2.1 What does homelessness mean to you? Which words come to mind when you think of a homeless person?

Class feedback and spider diagram

You can use the following picture as a prompt. Also consider the following questions:

Is the person in this picture homeless?

Why is the person in this picture homeless?

Do you think this person is happy living like this?

Should we help people who are living like this?
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

2.2 Show the following pictures to the class. Ask the class what they think has happened in each case

Read each story aloud. Emphasise that these are true stories:

1. Natasha is 16 years old and has just left school. She does not have a regular job at the moment but is planning to go to college in September. All her life Natasha has lived with her gran but earlier this year she was asked to leave because of all the arguments*. She has been staying with friends for the last four to five months but now, because of overcrowding, has been asked to leave again.

*Why do you think young people of Natasha’s age argue with their parents / grandparents / guardians?

Suggested answers: money, independence, housework, homework, drugs, alcohol, girlfriend/boyfriend, pregnancy, sexuality

2. Henry lost his job as he became ill and could not work. He therefore did not have any money to pay the mortgage on the family home and so built up a large debt. The Building Society took the house back from the family*. Henry and his wife asked for help and were placed in temporary accommodation.

*What is the name for when a bank or building society takes back a house when repayments on a mortgage aren’t made?

Answer: repossession

3. John and Joyce lived in a flat that they rented from a private landlord*. Their contract to stay in the flat had come to an end and the landlord wanted the flat back. John does not earn a lot of money and Joyce is unable to work as she looks after her elderly disabled mother who lives down the road. The couple are staying with relatives temporarily and looking for a home they can afford to rent.

*What is a ‘private landlord’?

Answer: a person who owns a property and lets it out to tenants. Tenants are the people who live in the property and pay rent to the landlord
Section 2

What is homelessness?

4 The flat Swati and her two children were living in was damaged beyond repair by flooding. They are now staying in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation*. The whole family has one room to share where they sleep and live from day to day. They may have to stay as long as a year or more in temporary accommodation as there is a shortage of permanent housing in the area.

*Would you like to live in this type of accommodation? How do you think living here has affected the family members' lives?

Suggested answers: sharing accommodation with other homeless people – they may have drug or alcohol problems, sharing a bathroom – unhygienic, cramped conditions, overcrowding – not enough room for the girls to play, do their homework, arguments, stress for the mother – not knowing how long they will have to stay

What do all the people in these pictures have in common?

Answer: they are all homeless

Although some have a roof over their heads – they could still be considered homeless.

Homelessness can happen to anyone at anytime in their lives. It is not necessarily a person's own fault that they find themselves homeless.

Would you like to be in any of these people's positions?

Suggested activity: Go to www.angelfire.com/stars4/lists/homeless.html for a list of famous people who were once homeless. Look for other celebrities who have not experienced homelessness. Print out pictures of the celebrities and ask the pupils to decide who they think has been homeless and who has not. This can be made into a quiz

The point of this exercise is to show:

- You can’t automatically tell a person is homeless just by looking at them
- Homelessness can happen to anyone at any time
- Homelessness is not just about people sleeping rough on the streets
- Help is available
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?
2.3 One definition of homelessness

Being homeless means not having a decent, secure home that you can afford where you feel safe, can work and fulfil your potential.

It can mean that you do not have a roof over your head and have to sleep on the street. Or, it can mean that you have nowhere to go and are staying with friends or in temporary accommodation such as a bed and breakfast hotel.

So, you may have a roof over your head but you are still homeless. People in these circumstances are often called ‘hidden homeless people’.
2.4 The Welsh Assembly Government recommends a broad definition of homelessness

‘Where a person lacks accommodation or where their tenure is not secure’

Examples of people covered by this definition include people who are:

- Sleeping rough
- Living in insecure / temporary housing
- Living in short term hostels, night shelters, direct access hostels
- Living in bed and breakfast accommodation
- Moving frequently between relatives and friends
- Squatting.

The broad definition also includes people who are:

- Unable to remain in, or return to housing, due to poor conditions such as overcrowding, affordability problems, domestic violence, harassment, mental, physical and / or sexual abuse
- Threatened with losing their home without a suitable alternative e.g. leaving hospital, the armed services or other institutions
- Required to leave by family or friends or due to a relationship breakdown
- Within three months of the end of a tenancy, facing possession proceedings or threat of eviction.

