



Perception

Source: <http://live-learning-to-give.pantheon.io/units/be-change-homelessness/preconceptions>

Standards: Please refer to website for specific standard look up.

<http://live-learning-to-give.pantheon.io/units/be-change-homelessness/preconceptions#block-views-ae565e9bc923c99f39e8017da09af2c7>

Duration

One 50-Minute Class Period

Objectives

The learner will:

- Write about an encounter or experience with an individual who was homeless.
- Assess the assumptions made about homelessness.
- Read and respond to short bios of homeless individuals, families, and children.
- List most-prized possessions and imagine what it would be like to lose them.
- Brainstorm questions to investigate about homelessness.

Materials

Student copies of Handout 1: Homelessness

Writing paper, pencils

Colored pencils

Internet capable computers (or multiple print-out copies of the stories from Coalition for the Homeless at <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/stories>)

Chart paper, markers

Teacher Preparation

Note: Be sensitive to the fact that some of your students may have personal experience with homelessness.

Instructor can bring donations to the Kansas State Fair, these donations will help support people who are homeless and hungry, field trip can be taken prior to Lesson 3: What Can We Do?

Kansas State Fair Food Drive - Reno County Food Bank

Donations can be made during state fair at the Kansas FFA/Wick Buildings location inside entrance E5.

Students will have the opportunity to learn more about hunger and where food comes from. Students will also have the chance to participate in the Hunger Fighters scavenger hunt to learn more about hunger and food productions in their communities.

2016 Kansas State Fair Food Drive

Educational Lesson Plans

Grades: 9, 10, 11, 12

**Subjects: Language Arts, Philanthropy,
Social Studies**



Vocabulary

Homelessness: the condition of having no permanent housing

Temporary: for a short term

Chronic: a condition lasting for an extended period of time, or occurring again and again

Preconception (or prejudice): an opinion formed beforehand, often of an unfavorable nature, about an individual or group of people; “pre-judging”

Possession: an item owned by or belonging to an individual

Empathy: ability to share feelings experienced by another

Reflection

Ask students to look at that list of preconceptions they brainstormed earlier and show them how to turn a preconception into a question. Give an example: “He seemed drunk.” Turn it into a question: “Are most homeless people alcoholics or drug addicts?”

Ask each student to think of one question that could help us to better understand homelessness and move away from any prejudices we may have come with. Invite students to write down their question on a note card. Tell them that you will display these questions on a chart and they will guide our work next time.

Bibliography

Coalition for the Homeless. <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/stories>

INSTRUCTIONS

Anticipatory Set:

1. Tell students that over the next four sessions, we will be focusing on some of the personal stories of people who are homelessness and what we can do about the issue of homelessness.

Ask students what they think it means to be homeless. Share with them the definitions on chart paper (may be prepared in advance or filled out in the discussion--save the chart).

Briefly discuss the different forms that homelessness can take: temporary or chronic; living on the street, in shelters, in “found” spaces; and families and individuals.

2. Ask students to think about a time when they came into contact with someone who was homeless. It could be someone they knew, someone they had an exchange with, or someone they simply observed. Model briefly with your own story, such as a time you felt uncomfortable on the subway when a homeless individual came through asking for money. Give students 5-10 minutes to write or draw about their experiences, trying to recall as many details as possible. Note: be sensitive to the fact that some students may have personal experience with



homelessness.

3. Engage the group in discussion about their experiences, encouraging them to share but being clear that nobody is required to share any personal details aloud. Ask: How did you feel? What did you think about the person? Encourage them to be honest about their initial reactions, stating that most everybody has preconceptions, or a prejudice, (share these definitions) about what it means to be homeless. This discussion is intended to examine preconceptions and look at what is prejudice and what is fact.
4. Write on a chart some of the questions that come up. Save these questions for the next lesson.
5. Tell students that one way to get past prejudices is to “step into the shoes” of someone who is homeless.
6. Tell students that they are going to step into the shoes of some homeless people by reading some stories. First, tell them you want them to imagine a situation:

Give students 3-4 minutes to create a list of their 10 most prized possessions. Now, ask them to imagine that a fire at their home is forcing them to leave their bedrooms immediately. They may choose only one item to take with them. Have students turn and talk with a partner about which of their prized possessions they would choose to bring. Have them discuss how it would feel, how difficult to choose, and what it would be like to lose most of their favorite possessions.

7. Reconvene as a whole group. Invite a few students to share a comment from their conversations. State that a house fire is one of many ways that people can become homeless. A fire is something that can happen to anyone, and it suddenly makes a family homeless. Read aloud one or two of the stories at <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/stories>. There are 20 stories in total. Ask students to read the stories in pairs or small groups. Come together at the end to share what stood out about the stories.
8. Distribute Handout 1: Homelessness, which illustrates that one way many teens become homeless is because they run away. Read and discuss the Handout in small groups or as a whole class.

Cross Curriculum

The students design and carry out a service project called, “What Will You Bring to the Table?” The project involves taking action to address the issue of childhood hunger in their community through a food drive or awareness campaign. Part of the project involves decorating or building a table and displaying it in the community to help children who are hungry. They may use a real table, a mural of a table, or a tablecloth set up in the lunchroom. They may be creative about their table and where it is displayed. The table may be a collection site for donations or a display that teaches others about the needs of children who are hungry. The table can also be a gathering place for conversations about hunger and what they can do to address the issue.

Donations can be brought to Kansas State Fair for Reno County Food bank.



Homelessness

Handout 1

Homelessness is a problem that affects countless people in America and across the world. Many people stay in homeless shelters and transitional housing where they gain access to food and clothes. Because so many people live paycheck to paycheck, the threat of homelessness looms over close to 50% of Americans.

“Homeless” or a “homeless individual is a person who does not have a permanent residence and oftentimes has to sleep in a temporary residence such as shelter, car, street or park.

Many times homeless people are teens who have run away from home.

Read these poems written by runaways.

What will you do to help reduce the numbers of homeless people living in your community?



Runaway Poem

Hi, well my name is _____ and I am almost 15 years old. And I just want to say to anybody and everybody out there that's ran away that I feel what you're going through cause I've been through it all before. And when you're out there in the world alone it's a cold, lonely, scary place. It's a horrible feeling to feel lonely and unloved.

But on the other side there are people out there that have really big hearts and love and care for you. I had run away twice but then I came back and life is ok now. I have some of the most amazing people that really love and care for me.

But to all the people that are planning on running away, don't. Go to the police, and speak up. Talk to someone. But if you are in a very bad situation and the cops won't help you and you're gonna runaway YOU BETTER MAKE DAMN SURE YOU'RE READY cause 99% of the chances are that you will get raped, kidnapped, and/or murdered. Find a good place to stay and bring knives, guns, pepperspray, anything to keep you safe. I will put my runaway experience up here in awhile, but for now here's a poem I wrote, and I hope you like it.



Homelessness

Runaway

The screams and anger and violence in my home,
the sound of glass hitting the wall after being thrown.
The cursing language and vulgar exchange of words,
I beg for it to stop but my pleadings aren't heard.
I sit in a dark, empty corner crying to myself,
if only I could be happy perhaps somewhere else.
I come to the point where I blame and hate myself for all this misery,
But what if I could leave all this behind and erase my past's memory?
So I'm through with all this I come to say,
I pack my belongings and I'm on my way.
I've been on my own since that day,
a young, unhappy, lost runaway.

