

Modern Homelessness

Workshop Outline



Age Range: Upper KS2 | Cross-Curricular

Learning Outcomes: Students use oral history extracts, film, discussion and role-play to challenge stereotypes and investigate common myths and misconceptions about what it is like to experience homelessness

Resources: ❖ Resources Pack ❖ Sticky Notes ❖ Foam Mat or Cardboard
 ❖ Layers of Clothing ❖ Sleeping Bag

This is an open activity – students should sit in a circle. Before beginning, explain that this workshop will cover some sensitive topics but that the circle is a safe-space for students to discuss and explore views

Activity 1: What is homelessness?

- Initial discussion questions – capture answers on a whiteboard:
 - Have you seen someone who is homeless?
 - How did you know that the person was homeless?
 - Do you know anything else about homelessness?
- Split class into groups of four. Give half of the groups the Activity 1 'homelessness' worksheet to complete and the remaining groups the Activity 1 'home' worksheet. Discuss as a class
- Ask students for a definition of the term homelessness
 - Students may conclude that it refers to someone who does not have a roof over their head. Explain that it can also refer people who are temporarily staying with friends or family, staying in a hostel or living in very overcrowded conditions

Source: Shelter

Activity 2: How does it feel to be homeless?

- It can be difficult for us to understand something that we haven't experienced personally. Split the class into groups of four and explain that you are going to play extracts from Trevor and Vanessa, who have both experienced homelessness. While listening, ask the students to:
 - Pick out key words that Trevor and Vanessa use to describe how they feel about their situations
 - Identify anything we learn about their experiences of homelessness
 - Think about how they might feel if they were to become homeless
- Groups to discuss answers and feedback to class
- Explain that people who are homeless are often labelled and aren't treated as individuals. Ask students to return to their groups and write down on sticky notes any labels they've heard people say about people who are homeless. After a few minutes ask one student from each group to stick the sticky notes to the board and discuss as a class
- Ask students if they can define the word 'stereotype'. Discuss whether any of the labels could be stereotypes
- Explain that people who are homeless are unique in the same way that each student in the class is different from one another



Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?

- All students to stand up. Explain that you are going to show them a series of images of people who may or may not have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. Students should stay standing if they think the person has experienced homelessness and sit down if they haven't
- Don't reveal answers but challenge why they remained standing or sat down
- Reveal that all of the people have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. Explain that homelessness can affect anyone, regardless of what they look like or their background
- We must make sure that we treat people who are or have been homeless the same as we would treat anyone else
- Play: *A Day in the Life of William*. Ask students:
 - What does William enjoy doing? What does he look forward to doing?
 - Is this what you expected?
 - Do the labels identified in Activity 2 describe William?
 - What factors did William identify as things that he had to be aware of to stay safe? Can you think of anymore?
- Students may remember shelter and visibility but you may need to support them to identify warmth, comfort, privacy etc.
- Playground activity: Split students into groups of four and ask if they were to become homeless in this playground where would they sleep? Encourage them to think about the factors above. Allow a few minutes to walk around before bringing students back together to discuss
- Ask for volunteers to try lying down on a foam mat and sleeping bag in their chosen spot. Can they spot any issues that they didn't identify? Now ask a volunteer to try on multiple layers to keep warm and dry. Encourage students to consider the realities

Activity 4: Why do people become homeless?

- Back in the classroom show the next slide, an image of people sleeping in a shelter, and ask students why they might have become homeless. Capture answers
 - Split class into original groups and hand out the *Causes cards*. Ask groups to match up each person with the reason that they became homeless
- Discuss as a class. Using 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down', ask other groups to agree or disagree

Activity 5: Role-play

- Split students into groups of four and assign each group a cause of homelessness. Ask the groups to write a short story by creating characters, drawing on everything that they've learnt in today's workshop. Students should consider:
 - ❖ Gender & age
 - ❖ Background
 - ❖ What makes them unique
 - ❖ How they became homeless
 - ❖ How they feel about their situation
 - ❖ What they're going to do to change their situation
- Groups to act out their stories for the class. The other groups should try to identify what cause each group had assigned to them
- Stories to be filmed on video
- Assign each group one of the below support services to research. You could finish the session by discussing which service/s the groups' characters could access for support

- ❖ Daycentres
- ❖ Soups Runs

- ❖ Night Shelters
- ❖ Citizens Advice Bureau

- ❖ Advice Centres
- ❖ Charities

Extension:

- English: Create a character who is homeless and write a descriptive diary entry or a poem as this person. Consider their gender, age, background, cause of homelessness and their feelings towards their situation
- Art: Design a poster to help raise awareness of homelessness
- History: Investigate what support would have been available to people who were homeless throughout different historical periods. Begin by learning about the workhouses
- Citizenship: Imagine that you were the Prime Minister. What changes would you make to help reduce homelessness?

