

Writing Our Hopes into Reality: Morning Prayer Pages *Start Your Day*

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SUMMARY:	This session makes use of free-writing and some writing prompts to harness participants' imaginations and use writing to launch into the day they hope to have. Time for individual reflection or prayer is also incorporated.
ABC GOALS:	<p>Affective: Participants will feel...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whatever they need to feel in that moment • Inspired by their own reflections to live the best day they can <p>Behavior: Participants will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortably and freely express themselves in writing • View writing as a tool for self-reflection and prayer <p>Cognitive: Participants will know...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basic building blocks of Jewish prayer • That they can pray in their own words any time they want
AUDIENCE:	This can be modified for all ages, but might be challenging for younger campers. Ideal size is up to 15 people, but a larger group would be okay too.
TIMING:	45 minutes
APPENDICES:	None
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Blank paper or notebooks, pens, scissors, clipboards, large pieces of paper
SET-UP DETAILS:	<p>This session can take place in any space, but outdoors with space to spread out would be ideal. If indoors, give participants plenty of room to spread out, and with a nice view of outside if possible.</p> <p>Some participants might have an easier time writing at a table, so having tables and chairs or benches, or clipboards to lean on, would be helpful.</p>

SESSION TIMELINE

00:00-00:05- Free Write

00:05-00:15- Reflection and Introductions

00:15-00:35- Writing as Prayer

00:35-00:45- Personal Prayer and Reflection Time

SESSION OUTLINE:

Free Write (5 minutes)

Free write for 5 minutes before doing anything else.

Anytime you write, you can also draw. You don't need full sentences- this is for YOU.

Reflection and Introductions (10 minutes)

Reflect- surprised by anything you wrote? How did this help or not help you start your day?

Writing as Prayer (20 minutes)

Introduce the 4 prayer prompts on large pieces of paper:

Wow

Help

Sorry

Thanks

(Explain that these are inspired by a Jewish modification of the "Help Thanks Wow" framework of [Anne Lamott](#))

Almost all Jewish prayers can be categorized into these 4 words (sometimes more than 1 at once).

Invite participants to add synonyms, or other words that come to mind on each of the large pieces of paper.

Teach participants how to make a zine pamphlet, if they would like to write in booklet form:
<https://www.readbrihtly.com/how-to-make-zine/>

Invite participants to choose one prayer word to write about (or more).

Give participants another 5-10 minutes to write, choosing one of the words to start. They are welcome to move through multiple words, or to focus on just one.

Personal Prayer and Reflection Time (10 minutes)

- Say goodbyes and thank yous before moving into this last activity.
- You'll now have ten quiet minutes to reflect on your own words, and/or the words in the prayer book. Feel free to place your own booklet inside the prayer book itself.
- This is an opportunity to recite traditional prayers as well if you would like.
- If you'd like, pick a prayer and think about the wow/help/sorry/thanks that the author was thinking about. Add your own thoughts to theirs.
- You can take as long as you want or need. When you hear the chime, time is up and it will be time to move to the next part of your day.

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP:

- For camps that have scheduled prayer time, this can be a nice activity to incorporate from time to time, or to do immediately before that prayer time.



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- For camps that do not have prayer time in the schedule, this can be an opportunity to give campers an occasional prayer-like experience.
- If prayer is not at all part of your camp culture, this can be reframed as an exercise to more generally reflect and practice mindfulness.