



# Writing to God

Kids' Edition

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## **Acknowledgments**

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### *Writing to God: Kids' Edition*

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Hi! My name is Rachel.

When I was a girl, I wasn't sure how to pray. Should I use fancy church words?

Holy Thee **THEOU** Blessed Trinity Amen

Should I put my hands together and close my eyes? (Closing my eyes usually put me to sleep.) Should I pray for the whole entire world? And how could I pray for the whole entire world if I didn't know the name of every person . . . *Laboni, Dae, Aram, Vahe, Elizabeth, Paavo, lanthe, José* . . . or the name of every place and every plant and every animal?

Most of the time, adults did the praying for me. My dad prayed at dinner. My pastor prayed during church. My teachers prayed in Sunday school. Adults wrote the books of prayer that I read in the morning before school. Adults wrote the prayers that we said aloud in church (including Jesus, who gave us the "Our Father" prayer).

So I never learned how to pray using my own words.



I just guessed.

Um ... **HI GOD.**

I felt pretty certain that my made-up prayers weren't very good and didn't really work.

... Can you hear me?

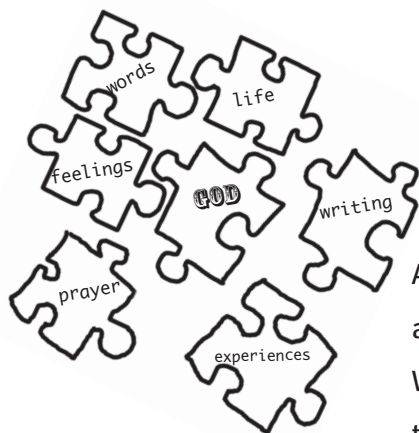
But I kept trying. I really wanted to say prayers to God using my own words, sharing my own feelings, asking my own questions.

One day—much later, when I had grown up—I was watching my baby son as he slept in his crib, and I wanted to say a special prayer that was just for him. I wanted to ask God to wrap love around him like a blanket. I decided to write down my prayer so that I could keep it and keep praying it as my son grew up.

I wrote:

May the angels guide you.

May the LORD hold you and  
be with you for your whole life.



When he was a few years older, I wrote this:  
God, walk beside him through the hallways  
at school. Sit with him in classes and in the  
cafeteria. Laugh with him, teach him, and  
bring him safely home after school.

As I looked at the words I had written, it was like  
all the puzzle pieces of prayer finally fit together!  
When I wrote down these prayers, I finally realized  
that I actually *could* pray. . . .



. . . and I haven't stopped writing my prayers ever since! I like to call this prayer-writing, and I use prayer-writing everywhere! I carry a pencil or pen and paper with me so that I can write prayers anytime and anywhere: at the kitchen table, in my car, just before bedtime, at my church, in the coffee shop, at a friend's house, on the beach, at the computer. Anywhere!

Today, after all these years, I can say that I love praying. I think if I had discovered prayer-writing when I was a kid, I might not have felt for such a long time that it was hard to pray.

If you feel like you don't know how to pray (like I felt when I was your age), maybe I can help! You might enjoy prayer-writing as a way to talk to God.

This book has ideas to show you how to write prayers in your own words. You can read through the whole book and try all of the ideas together, or you can try one new idea every day. You can use these ideas to write prayers with your family, or you can write prayers that are just between you and God.

Your prayers don't have to be perfect to reach God. You don't have to use big or fancy words. Your prayers can be long or short. Your prayers may even tell a story using words or pictures. Your prayers can be happy or sad or grumpy. Your prayers can have misspelled words and crossed-out words. (God understands when we make mistakes.)

Just be honest with God. Use words that make sense to you. Write about what you're feeling. Tell God when things are really great . . . and when they're not. Have fun using prayer-writing as a chance to talk to God.

And—no matter what your prayer looks like on paper—please know that God is enjoying this conversation with you!

