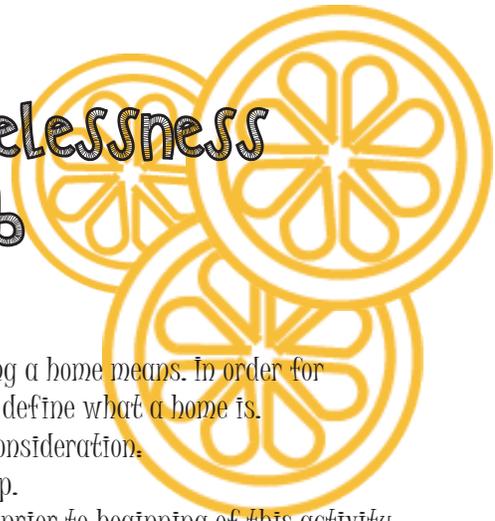




Understanding homelessness

Activity 2-b



The following activities all relate to teaching children of all ages about what having a home means. In order for them to begin to understand what it means to be without a home, they must first define what a home is.

If you are doing this activity as a group, you will need to take the following into consideration.

- It is important to be sensitive to the varying definitions of home within the group.
- It is important to know the home situations of each of the participating children prior to beginning of this activity.
- Do you have a child who is or has been homeless? Do you have a child in the group who has lost a home to a fire?
- Don't assume that having a child with this reality is a reason not to teach this activity. Instead, a child who has been through the experience of not having a home can be a wonderful asset to teaching other children about what this experience is like.

Desired Outcomes.

- Children will understand that many goals require a long time and a lot of work to accomplish.

Preparation Time.

20 minutes

Class Time.

one hour

Materials needed.

- A Chair for My Mother
by Vera B. Williams
- a large jar to hold small objects
- a large bag of cereal O's or small candy
- calculators for groups or individuals

Basic Objective.

Similar to the way Rosa fills a jar in the story, students will fill a jar with objects to understand how long it might have taken to collect enough money to buy a chair.

Background.

This lesson has children explore a specific aspect of the story. Rosa's goal to fill up the jar in order to buy her mother a chair. It is a concrete example of cause and effect in the story. Working with this concrete cause and effect relationship will help children better understand specific causes and effects related to homelessness.

Discussion.

1. Have the children fill a jar with cereal O's or other small objects to see how long and how many it takes to fill a jar. Talk about how many pennies or coins it must have taken to buy the chair that Rosa and her mother buy in the book.
2. Extend this discussion to how much money it takes to buy the things in our homes – even food. Talk about how people sometimes do not have enough money to buy things or do not have enough money to pay rent. Talk about what "rent" is. Have students think of things that might make it hard for someone to have enough money. Examples include, a fire, losing a job, or having to quit a job to care for a family member.

Source: <http://www.unitedwayla.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Facing-Homelessness-Curriculum.pdf>



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