

Religion Class

Forty Days with Jesus Devotional Life Project: Senior Religion

Grade Level

12th

Content Area

Bible/Religion

Topic Areas

John

Developing a Personal Devotional Life

Time Requirements

Preparation Time: Copying of materials.

Class Time: Twenty minutes of class time per day that you have class for approximately two months.

Concept/Enduring Understanding

Our students are so busy these days that many who desire to begin a devotional life never really get around to it. Students develop a pattern of devotion when offered a structured context in which to both learn tools and standards for devotional reading. As our goal is to enable students to foster a daily walk with Jesus, this project exposes them to a consistent practice with materials and content to feed their souls.

Essential/Guiding Questions:

How can students be shepherded into consistent, meaningful, relevant devotional practice?

Journey To Excellence Standards Addressed

- J2E 1.1 Accept God as the Creator and the Redeemer.
- J2E 1.2 Have a growing knowledge of God's Word and enjoyment in its study.
- J2E 1.3 Embrace God's gift of grace by accepting Christ as one's personal Savior.

- J2E 1.4 Discover the importance and power of prayer and faith in one's relationship with Jesus.
- J2E 1.5 Value God's revelation of Himself through inspired writings and creation.
- J2E 1.8 Value and participate in worship alone and with others.
- J2E 2.6 Relate to lifestyle choices and cultural issues based on biblical principles.
- J2E 3.4 Recognize that God's unconditional love gives one self-worth.
- J2E 5.5 Achieve a balance in work and leisure; balance physical, mental, social and spiritual activities.
- J2E 5.6 Recognize the interaction of physical, mental and spiritual health with emotional and social well-being.
- J2E 6.1 Broaden intellectual abilities through the study of God's Word.
- J2E 8.7 Manage time effectively.

Specific Learning Outcomes

Head (know): The learner will encounter reading material and their own spiritual health. They will discover the value of a personal relationship with Jesus that thrives on more than just what they pick up at church and in class.

Heart (feel): The learner will sense a growing connection with Jesus as they invest time, energy, and attention into a relationship with Him.

Hand (do/respond): The learner will develop a set of devotional practices that they can take with them into college and beyond.

Assessment of Outcomes

- Students will develop a personal devotional life.
- Students will work to be consistent in their learning about and with Jesus.
- Students will reflect on the learning they have done in a way that allows them to interact with their classmates.

Teaching Strategies & Instructional Management

- Presentation of Components of a Devotional Life
- Instruction for selection of devotional books
- Student accountability for reading when teachers check in each class
- Student reflection of learning and growth at the conclusion of each topic

Required Materials

- Devotional reading books (You can have students bring them in, work with you school library to have several selection available, or build your own devotional library...if time and resources allow!)
- Project handouts:
 - Application for Devotional Book
 - Devotional Reading Record
 - Devotional Reading Response
- Teacher checklist for tracking student reading (not included)

Description of Lesson

This project has been designed to address the need for students to develop a personal devotional life. It is designed as a compliment to instruction on Bible study techniques and criticism. Because I teach a block schedule (90 minutes per class period), for the last couple of months of school, I have the seniors read and have personal devotional time in class. The project works like this:

1. I present background content on what a devotional life is, and what kinds of materials we utilize to grow and nurture our relationships with God.
2. Students select devotional reading material. It is incredibly vital to this project that they select their own reading (within the parameters of the goal, of course. I don't allow fiction reading during this time, even Christian fiction), because this will become incredibly burdensome if they are saddled with something they can't grow with. I even encourage my students to switch books after a few days if they are struggling to find it valuable. They are allowed to select from the following options (I have built up a library of teenager-friendly books over the years, but I encourage you to make some recommendations to your kids based on their interests and spiritual maturity levels):
 - a. The Bible (they are required to pick a focused area of study)

- b. A devotional book (check out Christian bookstores or this genre online) (Several of these books include study questions, journal writing starters, and even activities to
 - c. A Christian lifestyle/issue book
- 3. After students have personally selected their reading material, they are required to submit a Devotional Reading Book Application, and must wait for instructor approval before proceeding.
- 4. Approved readers then begin the reading process. I have them track their reading for approximately 40 days. Each student should spend approximately 20 minutes per day with his/her devotional material. I assign reading for the weekdays ONLY. Each weekend day can be used for one make-up day if a day is missed here or there. Students should NOT read multiple sessions in one day...the object is to develop a pattern of spiritual devotion, NOT to finish a certain number of pages. Students can make up as many as two days per week (one for each weekend day)...after that, they cannot receive credit for any missed days.
- 5. On days that we have class, students spend the first 20 minutes of class with their devotional materials. On the other weekdays, they are charged to make time to have their devotional time. Again, they are not required to read on the weekends, but can read those days if they need to recover a day that they had missed.
- 6. Every class day while the students are reading, I walk around the room and sign off their Reading Records, recording their time and points on a class chart I have on a clipboard. I also talk with them individually as I come around to each student, to inquire as to what's going on in their books, and what they're learning. As I have read the grand majority of these books previously, and as they are required to record the time of their reading and respond to that reading with a review at the end, I haven't really encountered many issues with accountability.
- 7. As the goal is to spend time with God each weekday, students finish different numbers of books depending on their reading level. I do feel that it is reasonable to ask them to read through a minimum of about two books because of the amount of time they are investing. I have had students get through up to seven books during this time, but these are my top-notch speed-readers...most students get through two to

three. Again, however, please emphasize with them that this is a practice in quality, not quantity.

8. At the end of every book that a student reads, I require them to submit a Devotional Reading Response, reflecting on the value of their reading material. A fun further step in this would be to have your students post these online in a blog-type setting so that their book reviews can be more like recommendations in a book club for their classmates to view.
9. The most critical component for success in this project is that students are encountering reading material that is meaningful, challenging, and age-appropriate. The reading selections and styles will make or break this project for your students.

Lesson Evaluation & Teacher Reflection

You must constantly interact with your students throughout this project. If you stay involved with their topics and progress, it will encourage them to keep reading. Also, be ready to make reading recommendations to students who are a little hesitant about what they should begin their reading with.

Project Forms

(To follow on subsequent pages)

Name:
Senior Religion
Application for Devotional Book
Date:

Criteria	Information
Book Title	
Book Topic/s	
Author/s	
Number of Chapters	
Number of Pages	
Book Source (library, bookstore, etc.)	
Personal Reading Plan Devised and Outlined	
Approval from Your Instructor	

Name:
Senior Religion
Forty Days with Jesus
Devotional Reading Record

Day	Date	Time	Topic Addressed	Teacher Sign-off
1		__:__ to __:__ = 20 min.		
2		__:__ to __:__ = 20 min.		
3		__:__ to __:__ = 20 min.		
3		__:__ to __:__ = 20 min.		
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Name:
Senior Religion
Devotional Reading Response
Date Due:

Category	Response	Points
Title		
Author		
Topic		
Book Summary		
What did you learn from this book and your study time?		
What was your favorite feature of the book?		
How did this book work to improve your experience with Jesus?		

<p>Given the chance, what would you change about this book?</p>		
<p>Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why/not?</p>		
<p>Overall letter grade for the book (Please circle one and explain)</p>	<p>A B C D F</p>	