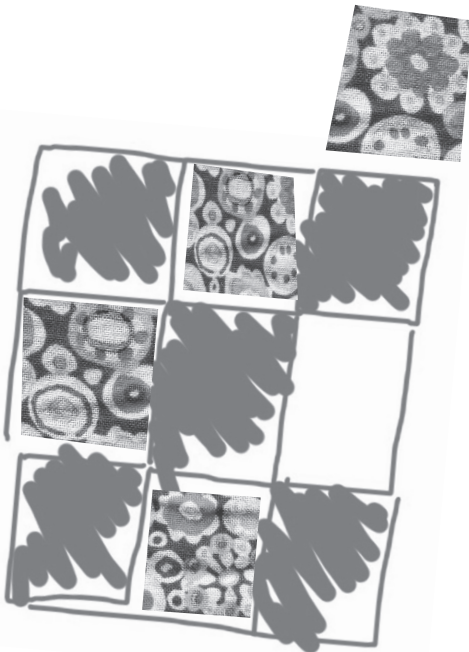
*from Rachel*



# Idea #1

## Writing prayers that use your five senses.

Let's start with the *sense of sight*. What are three things that you can see, right now, where you are? Write to God and tell God something about each of these three things.



For example, I see flowers and a mirror and a pen. So I tell God:

The yellow and white flowers are beautiful.

The next time I look in that mirror,

I want to remember that God loves me.

I like to write with my favorite blue pen.

I know that those sentences don't start with "Dear God" or end with "Amen," but each sentence is a prayer—a short conversation with God!





## Idea #1 Writing prayers that use your five senses.

Let's use the sense of touch next for praying. Think about holding a rock in your hand. Does it feel smooth or bumpy? Is it hard, or does it crumble easily? Is it heavy? What can you do with rocks? Write "Thank you for rocks" and then make a list of cool ways that we use rocks.





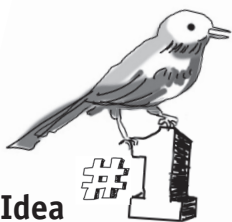
**Here's my example:**

Thank you for rocks  
that make roads and become buildings.  
Thank you for rocks that I can skip across the river.



**Logan (age 5) prays:**

Dear God, Thank you for rocks.  
They are cool because . . .  
they're hard  
you can collect rocks  
some rocks can draw  
they make shapes  
they can line up in a row.



**Idea**

**Writing prayers that use your five senses.**



How about the *sense of hearing*? Do you ever hear bad news? Sometimes we hear something sad or scary or mean when we're listening to people talk around us, listening to the radio or television. Tell God about some bad news that you've heard.

## I want to tell God:

I'm so sad to hear that my grandfather is sick. I'm worried because he is in the hospital. Would you please take care of him, and take care of my grandmother, and of me too?

## Emily (age 12) prays:

Dear Lord, I woke up this morning full of life, and five seconds later my world went up in smoke. I couldn't bear the words I was hearing. My sister is moving! Pull me through this, Lord. Let me know I am loved . . .





## Idea #1

### Writing prayers that use your five senses.

Now the *sense of taste*! You can probably think quickly of foods that you love to taste. Did you know that there's a Bible verse that says, "Taste and see that the LORD is good!" (Psalm 34:8, NRSV)? This verse tells us that we can use all of our senses—even taste—to get to know God. How awesome that even the food we eat can remind us of God! Write or draw pictures of food that you like (and food that you don't like!) to thank God for the different kinds of food in the world.





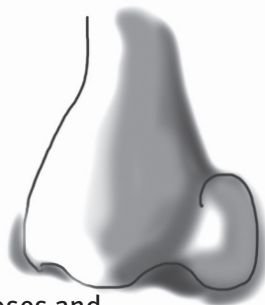
**I thank God for:**

warm tomato soup on a chilly day  
lima beans (even though I think they are really gross)  
corn-on-the-cob with butter  
apples (God, it's amazing that you can make one  
little apple seed grow into a whole apple tree with  
new apples!)

