

NONFICTION: "I Was Homeless" • SKILL: Reading Comprehension, page 1 of 3

Read, Think, Explain

Identifying Nonfiction Elements

Use this activity sheet with "I Was Homeless." See *Scope's* "Glossary of Nonfiction Terms" for definitions of the words that appear in bold.

Before Reading: Text Features

1. Read the **headline**, or title. Write it here: _____

2. Study the main image on page 4. Describe it.

3. What can you infer about Kevin Liu, based on the image and the headline?

4. What does the As You Read box on page 5 tell you to think about?

5. Consider the infographic on page 7. Which of the following best describes the type of information it contains? (check one)

- It compares homelessness in America with homelessness in other countries.
- It contains facts about homelessness in America.
- It contains facts about homeless teens in America.

6. What type of information do you think you will learn in this article?

During Reading

7. Consider this sentence from page 6: "Over the past decade, the cost of homes in major American cities has skyrocketed."

A. Check (✓) the box with the correct definition of *skyrocket*, as it is used in the sentence from the article. (Check a dictionary if you're not sure.)

to increase rapidly

to fly

to collapse

B. Why might the author have chosen *skyrocketed* instead of another, similar word? What does the author's choice of *skyrocketed* suggest about the cost of American homes?

8. The section "The Ordeal" describes several cause-and-effect relationships. Two effects described in the section are below. For each, write the cause.

Effect 1: "Life can be very lonely for kids in shelters." (p. 7)

Cause: _____

Effect 2: "Many families in the shelter system end up staying much longer than they intend." (p. 7)

Cause: _____

9. Look at the infographic on page 7. Then read the claim below. Decide whether the claim is true or false.

Explain your answer using **supporting evidence** from the infographic.

Claim: Homelessness declined in most states between 2011 and 2012.

This claim is true false (check one).

Explanation: _____

After Reading

10. Below is a sample of an **objective summary** of "I Was Homeless." It contains some information that it shouldn't, such as personal opinions and unnecessary details. Read the paragraph, then cross out any information that should not be included. We've crossed out two pieces of unnecessary information for you.

"I Was Homeless" by Kristin Lewis tells the story of Kevin Liu, a teen from New York City whose family was homeless for a number of years. ~~Kevin seems like a really nice guy. I'm sorry about what happened to him.~~ The Lius lived in a comfortable apartment in Chinatown, ~~which is a neighborhood that includes many busy shops,~~ before they were suddenly and illegally evicted by their landlord. The family moved into a homeless shelter, where the living conditions were extremely poor. It sounds really awful. The stress and shame of living in the shelter caused Kevin's grades and social life to suffer. Kevin's mom bought a crockpot even though it was against the rules. The article also includes a lot of general information about homelessness in America and the safety net in place to help the homeless. Did you know that the number of homeless families in Washington, D.C., has doubled in the past five years? Eventually, after three very difficult years, Kevin's family got an apartment of their own. Still, the United States faces many challenges in reducing homelessness.

11. Below is a **central idea** of "I Was Homeless." Three of the pieces of evidence listed support it, but one of them does not. Cross out the one that does not.