Suggested activity. Discuss as a group:
Do you agree or disagree with the Welsh Assembly Government’s definition of homelessness?
Can homelessness happen to anyone?
Do people find themselves homeless due to their own actions and behaviour?
What is homelessness?

2.5 Pair work

Look at the situations below and decide whether the people have a home, are homeless or if you don’t know. Put a tick in the appropriate column:

1. Jodie is living on the floor of a friend’s house
2. Gareth has just bought his own flat
3. Ahmed is one of over 100 asylum seekers who were given emergency housing in a leisure centre
4. Kathy lives on a houseboat with her 12 year old daughter
5. Bethan lives with her new baby in her parents’ house
6. Michael and his three brothers are living in a caravan with their parents
7. David is 14 and lives with his grandmother
8. Anthony and Steven live in a house they rent from the Council
9. Catrin lives with her boyfriend but she wants to leave because he is violent towards her
10. Phillip has argued with his parents and has been asked to leave. He is living in hostel accommodation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>People who are homeless</th>
<th>People who have a home</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
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Suggested answers to 2.5: You do not have to be sleeping on the streets to be homeless. When considering answers to this exercise, bear in mind that homelessness can mean:

- Living in temporary accommodation
- Living at risk of violence or abuse
- Sleeping on a friend’s floor
- Living in hostel accommodation
- Living in seriously overcrowded accommodation
- Sleeping rough on the streets

2.6 A journalist for a local newspaper is writing an article about homelessness

Write a script on the interview that takes place between the journalist and a Big Issue vendor.

Use the prompt cards and picture for some ideas but avoid using the exact same words in your script.

Suggested activity:
Go to 2.12 to write another newspaper article
Ordinary citizens feel threatened and harassed by homeless people.

Homeless people are ‘ordinary’ citizens like everyone else.

Only people from poor backgrounds end up homeless.

Homeless people can be young or old, poorly or well educated, fit and healthy or sick, had a good or bad upbringing.

People become homeless through being lazy and irresponsible.

There are many reasons why people become homeless – and in most cases it’s not their own fault.

Drink and drugs are a big problem for homeless people.
Some homeless people have problems with drink and drugs

Some people who are not homeless have problems with drink and drugs

Homelessness is more than people sleeping rough

Homeless people don’t want to work. If they did they might be able to afford a home

Homeless people have problems finding work because they don’t have a permanent address

Selling the Big Issue is just another form of begging

Selling the Big Issue is a job homeless people do. Vendors buy it from the Big Issue and sell it on
2.7 This poem was written by a group of sixth formers and teachers after spending some time walking around Cardiff City centre. They got chatting to a Big Issue vendor and decided to write a poem about the experience.

Two Sides of the Street

We were carrying our shopping bags through Cardiff’s preoccupations. Past the wedding at Tabernacle chapel, the families celebrating a ‘bond’ between two beings. Past the building societies’ mirrored windows and their dear, delectable debts.

But opposite, at the entrance to Oxford Arcade, not an exchange of vows, or rings but an exchange of the Big Issue for one pound and forty pence of self-respect sometimes at the right price sometimes for a few extra quid of sympathy sometimes, to a pensioner, for less.

We stopped, we bought, and on hearing his ‘Diolch yn fawr i chi’ we chatted and asked about him. Ten minutes later we sat around him, listening, a spellbound circle in his pavement parlour as this street-life storyteller told us his life’s tale - the parents’ divorce, a strict step-dad and the leaving of a home that was colder to him than the street.

The sleeping bag on the smelly steps behind the CIA, with a dog, bottles, and dirty needles as companions, in the embers of the rubbish. Every door shut every window boarded up and no-one to care or to watch except the eye of the CCTV.

His friends called by our street symposium to share a few words to share a joke and, in the case of the street preacher, with his megaphone hidden in a plastic bag – to share the gospel.

Time to gather our stuff to straighten up and move on and as we said goodbye we took away more than just our shopping bags and our copy of the Big Issue and we keep a souvenir of this sharing - which is to seeing from this time on that though the street has a left and a right not everything in life is black and white.

Co-written and translated from Welsh by Grahame Davies (grahamedavies.com)
Was the young people’s experience positive?

Do you think the Big Issue vendor was happy to share his story?

Have you ever bought the Big Issue?

What is the stereotypical view of Big Issue vendors?

Do you think this is fair?

