



Exploring Homelessness

KS2 Lesson Plan

EXPLORING HOMELESSNESS KS2 LESSON

A short lesson plan guide for teachers is also available.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To find out who can be affected by homelessness
- To be aware that there are different types of homelessness
- To identify some of the reasons people experience homelessness

RESOURCES

- PowerPoint presentation (standard and widescreen)
- Teacher short lesson plan guide
- Glossary
- Statements cards - resource sheet A (you may wish to create a digital version or enlarge this for class discussion)
- Guess the word cards - resource sheet B (blank cards are included in case you wish to add your own key words)
- Building a picture - resource sheet C (optional) A4 or A3 size

YOU WILL NEED

- A wobbly three-legged stool (optional)
- A timer

GLOSSARY

Bedsit: A single room with a bed and shared cooking, cleaning and washing facilities

Hidden homeless: People who have nowhere to call home and are not receiving any support as authorities are not aware of them

Homeless: A term used to describe the situation when someone has no place they would consider home or a permanent place to live

Hostel: Temporary accommodation providing basic facilities

Lifehouse: Salvation Army accommodation supporting people who are experiencing homelessness

Night shelter: Emergency night accommodation for rough sleepers usually during winter months

Sofa-surfer: A person who is repeatedly staying with friends or family for short periods of time then moving on

Rough sleeper: A person who usually sleeps outside (including in a tent or a makeshift shelter)

Be sensitive as pupils may themselves have experienced being homeless or be particularly concerned by this topic.

Images used are for illustrative purposes only and include images from other campaigns, projects and events.

More educational resources are available including exploring Faith in Action
www.salvationarmy.org.uk/schools



Exploring Homelessness

KS2 Lesson Plan

STARTER

Slide 1 - Quick-fire questions

Ask a range of quick-fire questions, mainly about the pupils' likes and dislikes. Pupils show they agree by raising their hand. For example:

- Who likes ... pizza?
- Who hates ... sandwiches?
- Who likes ... snow?
- Who hates ... Ant and Dec?
- Who likes ... football?
- Who hates ... football?
- Who likes ... having long hair?
- Who hates ... *Strictly*?
- Who likes ... dogs?
- Who hates ... bikes?

Sum up the variety of responses. Explain that some of the answers might be easy to guess, but we don't really know unless we ask, even if they have long hair, have a football nearby, or have pizza sauce round their mouth!

Slide 2 - Who is ... homeless?

Look at the photos. Repeat some of the questions. Eg:

- Who do you think might like football?
- Who do you think might hate *Strictly*?
- Who do you think might like having long hair?
- Who do you think might hate sandwiches?

Point out that, just like before, we can guess, but we can't know, just by looking at someone. (You may wish to introduce the term 'stereotype'.)

Looking at the photos, ask: Who do you think might not have a home?

Take a few responses. Challenge pupils' perceptions by explaining that it is possible that any or all these people may have experienced homelessness. Or perhaps none of them. We cannot tell just by looking at someone.

MAIN LESSON

Slide 3 - Learning objectives

Share the learning objectives with the class.

- To find out who can be affected by homelessness
- To be aware that there are different types of homelessness
- To identify some of the reasons people experience homelessness

Highlight some of the language used in the learning objectives. **Click to highlight phrases.**

- affected by homelessness
- experience homelessness



Exploring Homelessness

KS2 Lesson Plan

Explain that not having a home is something that can happen to people; it is not a full description of who people are. The commonly used term 'homeless people' is not an accurate description, as we are so much more than where we happen to live.

Slide 4 - Statement activity

The aim of this activity is to promote discussion and address stereotyping. Give pairs or small groups the **Statements cards (resource sheet A)**. Ask the pupils to discuss the statements about people who experience homelessness and to categorise them under the headings: Agree - Disagree.

Let pupils create a middle ground for cards if they decide they need to, eg Not sure / Sometimes. As a class discuss each statement. (You may wish to use an enlarged version of the statements or have a digital version prepared, to aid the discussion.) Discussion points are outlined below.

People who experience homelessness:

- have a drink or drug problem
Some people may have health and addiction problems, but this is not always the reason they experience homelessness.
- are happy living on the streets
For some, perhaps for mental health reasons, they feel they are not ready to live in a house. However, rough sleeping is a very challenging way to live.
- are only men
Women, children, babies and older people can also experience homelessness.
- are easy to spot because of how they look
It is difficult to guess this by appearance as many will have access to cleaning facilities and some form of shelter.
- must have done something wrong
There are many reasons people become homeless, often through no fault of their own.
- choose to leave home
Some people are forced to leave as they could not afford where they lived, some feel they had no choice but to leave because someone else's behaviour was not acceptable.
- can have a job
It can be hard to find a job without a mailing address. However, people can be employed and still have nowhere to live.
- need help
Most people will need some form of help, either from friends, family, the council, the government, or charities.
- do not live as long
Rough sleeping and poverty can seriously affect people's health and life expectancy.
- are important
Aren't we all important, and deserve to be helped?

Discuss any stereotypes or misconceptions the pupils have raised about people affected by homelessness. You may wish also to refer to the photos on slide 2. Sum up that anyone, from any background, can be affected by homelessness.



