

**Teacher Guides for *Address Unknown* by Charles Warren:
Developed Using the Common Core State Standards Initiative**

Grade 7

About *Address Unknown*

When Marshall’s single mother loses her job, the family has to live in a car for five weeks. In this sensitive and thought-provoking novel for youthful readers, seventh-grader Marshall wrestles with the usual ups-and-downs of friendship, family life, and school—along with an unexpected problem: Homelessness. As he struggles to resolve this crisis, Marshall is challenged to discover new truths about himself, his friends, his school, and his community.

Pre reading Activity

1. Write a poem describing what you think it must be like to be homeless.
2. Have a class discussion to explore why some students might feel different from everyone else. What can the person who feels that way do about it? What can other students do to help that person?

Reading

Have your students do any of the following exercises:

1. Determine a theme or central idea of *Address Unknown* and analyze its development over the course of the story.
2. Write an objective summary of the novel *Address Unknown*.
3. How does the parking lot at G.R. Hoopenheimer’s store help shape the plot?
4. How did Harry influence Marshall’s reaction to being homeless? Use specific details from the text.
5. Analyze how the author develops the points of view of Crystal and Shark.
6. What traits, such as courage, compassion, etc. does Marshall have? List at least three traits, define each one, and explain why you believe he has them. Use details from the text.

Writing

Have your students do any of the following writing exercises:

1. Write an essay to examine ideas and information related to homelessness. Introduce the topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize your ideas, concepts and information using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics, and multimedia when useful to aid comprehension. Use transitions to create cohesion and to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. Establish and maintain a formal style. Provide a concluding statement or section that supports the information presented.

2. Write a narrative to develop a real or imagined experience with bullying using effective techniques, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. Engage the reader by establishing a point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds logically. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing and description, to develop experiences, events, and characters. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and shifts from one time frame or setting to another. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details and sensory language. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated events.

3. Share your paper from #2 above with the teacher, the class, or a small group of students. Rewrite as needed to strengthen your paper focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

4. Write an essay on the causes of homelessness and use the internet to cite and link to sources and to collaborate with others.

5. Marshall felt that he was different from the other students. Adolescents often feel this way. What are some other reasons that an adolescent might feel different from other adolescents? How might someone who feels different learn to cope with that feeling?

6. In what country did jazz originate? Write an essay, after doing adequate research, in which you discuss how jazz originated, the great jazz musicians throughout history, some of the great songs, and the role jazz has played in our culture.

Speaking and Listening

1. After having read *Address Unknown* and having completed some research on the topic of homelessness, have your students engage in a discussion of one of the following topics. You may have them discuss one-on-one, in small groups, or you may lead the entire class in the discussion.

Have your students acknowledge new information expressed by others and modify their own views when appropriate.

- Could Marshall have done more to help Harry? Should the community do more to help Harry?

- Is homelessness a big problem in your community? What resources are available for the homeless in your community?

2. Have your students research a question concerning homelessness or bullying and present their findings to the class. Remind them to use appropriate description, facts, details, and examples and to make good eye contact with their audience, use adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. They should be encouraged to use multimedia components to clarify their information and to emphasize key points.

3. Have your class outline one of the speaker's presentations and evaluate the soundness of the reasoning, the relevancy, and sufficiency of the evidence.