Refer to the Housemate DVD for a closer look at the life of a Big Issue vendor.
2.8 Can you imagine a circumstance where you as a young person could become homeless or in which a friend of yours could become homeless? Class feedback and draw spider diagram

Look at the following scenarios and reasons for becoming homeless. Put a name by each of the reasons. In some cases, there may be more than one reason for homelessness and you can go into more detail about what caused the homelessness e.g. what sort of abuse etc?

Sioned was abused by her father over a period of three years. She did not tell anyone. She ran away from home at 16. Her parents have split up but now she has no contact with her mother.

Rhys was brought up in a small village. When he left school at 16 there was no work in the area. He got a job in Bangor in a burger bar but he soon lost it, as he could not find anywhere to live.

Jacob’s mother went to prison. He went to live with his grandfather at first but his grandfather had too many rules and they argued all the time, so he left.

Prakash left home at 15 because his father was violent towards him. He had a social worker for a while but is now without any support.

Michelle became pregnant and her parents kicked her out. She went to live with her boyfriend but he was very controlling and tried to restrict who she saw and where she went. She wants to leave him.

Laura, who’s 18, left Somalia after her parents were killed. She entered the UK and stayed in a mosque in Cardiff for a couple of days. The Home Office then put her in a reception centre. She was given permission to remain in the UK and had to leave the reception centre. She has no relatives or friends in the country.

Meinir left home at 16 because her father remarried and moved into a new home with his new wife and children. There was not enough room for her as well.

Jimmy lived in a children’s home from age 11 until he was 16. He left and went to stay in a hostel for a while but didn’t like it and left. He stayed with his gran for a few weeks but she asked him to leave. He has not kept in touch with any social worker.

Ceri came out to her parents when she was 16. Her parents could not accept that she was gay and asked her to leave. She has been staying with various friends since then.

Carys got pregnant and her parents threatened to kick her out when the baby was born. She then had a miscarriage and after she left hospital her mother would not let her return home. Since then she has been staying with her aunt, her friends and sleeping rough.
### What is Homelessness?

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<th>Main reason</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Another reason and/or explanation</th>
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<td>Family breakdown</td>
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<td>Leaving care</td>
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<td>Seeking asylum or being a refugee</td>
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<td>Family breakdown</td>
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<td>Suffering violence or abuse</td>
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<td>Moving to find work</td>
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WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

2.9 Information – the Council (Local Authority) has to accept an application from any person over the age of 16 who appears to be homeless or is likely to become homeless within 28 days.

An application to the Council can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. Once someone has made an application the Council will investigate their case if they “have reason to believe” the applicant is homeless.

Who has the right to a home?

You are a housing advice worker, in a room full of six people. They are all shouting, “I have a right to a home!” But they are a pretty mixed bunch of people.

A nurse

A drug addict begging for change

A scruffy unemployed person

A businessman in a suit

A single parent

An asylum seeker

Each of the six is homeless. But there will only be five houses to go round. Your job is to draw up a waiting list and place each person in the order they will receive a home. Explain why you made your choice.

<table>
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<th>Person</th>
<th>Reason for choice</th>
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Reason for rejection

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Each group to feed back to the class.
Would you change your mind if you knew the following information about each person?

What if the scruffy unemployed person was your friend’s dad? He is only scruffy because he lost his job when the company he worked for closed down and he hasn’t been able to afford to mend the washing machine.

What if the drug addict begging for change had a two-year-old child and was begging for money to feed the child?

What if the single parent was an alcoholic?

What if the nurse was male?

What if the asylum seeker had enough money to pay for a bed and breakfast for the week?

What if the businessman’s house had just burned down in a fire?
Section 2

WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

2.10 Who gets housed?

Information – the Council (Local Authority) has to accept an application from any person over the age of 16 who appears to be homeless or is likely to become homeless within 28 days.

An application to the Council can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. Once someone has made an application the Council will investigate their case if they “have reason to believe” the applicant is homeless.

In groups of three, choose one of the sets on the following page.

One person is a housing officer; the other two will take it in turn to tell the officer their situation. Try to convince the housing officer that you are homeless and should be housed. The housing officer has to decide who gets housed and who is rejected.

**Suggested answers:** Decisions are made on the facts of each situation so outcomes can vary from case to case. However in most circumstances, the Council would house Sadie, Rahila, Rita and Amrique. The Council would not class the other cases as homeless under the law.