Exploring Homelessness

KS2 Lesson Plan

Slide 5 – Speech bubbles

What is homelessness? Show and discuss each speech bubble, one at a time. **Click to reveal.** For each statement ask if this person is experiencing homelessness. Encourage pupils to discuss with a talk partner before feeding back. Ask the class to show if they agree or not, by showing thumbs up or down (or in between if not sure) before sharing their opinions.

During the discussion introduce the terms below.

Person 1: Rough sleeper

‘I spend my days in my tent in the park. When it’s really cold I try to get a spot at a night shelter.’

A rough sleeper is experiencing homelessness. Living outside, even if there is shelter, like a tent, is called rough sleeping. These are very vulnerable members of the homeless community as they have little protection from the weather and others. A night shelter provides beds, often in a big area like a hall, like a dormitory. In winter additional temporary shelters can be set up, in a different church or community building each night.

Person 2: Hostel

‘I’ve got a room at a hostel. I have to leave the building during the daytime and sometimes I take all my stuff with me so they’re safe.’

A hostel is a type of temporary accommodation for people experiencing homelessness. The hostel often provides bedrooms, sometimes shared, with access to shared facilities and usually a meal. It provides shelter but its residents are still part of the homeless community. This is also true of people who live in bedsits and B&Bs.

The Salvation Army does not run hostels; it has Lifehouses. Lifehouses, as well as being a safe place, provide individual support for each person, supporting their emotional and physical wellbeing. Lifehouses aim to help each person regain their lives, to be the person they have the potential to be.

Person 3: Hidden homeless

‘I’m staying at a mate’s place. Every other week I stay with a different friend. Just till I get things sorted.’

‘Hidden homeless’ is a term for people who live in temporary places. ‘Staying with a mate’ or ‘sofa surfing’, if it continues in the long term, will mean they are experiencing homelessness, as they have no place they would consider to be home. There are no official figures for this group as they are hard to identify and so have no access to support.



Exploring Homelessness

KS2 Lesson Plan

Slide 6 - Why do people become homeless?

Recap that anyone can become homeless and there are lots of different ways that a person can experience being homeless. Ask the pupils for reasons they think someone might become homeless.

Slide 7 - Reasons

Explain that there can be many different reasons someone loses their home. To simplify, there are three main areas that help people to have somewhere to live.

Money: We need money to afford to have a home.

Relationships: We often share a home with another person - often a friend or family.

Home: There needs to be an actual place, a building, for us to live in.

Ask if pupils have ever sat on a wobbly stool (or chair)?

Draw an analogy between three-legged stools and the three main areas. *Demonstrate using a wobbly three-legged stool or use slides 8-11.* When all is going well in these three areas, things are stable and safe, just like sitting on a stable stool. But when one leg is shorter, things go a bit wobbly and this puts pressure on other parts of your life.

Slide 8 - Money issues

It can be challenging when there is less money available. This can mean a change in income, perhaps in benefits, losing a job, or unexpected costs. It can put pressure on other aspects of your life. It can be hard to find the money to pay the bills for the home.

Slide 9 - Relationship problems

The type of relationship we mean is not a romantic relationship, but the people who are your support structure. This can be friends, family or a partner. It can be difficult when there is a break with a relationship, when people aren't getting along. This could be a couple deciding to split up. Or perhaps the home doesn't feel safe any more because someone's behaviour at home is not acceptable. This could be due to addiction, violence, arguing or just not getting along any more. There can be many reasons why someone feels that they need to leave home.

Slide 10 - Home - a place to stay

People need an actual place to stay. Sometimes people must move, perhaps because their lease has finished, or their job is elsewhere. It can be tricky finding a place to live, especially if you need to stay in a certain area.

Slide 11 - Which one is ...?

Explain that problems with money, relationships and homes happen to most people, but it does not mean that they will automatically become homeless. Reassure the pupils that most people have wobbles and find a way through without becoming homeless. But, sadly, not everyone is fortunate.



Exploring Homelessness

KS2 Lesson Plan

Ask pupils: out of the three areas that help people have a home - money, relationships, and a place to stay - which one do they think is:

- the most important one?
- the least important one?
- the easiest one to get help with?
- the hardest one to get help with?

Ask pupils to discuss with a talk partner before sharing their thoughts with the class.

Slide 12 - Learning objectives

Recap on the learning objectives, asking pupils to share examples for each learning objective from the lesson.

PLENARY

Slide 13 - Guess the word

Split the class into small groups. Give each group a **Guess the word card (resource sheet B)**. Challenge each group to explain their key word(s) in 30 seconds (or longer depending on your class). Can the rest of the class guess the word before the time is up?

Slide 14 - Follow-up activity

This activity can be done later if time is limited. Explain that homelessness is a large topic, and we are just starting to understand what it means and the issues surrounding it - we are starting to build up a picture of what homelessness means.

Give each pupil a **Building a picture sheet (resource sheet C)** A4 or A3 size. Ask pupils to complete the sentences. In the blank jigsaw pieces pupils can draw or write any responses they have about homelessness, eg key words and phrases or images. Encourage pupils to treat this as a piece of response artwork, to be selective in the colours, fonts and images they use.

When completed, the teacher may wish to trim and display as a class display, interspersed with photos or facts about homelessness.