neighborhood, the neighbors themselves, and the reputation of God's name.

Suggestions for mid-level classrooms:

- Use props to help focus prayers (e.g. when praying for the poor bring in old clothes to show the hardships that people face).
- Pass out index cards and have students write one thing to pray for. Keep the cards and read them next week. Put any answered prayers in a jar so that students can see that God has answered their prayers.
- Keep a prayer journal for the classroom. Have workers hold on to it and update it each week.
- Adopt a younger classroom to pray for regularly.

Suggestions for younger classrooms:

- Teach kids about the different ways that they might hear from God (or ways God might answer a prayer). Explain that it might take patience/practice to recognize God's voice.
- Teach kids that there is power in prayer; they can impact eternity.
- Use a world-map rug to visualize different countries to pray for.
- Give students a card with a picture of something to pray for.
- Regularly ask students, "What did you learn in your prayer time? Did God speak to you?"

There are even things to pray for in nursery classrooms:

- Pray for the children you look after; pray for their future.
- Encourage parents to pray with and for their kids.
- Tell the children that you are praying for them.
- Send out monthly emails/prayer pages with one aspect of God's truth to focus on.