Sadie – Homeless and ‘priority need’ because she is a young person

Gwyn – He is homeless but would probably not be seen as a ‘priority need’ because he is in good health

Rahila – She is homeless and pregnant so she is considered as ‘priority need’

Cathy and Mark – Not considered as ‘priority need’ as they are in good health and don’t have children

Dave and Karen - Although they are homeless and in ‘priority need’, because they have children, they would probably be seen as ‘intentionally homeless’ as they used their rent money to pay for a holiday

Rita and Amrique – They are homeless and would be considered ‘priority need’ because they have children and their house was destroyed by fire.
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

Photocopy and cut into strips

Set 1

1. Under 18 and being kicked out - Sadie is 17. She lives with her mum, step-dad and brother. She’s had loads of arguments with her step-dad but yesterday they had a massive row. He has told her to leave by the weekend. He has said he will not change his mind and he will tell that to anyone that asks him. She knows there’s no point in talking to her mum about it as she always sides with her husband.

2. Young and sleeping rough - Gwyn is 20. He used to live with his father, but his father died last year. He could not afford to pay the rent in the flat so he left to stay with his girlfriend. They broke up and since then he’s been sleeping rough. Some nights he has stayed in a hostel but mostly he has slept in the park, shop doorways or a bus station. Gwyn is healthy but he’s tired of being cold and wet.

Set 2

3. Pregnant - After an unhappy marriage, Rahila obtained a divorce from her abusive husband. She then moved in with her sister. After a brief affair, Rahila found she was pregnant. When Rahila’s sister found out she told Rahila she could not stay with her and told her to leave.

4. Married with nowhere to live - Cathy and Mark got married last year. They don’t have any children. They moved in with Cathy’s parents on the understanding that they would move on within a few months, and began to save for a deposit to buy a house, but last month Mark was made redundant. They know they will not be able to buy a house now and the rents in flats in the town they live in are too high on Cathy’s wages. They have been living with Cathy’s parents for over a year and have now been thrown out and have nowhere to go.

Set 3

5. Family evicted for non-payment of rent - Dave and Karen and their two children live in a rented flat. The family had just returned from a holiday in Spain when Dave was made redundant from his job. He applied for housing benefit to help pay the rent, but instead of giving the money to his landlord, Dave used it to pay off a loan he had taken out to pay for the holiday. As he owed three months’ rent his landlord took him to court to evict him. The court told him he had to leave his flat.

6. A family home destroyed by fire - Rita and Amrique, together with their three children, Poonam (aged 5), Sunir (aged 12) and Pradip (aged 15) are homeless after a fire totally destroyed their home. The family is very distressed, they have lost everything and they did not have insurance. The children are all having nightmares, and Pradip’s schoolwork is suffering badly. He will be taking his GCSEs next summer and his parents are very worried that he won’t do as well as expected.
2.11 Look at the following information and present it to your classmates as part of an oral exercise. You could also use this information as part of an oral assessment in Welsh, English or modern languages.

**Local Authorities (the Council) and homelessness**

If someone has nowhere to stay or they cannot continue to live where they are, the Council may have a duty to help. You do not have to be sleeping on the street to get help. The help available to someone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness changes according to their circumstances. In order to work out what the law says the Council must do, the Council will investigate their case and then let them know their decision. Some young homeless people may be turned away by the housing department and told to go to social services, though this should not happen. Housing and social services offices should work together to provide help for young people.

**Who can apply as homeless?**

The Council has to accept an application for help from anyone over the age of 16 who appears to be homeless or is likely to become homeless within 28 days. They must then be given written confirmation of the Council's decision about their application. If the Council won't let them make an application, they can ask for written reasons why. They should seek immediate advice and may be able to challenge the Council and get them to accept their application.

**How to apply**

Councils have to accept homeless applications in any form. This means that you will be able to apply:

- In person
- By telephone
- In writing

However, most Councils prefer homeless people to apply in person at the Council offices so that they can be interviewed. If the Council is insisting that someone applies in a certain way and they are unable to do so for any reason, the Council may be acting illegally.

**What happens next?**

Once someone has made an application the Council will investigate their case and will look at a number of points:

- **Immigration/residence status**
  Some people from abroad are not provided with housing help; they may only be offered advice and information.
- **Homelessness**
  The Council will decide if the applicant has anywhere it is reasonable for them to stay. If someone is not homeless the Council will just give them advice and information.
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

• **Priority need**
  Certain people are in “priority need” this includes young people, families with children, or people who are sick or disabled etc. If someone is not in priority need the Council might only offer advice and information.

