

Activity 5: Needs and Wants

The main purpose of this activity is to enable pupils to understand that there is a difference between needs and wants. Pupils consider what is essential in life and what is a luxury.

Pupils consider how the possessions most of us take for granted can become vitally important for those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. The most basic items, such as food, water or clothing, can be critical to their survival.

Learning Intentions

Pupils will:

- explore and develop their understanding of homelessness;
- be aware of homelessness as a societal issue;
- begin to develop empathy for people experiencing homelessness;
- understand that people have negative attitudes;
- explore issues of prejudice and stereotypes; and
- know some factors that can cause people to become homeless.

Resource

Resource 2.4: Needs and Wants

Vocabulary

Needs, wants

Recap the previous daily routines activity. Remind the class that daily routines are much more difficult when you do not have a home.

Explain to the class that they are now going to explore the difference between what we **need** to live and what we **want**.

Needs are what we rely on to live; and

Wants are not essential to our life or health; they are objects that we like to have.

Give your pupils **Resource 2.4: Needs and Wants**.

On the first worksheet, ask your pupils to identify if the picture is a need or a want.

Realities of Homelessness

On the second worksheet, ask your pupils to think of all of the objects in their home and consider which are needs and which are wants.

Once they have completed the worksheet, ask your pupils to form groups of four. Use a [Thinking Card](#) to encourage pupils to discuss:

- the objects they identified as a need or a want;
- whether there are more objects in the wants or needs category and if so, why;
- whether they were surprised by this;
- whether the needs of someone who is experiencing homelessness are the same or different to their own needs; and
- whether those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness have difficulty meeting their basic needs.

Reflection

When all the groups have completed this activity, bring the class together to compare their results.

End this activity by telling the class that housing is a basic human right. Ask your pupils whether they think it is fair or right for some people not to have a place to call home.

Extension

Many organisations and charities around the world provide those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness with survival kits. These packs include everyday items to meet their basic needs and include information on where they can go for help and support. Ask the class to develop a homeless survival kit.

Pupils could also design a poster campaign to encourage public donations towards the survival kit.



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