Investigate the role of charities in supporting people who are homeless

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www.bht.org.uk



Resource Pack

Prepared: May 2015

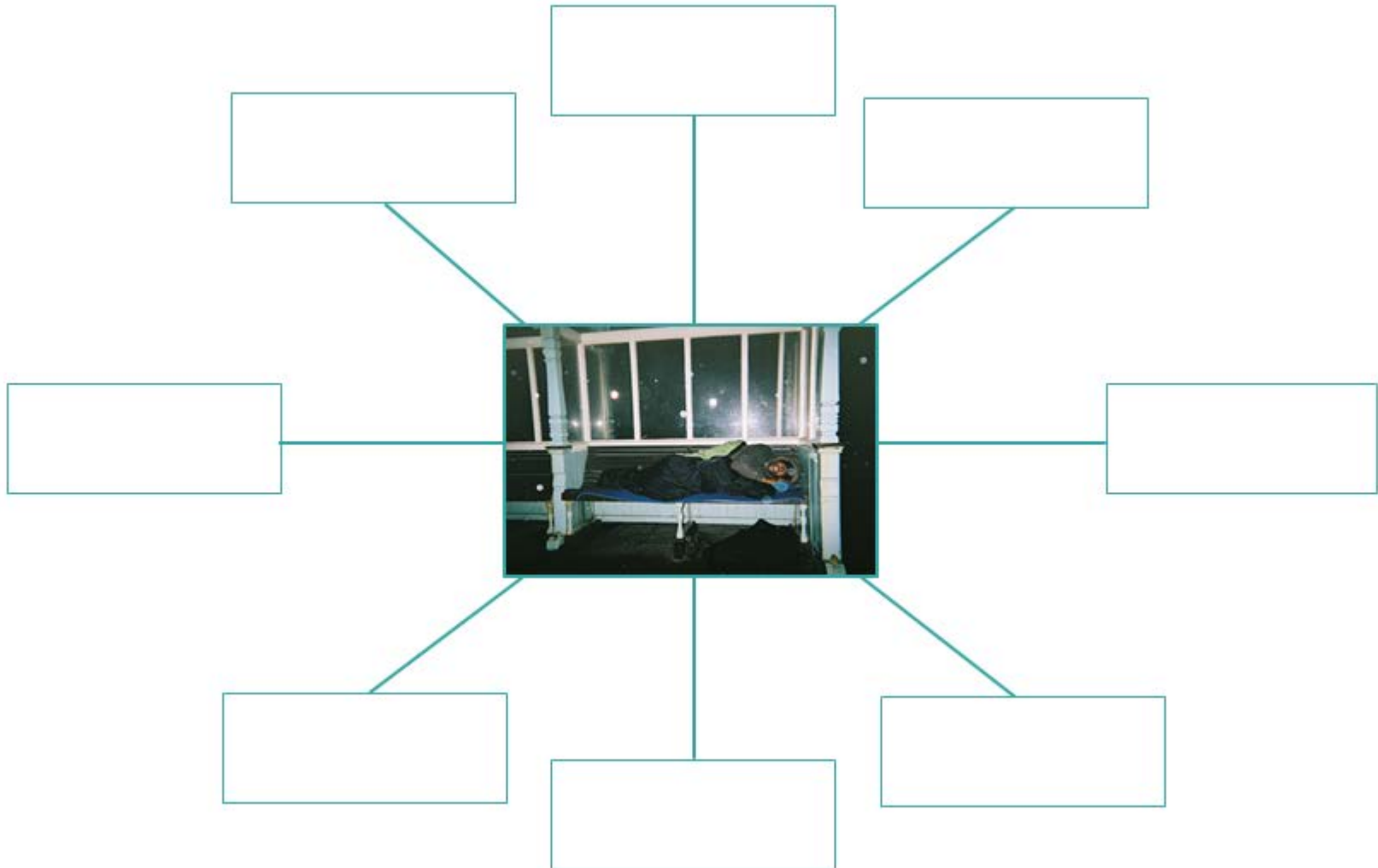


Combating Homelessness, Creating Opportunities,
Promoting Change

Activity 1: What does homelessness mean to you?



In each box write one word that comes to mind when you think of homelessness. You can add extra boxes if you wish



Activity 1: What does home mean to you?



In each box write one word that comes to mind when you think of home. You can add extra boxes if you wish



Activity 2: How does it feel to be homeless?



To hear Vanessa's experience:
bht-heritage.org.uk/ohpost/vanessa-yuill/



To hear Trevor's experience:
bht-heritage.org.uk/ohpost/trevor-ball/

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Daniel?



Source: [imdb.com](https://www.imdb.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Richard?



Source: [freeimages.com](https://www.freeimages.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Halle?

