Guided Highlighted Reading for Middle and High School

Social Studies: *America's mentally ill homeless people*
Adapted from an essay written by Henry G. Cisneros, Secretary of the Department of
Housing and Urban Development

Background Knowledge
(The overview given by the teacher prior to reading.)

Anticipation Guide: *Have you noticed an increase in the number of homeless people? You will learn what causes homelessness and what is being done to reduce the numbers. Also you will learn the dire situation homelessness creates for those who are mentally ill. Finally, you will learn what it will take to reverse the situation.*

Summary:
This essay paints a picture of America's mentally ill homeless people, as well as, describing the ways urban cities and the government has tried to solve the problems for the cities and for the mentally ill homeless people themselves. The complexity of the problems faced by the mentally ill homeless is revealed by describing accompanying disabilities, limited financial support, vulnerability to street violence, and what needs to occur if the problem is to be reversed.

Genre: A descriptive essay with the intent to persuade

How the Text is Written: A series of facts and observations reveal the plight of the American's homeless who are mentally ill. It begins with the problem from the perspective of the country, the cities and finally the individual. It ends with a possible solution to reverse the situation and a conclusion that the problem probably cannot be solved .

Vocabulary: Words are bolded and defined in the paragraph in which they appear. The teacher reads the word and the definition. If time permits have the students say the word five times.

Guided highlighted reading: Each student has a highlighter pen. The teacher reads the paragraph and directions for highlighting. The teacher reads as rapidly as students can follow. The purpose is to get students to push their eyes rapidly across the text to find the text to be highlighted.

The goals for this activity are to prepare for reading a selection, build silent reading fluency, to determine what is important in a paragraph, to make inferences, and to read with a larger context in mind.

The teacher reads the following:

Paragraph 1
Highlight the source of this information.

Paragraph 2
Highlight the total number of homeless in the United States and how many of them suffer from mental illness.

Paragraph 2
Highlight the description of American's reaction before and now to the homeless.

Paragraph 3
Highlight the words that lead you to believe the homeless are mostly in urban areas.

Paragraph 3
Highlight how homelessness came about.

Paragraph 4
Highlight what has made a tremendous difference to the lives of the homeless.

Paragraph 5
Highlight the percentage of the increase in the number of homeless people helped by the government.
> **Vocabulary: Continuum**: a continuous nonspatial whole or extent or succession in which no part or portion is distinct or distinguishable from adjacent parts

Paragraph 5
Highlight the successful forward-looking policies that have shifted the national priorities.

Paragraph 6
> **Vocabulary**: **Compromise:** (verb) to expose or make vulnerable to danger

Highlight the accompanying disabilities that often befall the homeless and mentally ill.

Paragraph 6
Highlight possible reasons for linking homeless to mentally ill.

Paragraph 8
Highlight the crimes committed by the mental ill homeless for survival purposes.

Paragraph 9
> **Vocabulary**: **vortex:** a state of affairs likened to a whirlpool for violent activity, irresistible force

Highlight the phrase that is the reference for "vortex of suffering."

Paragraph 9
Highlight the reasons mental illness compounds the problem of homelessness

Assignment
America's Mentally Ill Homeless People
Adapted from the Essay by Henry G. Cisneros

Question # 1: What does the text say? (Briefly summarize the short story at a literal level.)

Rubric for Question # 1

Questions	3 (meets assignment)	2 (partially meets)	1 (minimally meets)
What does the text say? (Briefly summarize the story.)	Answer is accurate, significant, and relevant with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is accurate, significant, and relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer is inaccurate or a misinterpretation with little or no relevance to text or question. Ideas and content are not developed with details or appear random. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.

Sample Responses for Anchor Text
America's mentally ill homeless people

3

This essay paints a picture of America's mentally ill homeless people, as well as, describing the ways urban cities and the government has tried to solve the problems for the cities and for the mentally ill homeless people themselves. The complexity of the problems faced by the mentally ill homeless is revealed by describing accompanying disabilities, limited financial support, vulnerability to street violence, and what needs to occur if the problem is to be reversed.

2

This is about America getting more and more mentally ill homeless people and we are getting use to seeing them on the streets. Cities have tried to get rid of them and so has the government. These people do not have much money, they use drugs, and they get involved in crime. Only if they get the right kind of help can they get better, but that is not likely.

1

This is about mentally ill people who live on the street. There are too many of them and cities can't get rid of them. They can't help themselves because they use drugs and stuff. They are criminals and get arrested. They have many mental illnesses.

America's Mentally Ill Homeless People

Question # 2: How does it say it? In other words how does the author develop the text to convey his/her purpose? (What are the genre format organization/features etc.?)