• **Intentional homelessness**
  If someone has done something deliberately, which made them become homeless the Council may say they are intentionally homeless. These people may only be offered housing for a short period of time.

• **Local connection**
  People who have not lived in the area for a certain period of time or lack some other connection to the area may be referred to another Council where they do have a local connection.

**Who is homeless?**
The legal definition of homelessness is broader than you may first think. Someone is homeless if they:

Do not have anywhere they can legally live. This includes:

• Rough sleepers
• Being put up temporarily by family
• Squatters
• Sleeping on a friend’s floor or “sofa surfing”
• Sleeping in a car.

Cannot gain entry to their home. This covers people whom:

• Have been illegally evicted by their landlord
• Live in a mobile home but have nowhere to legally place it

It is not reasonable for them to stay in their home. This includes people who are:

• At risk of violence in their home
• Living in housing which is a risk to their health
• Living in very insecure housing (such as a hostel)
• Living in severely overcrowded conditions.

Shelter Cymru can offer advice on the process of applying as homeless and how to respond to decisions made by the Council. Go to [sheltercymru.org.uk](http://sheltercymru.org.uk) for information on your nearest Shelter Cymru advice surgery or call 0845 075 5005.
What is Homelessness?

What sort of housing is offered to homeless people?
There are different types of accommodation a Council may offer someone who is homeless.

Bed and Breakfast
They will have a bedroom to themselves and may well have to share facilities with other residents. There are regulations about the quality of accommodation offered here and how long a young person should have to stay. The bed and breakfast may have rules about what time the residents must be in at night, whether they can have guests and the use of alcohol and drugs.

Hostels
Hostels can be run by the Council, a Housing Association or a charity; the Council may place someone in any of these. As with bed and breakfast accommodation there are often rules about what time residents must be in at night, whether they can have guests and the use of alcohol and drugs. Residents can be evicted for breaking the rules.

Women’s Aid Refuge
Women escaping domestic violence may be offered accommodation in a Women’s Aid refuge.

Flat or house
It is unlikely that someone will be offered a flat or a house straight away; most people will spend some time in other types of accommodation first.

Supported housing
Supported housing is often run by Housing Associations or charities and offers accommodation for vulnerable people. Most supported housing has staff that provide high quality support and operate within professional boundaries and guidelines. People who live in supported housing accommodation are encouraged and supported to gain the necessary skills to move towards independent living.
2.12 Read the following extracts which have been taken from daily newspapers on 21st October 2000

**Park bench, own postcode, to share. Would suit rough sleeper**

…welcome to Park Bench, Portland Square, Bristol BS2 8QD – the official address of six rough sleepers. Since 1990 all NHS patients have needed a postcode to be able to permanently register with a doctor. The bureaucracy has made it difficult for the rough sleepers to receive medical treatment. Montpelier health centre, a practice in inner city Bristol came up with the idea of using the bench as a fixed address to allow homeless people to register with a GP.

Louise Casey, the government’s homelessness Tsar said “It’s a good thing that the surgery is helping homeless people get treatment but it is every health authority’s duty to permanently register rough sleepers with a GP using ‘no fixed abode’ as an address”.

© The Guardian, 21st October 2000 (Photocopying allowed for classroom use only)

**Sitting pretty: and medical care too**

This wooden park bench used by down and outs to snooze on has been declared an official residence with its own post code

© The Daily Star, 21st October 2000 (Photocopying allowed for classroom use only)

**BS2 8QD, park bench with its own postcode**

…a wood and cast iron park bench has an added cachet for anyone thinking of taking up residence on it….its own post code. It’s been given to help homeless down and outs who use the bench to cut through NHS red tape

© The Daily Mail, 21st October 2000 (Photocopying allowed for classroom use only)

**Tramps get post coded park bench**

Here’s Britain’s most amazing postal address – a wooden park bench in the middle of a busy city centre square. The humble seat had been associated for years with vagrants and tramps who often use it for 40 winks or to bed down for the night.

But under NHS regulations, the down and outs who frequent it were unable to receive medical treatment as they had no registered home address.

© The Sun, 21st October 2000 (Photocopying allowed for classroom use only)

**Red tape turns park bench into undes res**

A park bench has been designated the official residence of down and outs treated at an inner city medical centre…Half a dozen down and outs use the bench in Portland Square, Montpelier, half a mile from the city centre. For their computer records, GPs have allocated the bench the same postcode as the surrounding homes. However because the post code is not registered with the Post Office there is no chance of Mr T.Ramp being bombarded with junk mail.