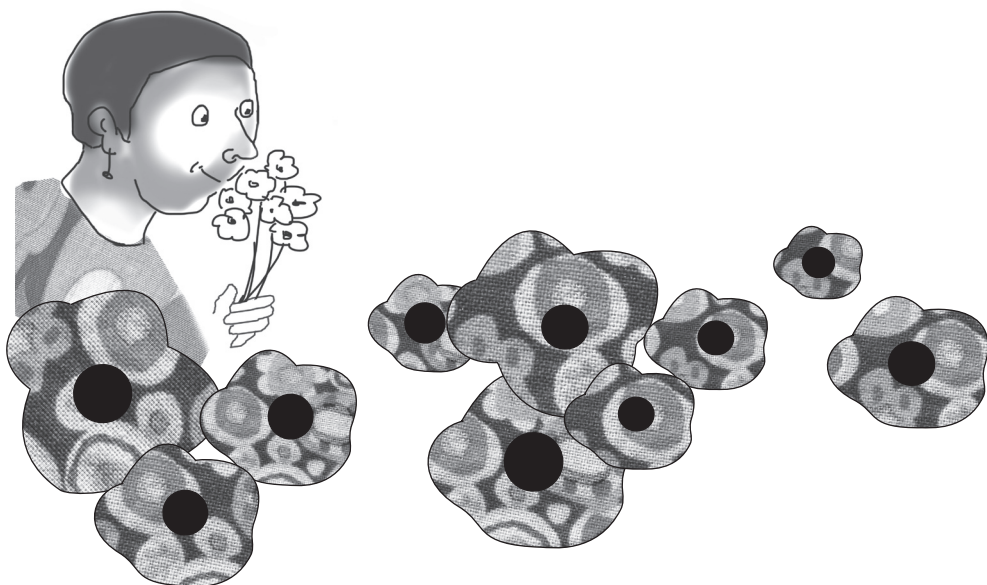


# Idea #1

## Writing prayers that use your five senses.



Finally, the *sense of smell*. I wonder how our noses and brains decide if things smell good or nasty. Or why some people like a smell that other people dislike. God is amazing for creating so many scents! Write to God about the things you smell.



**These are some of the things that I am thankful for smelling, God:**

chocolate cookies baking in the oven  
a hamster cage that needs to be cleaned  
the kind-of-good, kind-of-stinky smell of mud after rain  
smoke from a campfire



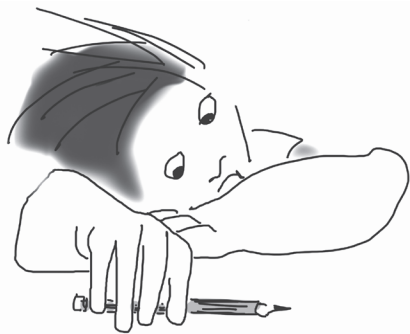
**This list doesn't look like a prayer,  
but I thank God for the sense of  
smell to experience the odors of life!**



## Idea Writing to God about your feelings.

Write to God when you're upset about something you shouldn't have done (or something you *should* have done but didn't do). Start with "I'm sorry."





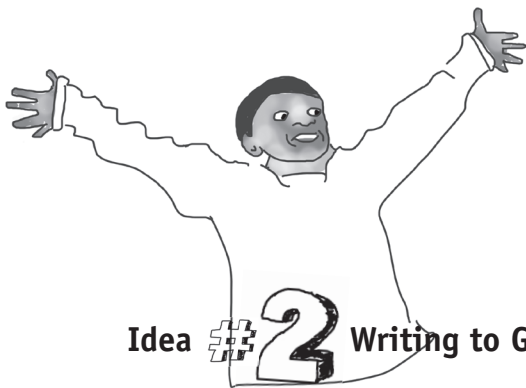
One summer, I was angry at my friend Alexi. I thought Alexi was ignoring me, so I decided to ignore her too. We didn't speak all summer. Then she called me one day . . . and I realized that I had been a bad friend to her! I wrote this prayer after we talked:

I'm sorry that I hurt Alexi's feelings by ignoring her. I was wrong to be angry. Please help me forget my anger.

**An "I'm sorry" prayer from Logan (age 7):**

Dear God: I'm sorry that I was not being a good friend to my Nana. That I was not being a good sport. I know that you want me to be good. I played another game with her and didn't call her a cheater. When I make bad choices, it makes people feel bad. I will try to be better.





## **Idea #2 Writing to God about your feelings.**

What do you say when something great happens? I hear kids say things like “Wow!” “Cool!” “That rocks.” “Awesome!” and “OMG!” Write to God when you feel surprised or amazed by something great that happens. Start your prayer with “Wow, God!”



**Sometimes in the morning I want to tell God:**

Wow! That sunrise was awesome!

**When I'm at the ocean, I often pray:**

God, the sound of waves crashing on the beach is so cool!

**Noah (age 11) writes:**

Wow, God, something amazing just happened:  
Francesca learned how to ride a scooter!  
It made me feel so happy because  
me and Faith taught her how.





## Idea **#2** Writing to God about your feelings.

God knows that sometimes we feel tired, sometimes our bodies hurt, sometimes we feel grumpy about being ourselves and we want to be more like someone else. Tell God about those feelings.