Rubric for Question #2

Questions	3 (meets assignment)	2 (partially meets)	1 (minimally meets)
How does it say it? In other words, how does the author develop the text to convey his/her purpose? (What are the genre, format, organization, features, etc.?)	Answer is relevant with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer contains misinterpretation and has little or no relevance to text, question, or genre. Ideas and content are developed with few or no details. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.

Sample Responses for Anchor Text
America's mentally ill homeless people

3

This descriptive essay was written with the intent to persuade the reader of the complex and convoluted nature of the problem for the mentally ill homeless people themselves and for the country, city, and government. The essay written by the former Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development uses facts and observations to describe the problem that is the responsibility of his former department. By recounting failed ways to solve the problem, he contrasts the single simple solution to a combination of solutions and a change in national priorities to the success of the government approach. The tone/mood of the rest of the essay is of despair and hopelessness. The three paragraphs about those who are mentally ill and homeless paint a dire picture of the complicated entanglement of the problem, their limited resources, along with their criminal involvement and of substance abuse for survival. The essay ends with an improbable solution to the problem and a conclusion that the problem probably cannot be solved.

2

This descriptive essay paints a picture of the mentally ill homeless people in America through observations and facts. It describes the number of mentally ill homeless in America, how they are perceived, and what has been done to try to solve the problem. The essay begins with the problem mentally ill homeless people create for the country, then the city, the government and people themselves. They are further described by telling about their other illnesses, their drug and alcohol use, and involvement with crime. It ends by giving little hope for a probable solution to the problem.

1

This is a report about mentally ill homeless people. It tells where they live and what they are like. It also tells how we try to get rid of them. It tells how difficult it is for them to live because they take drugs and get in trouble with the law.

Question # 3: What does the text mean? (What theme/concept is the author trying to get across?)

Rubric for Question #3

Questions	3 (meets assignment)	2 (partially meets)	1 (minimally meets)
What does the text mean? (What theme/concept is the author trying to get across?)	Answer is relevant with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer contains misinterpretation and little or no relevance to text or question or is a retelling or summary. Ideas are not developed with details. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.

Sample Responses Anchor Text
America's mentally ill homeless people

3

The theme of this descriptive essay designed to persuade is that, "One way to get to a possible solution to a problem is to change the perception of what it takes to solve it." Meaning resides in the recounting of the many unsuccessful attempts to solve the problem and by describing the problem of the mentally ill homeless people in a mood/tone of despair and hopelessness. The essay ends by describing the situation as a vicious cycle and/or a vortex of suffering and a confession that it really probably can't be solved. He wants us to know that when problems are complicated by many factors simple solutions will probably not solve the problem.

2

The theme of this essay is that finding a solution to the problem of mentally ill homeless people in America is very complicated. It will take combining solutions over time to make a difference for people in this situation. Sometimes changing how you see the problem will help find a solution. His final message was that sometimes under the best of conditions, the problem cannot be solved.

1

The author wanted us to know how difficult it is to help mentally ill homeless people. He wants us to know what a hard life they have with no money, being in drugs, and involved with crime.

America's Mentally Ill Homeless People

Question # 4: So what? (What does the message/theme/concept mean in your life and/or in the lives of others? Why is it worth sharing/telling? What significance does it have to your life and/or to the lives of others?)

Rubric for Question # 4

Questions	3 (meets assignment)	2 (partially meets)	1 (minimally meets)
So what? (What does the message/theme/concept mean in your life and/or in the lives of others? Why is it worth sharing/telling? What significance does it have to your life and/or to the lives of other?)	Answer is relevant and/or insightful with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer contains misinterpretation and little or no relevance to text or question. Answer appears random or inappropriate. Ideas are not developed with details. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.

Sample Responses for Anchor Text
America's mentally ill homeless people

3

The theme, "One way to get to a possible solution to a problem is to change the perception of what it takes to solve it" would help clear up the controversy over the pending health legislation. Rather than selling it as a simple solution to a simple problem, detailing the convoluted, complex nature of the problem would help bring clarity to what needs to be done to solve the problem. The message in this essay speaks to many situations in life, especially my life. Waiting to solve a problem until the complexity of the problem is clarified makes a lot of sense.

2

I feel like I have a better understanding of the problem the mentally ill homeless in America face.
I am more likely to give them money, if I have it, and treat them with kindness and respect. Most important for me is to prepare myself to be able to earn enough money so I have a house or an apartment. Even though people who are homeless but not mentally ill have it a little easier, I don't want to be in that situation.

1

I don't plan to live in a big city so I won't be bothered by homeless people. Besides my grandfather wants me to come to live with him after I graduate and help care for the horses. They don't have homeless people out in the country.