©The Times, 21st October 2000 (Photocopying allowed for classroom use only)
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

2.12 cont. Questions

1. Which words are used to describe homeless people in the articles?

2. If you were homeless, would you like to be described in this way?

3. Which phrase is used which simply describes the fact that people are sleeping on the streets?

4. Do you think newspapers often write articles about the difficulties homeless people have in obtaining medical care? Have you ever seen any other articles about this issue?

5. Do you think these articles would be written differently now (compared to in 2000)?

6. Write your own article on this story (50-100 words). Which words would you use or avoid using?

2.13 Look at the statements and discuss with your group. Do you agree or disagree with the statements? Write down your ideas in the thought bubbles and feed back as a whole class

Notes for the teacher: photocopy the blank page and write the following statements in the speech bubble. Photocopy and distribute to the class.

1. People live on the streets because they are too lazy to look for a job and look after their money properly

2. Only young men live on the streets

3. Does giving people sleeping bags and soup encourage them to sleep on the streets?

4. A person living in a caravan is homeless

5. The main reason for homelessness is young people moving to big cities in the hope of finding adventure and a better life

6. Homelessness affects everyone

7. A person living with a violent partner is homeless

8. Why are there so many homeless people when there are empty houses?

9. Children and young people who run away from home are more likely to be homeless when they are older

10. What sort of support should be available to homeless people?

11. People aren’t homeless for a long time
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?
What is Homelessness?

2.14 Homelessness around the world

Class / group activity

Ask pupils to look into the problem of homelessness e.g. facts and figures, reasons, who can help by looking at the Internet, resources in the library etc.

Ask different groups to look into different countries or areas of the world.

Ask each group to produce a poster to display the information or make a PowerPoint presentation

Possible countries to look into:

Wales and the UK
Europe
Brazil
USA

2.15 The truth about asylum

Do you think Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Illegal Immigrant all mean the same?

Think again!

Try to match the terms below to the correct definitions (photocopy and cut out):

1. Refugee
   a. A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but their application has not yet been decided

2. Illegal immigrant
   b. Someone who has moved to another country to work

3. Asylum Seeker
   c. Someone who enters or stays in a country when it is against the law for them to do so

4. Migrant worker
   d. Someone whose asylum application has been successful and who is allowed to stay in another country after proving they would be in danger back home
Read the following information

**The truth about asylum**

Many refugees and asylum seekers hope to return home at some point in the future, provided the situation in their country has improved.

The UK asylum system is strictly controlled. It is very difficult to get asylum.

Asylum seekers do not come to the UK to claim benefits. Most know very little about the UK asylum or benefits system before they arrive.

Asylum seekers want to work and support themselves. Many do voluntary work while their asylum application is being processed.

Asylum seekers do not jump the queue for Council housing and they cannot choose where they live. The accommodation they get is not paid for by the local Council. It is nearly always ‘hard to let’ properties where other people do not want to live.

Most asylum seekers are living in poverty and experience poor health and hunger.

Asylum seekers are no more likely to commit crimes than anyone else.

Many refugees have academic or teaching qualifications. There are more than 1,500 refugee teachers in the UK.

**Understanding how and why people come to work in the UK**

When 10 more countries joined the European Union in 2004, the UK said it would allow people from those countries to come here to live and work.

Freedom of movement is one of the basic entitlements of the European Union. This means that a UK citizen can work in France, for example and a Polish citizen can work in the UK.

Some people believe that migrants from these new member states (including Poland and many Eastern European countries) come to the UK and take jobs, benefits and housing. The government say that these migrant workers are helping the UK by filling skills and gaps in the job market that UK citizens cannot fill.

Migrant workers often do jobs that UK citizens will not do for the same low wages.

Migrant workers do not get priority for Council housing. They have to go through the same procedure and waiting lists as everyone else.
WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

2.16 Other people’s experiences 3 4

a Choose one of the pictures below. Imagine you are an asylum seeker in the UK. Write a diary about your experiences whilst you are waiting for a decision to be made as to whether you can stay in the UK as a refugee.

b Choose one of the pictures below. Imagine you are a migrant worker from Eastern Europe. Write a letter to your family telling them about your life in the UK.