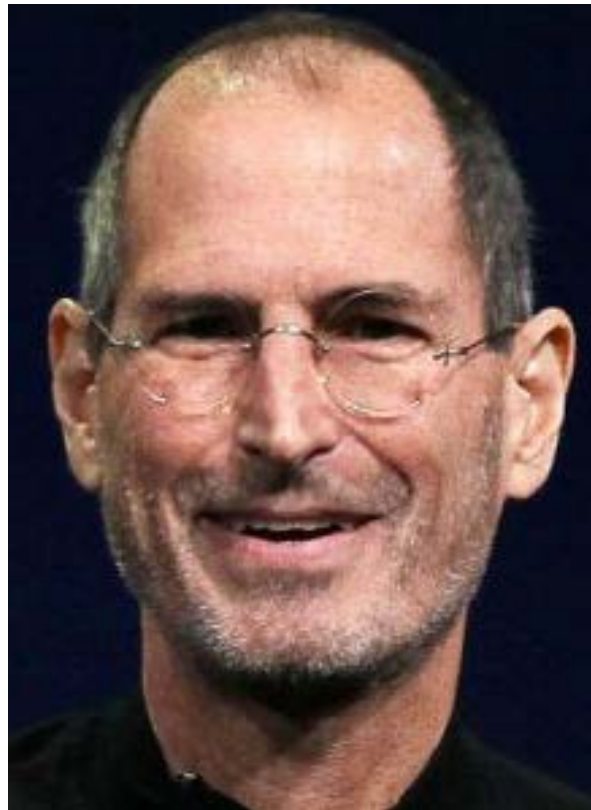


Source: [biography.com](https://www.biography.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Steve?



Source: [biography.com](https://www.biography.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Mark?



Source: [freeimages.com](https://www.freeimages.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Angie?

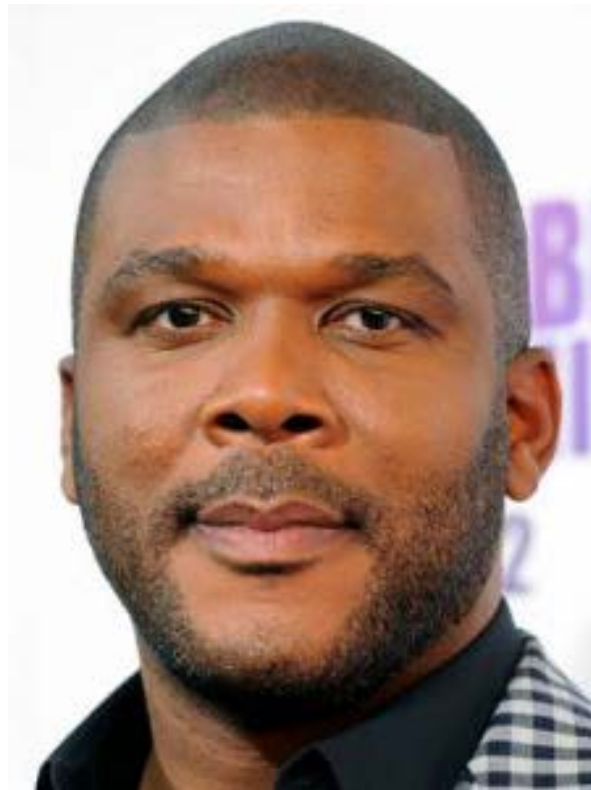


Source: [freeimages.com](https://www.freeimages.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



Tyler?



Source: [biography.com](https://www.biography.com)

Activity 3: Who experiences homelessness?



A day in the life of William* ...

*Name has been changed

To hear William's experience:

bht-heritage.org.uk/resources/#rough-sleeper-youtube

Activity 4: Why do people become homeless?



Activity 4: Why do people become homeless?



Print the sorting cards and cut along the lines to separate and mix up the cards. In groups, ask students to match up each person with the reason that they became homeless

Divorce or break-up	Daniel ‘My wife and I split up. She stayed in our house with our children and I left, but I had nowhere to go’
Money Problems	Christina ‘I couldn’t afford to pay my bills. I first got behind with my electricity bill, then my gas bill, then eventually I couldn’t pay my rent’
Criminal Record	Lucy ‘Landlords don’t want to rent flats to people who have been in prison because they think they will bring trouble to the area’
No job	Robert ‘The company I worked for closed down. Landlords think people who are not working are not going to pay the rent’
Alcohol Problems	Mandy ‘I went through a really difficult time in my life and I began to drink to make the pain go away. It got to the point where my drinking affected everything in my life’
Family Arguments	Peter ‘My Mum and I started having really bad rows. In the end she told me I had to leave so I’m now sleeping on my friend’s sofa’
Lack of Education	William ‘I left school at 15. I have no certificates. I can’t get a job because of this so I can’t afford rent’
Illness	Sarah ‘I’ve tried living alone a few times but my bad health makes it difficult for me to look after myself. I couldn’t manage in my last flat so I left’