



Where, why and how do Christians pray – teachers' notes

Thank you for downloading this resource. We hope that it will be a useful teaching tool in your classroom.

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Overview:

Recap the essential elements of where, how and why Christians pray, within the context of Westminster Abbey, at the start of the topic on prayer and worship. This KS3 introduction lesson is designed to last for one hour. It includes activities about what Christian worship looks like, examples of how Christians pray and an activity about matching key locations in the Abbey with definitions of their purpose in a service.

SLIDE 3: Explore the location of the Abbey through Google Maps.

As a Royal Peculiar, Westminster Abbey is neither a parish church nor a cathedral. Instead it is directly accountable to the monarch. The Abbey was rebuilt in its Gothic style by Henry III in 1245AD. Westminster Abbey was a Catholic monastery until the reign on Henry VIII.

SLIDE 4: Allow pupils to discuss and feedback. Alternatively ask pupils to consider worship in the first instance, and then prayer.

This is designed to be a starter activity, with definitions included on slide 6.

SLIDE 5: Ask pupils their thoughts on the prayer and worship. Are they similar to what the film shows?

SLIDE 6: Ask pupils what acts they think Christians might do to honour God.

Worship: The word 'worship' comes from the old term "worth-ship", meaning to give someone the honour they are worth. For Christians, any act they do to pay honour to God is an act of worship.

Prayer: Christians believe that prayers are a personal conversation with God. Prayers can be silent, or they can be said aloud, and Christians will often pray in public (for example in a church service) as well as in private. Prayers are a part of Christian worship.

SLIDE 7: This is designed as an introductory activity. Allow pupils to discuss and feedback.

1. This slide allows you to give pupils a visual overview of some different types of Christian worship and key items these may include. Highlight that Christian worship looks different across different Christian denominations. This will be useful for pupils who are not or are less familiar with Christian worship overall, as well as for those who may only have experienced worship through a



particular denomination.

2. Pupils may or may not have participated in Christian worship or Church services. This task allows pupils to explore and share their current knowledge in a way that encourages them to think about a Christian's experience during worship. What might they hear? What might they smell? What might they taste? What/how might they feel. Guidance on possible responses below:
 - Sound: singing (hymns or songs, congregation or choir), organ music, voices (people saying prayers, the minister leading the service), bells or other instruments
 - Smell: incense (in Catholic or High Anglican services), burning candles, food (many modern churches host communal meals after services)
 - Taste: bread and wine during Eucharist/Holy Communion
 - Feel: a sense of belonging or community, a spiritual feeling, feeling connected to God, peace, happiness, joy

True Christian worship requires believers to turn their whole selves to God and to focus only on raising their hearts to him.

SLIDE 8: Prayer and worship at Westminster Abbey.

Further information on Westminster Abbey services can be found at <https://www.westminster-abbey.org/worship-music/services-times>. These include special services at Advent and Christmas, Holy Week and Easter, and Edwardtide.

SLIDE 9: It may be challenging for pupils to visualize worship taking place at Westminster Abbey without first seeing inside it. Use the images on this slide to point out the different parts of the Abbey: the Nave, the Quire, the Sanctuary and the locations of the North and South Transept (use the plan on the next side for reference).

You can take your pupils on a digital tour of Westminster Abbey <https://www.westminster-abbey.org/learning/virtual-tours>. As with the images above if you choose to do this it is recommended that you focus on the Nave, Quire and Sanctuary. You may want to show this to pupils now. Alternatively you can use it after the activities on slides 14-16.

SLIDE 10: Floorplan of Westminster Abbey. Point out the key areas of the Abbey labelled on the plan. It is not necessary to go into further detail here as pupils will revisit this during the main activity of this resource.

SLIDE 11: Activity: What examples of Christian prayer can you think of?

Whole class activity, collect a list of pupils' suggestions on the board. Examples might include: The Lord's Prayer, giving thanks or saying grace before meals, personal prayers said before bed.

SLIDE 12: Activity: What do you think?

1. Why you think a Christian would pray
2. What you think a Christian might pray for
3. Why you think they might pray for these things

Westminster Abbey

Learning



SLIDE 13: The Lord's Prayer: <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/going-church/lords-prayer> .

Use the slide to familiarise/re-familiarise pupils with The Lord's Prayer.

Further information and a video relating to The Lord's Prayer can be found on the Church of England website <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/going-church/lords-prayer>.

SLIDE 14: Holy Communion.

Your pupils may already be familiar with the Holy Communion service. If this is the case, use this slide to check and refresh their knowledge.

SLIDE 15: The painting behind the High Altar at Westminster Abbey is of the Last Supper. At the Last Supper Jesus asked his disciples to perform the Eucharist 'in remembrance of me'.

SLIDE 16 & 17: Activity: Match the word to its picture and definition to find six things that play an important role in services at Westminster Abbey.

This is a 3 part activity designed to extend pupils' understanding of worship at Westminster Abbey and in other Anglican churches. Part 1 is on this slide with answers following on slide 15. Part 2 and answers are on slides 16 and 17. Part 3 and answers are on slides 18 and 19.

In part 1 of this activity pupils match the word (1-6) to its picture (A-F) on this slide. In part 2 they then have to match these with the definitions given on the activity sheet on slide 16. They write each name against the correct definition in first column of the activity sheet. In part 3 they then have to locate each item within a plan of the Abbey.

SLIDE 18 & 19: Pupils should use the clues to help them locate the items on the plan of the Abbey.

SLIDE 20 & 21: Fill in the blanks with the corresponding name.

SLIDE 22 & 23: Could you be a guide at Westminster Abbey? Answer the questions below to find out.

1. What do Christians believe prayer is?
2. Why do Christians pray (give two examples)?
3. Which type (denomination) of Christians pray and worship at Westminster Abbey today?
4. Name two places a Christian might worship God.
5. Which formal prayer is often said by Christians during services at the Abbey and may also be said at home?
6. Which items would you find on the Altar during a service at the Abbey?
7. What important service takes place at Westminster Abbey every day?
8. What is the book that helps Anglican Christians to pray during services?

SLIDE 24: Discuss. If time, this philosophical question could be used to provoke discussion.

1. Why do people sometimes suffer or die despite Christians praying for them?
2. If God is unchanging, what is the point of praying to ask him to intervene in the world?