



Common Siddur Words

Topic

Tefillah – prayer

Grade Level

Intermediate

Goals for the Lesson/Activity

Students will:

- Become familiar with common words from the *siddur* (prayer book)
- Have scaffolding to pray meaningfully
- Have opportunities to deepen their connection to prayer by illustrating and creating movements related to common *siddur* words

Materials needed for paper/print option

- Common *Siddur* Words Flash Cards
 - Print out sets of flash cards on card stock. Each set includes a common Hebrew word from the *siddur* on one side and a translation with extra space on the other side. You may choose to have one set of flash cards for each student, for pairs of students, or for small groups.
 - To create vocabulary games, download the teacher and student Vocabulary Game Guides from JTeach.org.
- Markers/Crayons

Technology needed for tablet/computer option

- [Quizlet](http://quizlet.com), free for iOS (iPad) or Android devices and/or free browser version
- To access a prepared Quizlet set of these words, click [here](#) or type in the following in any browser: http://quizlet.com/_1042vm.

The Quizlet set password is: JTeach.org

- Tablet(s) or Computer(s)

Device Notes: This activity can be done with 1 device as a station in the classroom or with multiple devices for the whole class at the same time. If using one device, students can work with a partner and either sign up for a time slot or rotate to the Quizlet station at times throughout the class period.



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Background for Teachers

The *mitzvah* (commandment) to pray is considered to come from the Torah. The Rambam (Maimonides) and the Ramban (Nachmanides) debate about the source for this *mitzvah*. According to the Rambam, the source is “You shall serve your God” (Exodus 23:25). According to the Ramban, the source is crying out before going to war (Numbers 10:9). Thus, for the Rambam it is a Biblical *mitzvah* to pray every day while, for the Ramban, it is a Biblical *mitzvah* to pray when one feels the need to petition God. The Ramban states that the *mitzvah* to pray every day is rabbinic and comes from Ezra and the Great Rabbinical Court.

This debate between the Rambam and the Ramban sets some of the parameters of *kevah* (set prayer) versus *kavanah* (prayer that comes with intention). According to Rabbi Avraham Weiss in *Holistic Prayer*, prayer is set in order to enable the petitioner to have *kavanah*. If we were to pray only when we have a true desire to petition God or to demonstrate our love for God, we might forget what it feels like to have that desire. With set prayer, we give ourselves the opportunity to have moments when we have true *kavanah* for prayer.

The words that appear on the flash cards are words that are part of the set prayers that we say on a regular basis. This lesson gives students the opportunity not only to learn the literal meanings of the words but also to think about how they relate to the words physically and spiritually.

Description of Activities

- Hand out sets of flash cards to students/student groups. Ask students to illustrate the translated side of the flash cards. Students can review words in pairs.
- **Make Your Prayer Moving** – Ask students to act out the words on the flash cards and/or create meaningful movements that they can do while praying.
- If using Quizlet, students can play [online games with the card set](#) prepared by JTeach.org. The Quizlet set password is: **JTeach.org**



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Differentiation Options

Knowing that students learn in a variety of ways and modalities, the following options are provided to help you adjust the above lesson to meet the unique needs of your learners.

For learners who need more assistance:

- Narrow the number of words to use in the vocabulary activities to 6-8 instead of the full list.
- Ask students to work in small groups of 3-5 learners with a *Madrich(a)* to come up with memorizing tricks/mnemonics for the words.

For learners who need extension opportunities:

- Provide learners with a *siddur* and ask them to look for the vocabulary words in their favorite prayer(s). Ask them to note patterns in the words (prefixes, suffixes, gender construction, etc.)
- Ask learners to write their own prayer using the vocabulary words. This could be done in Hebrew or a mix of English and Hebrew. Provide a Hebrew-English dictionary as a student resource.