citizen math

SEEKING SHELTER

What factors affect homelessness in a city?

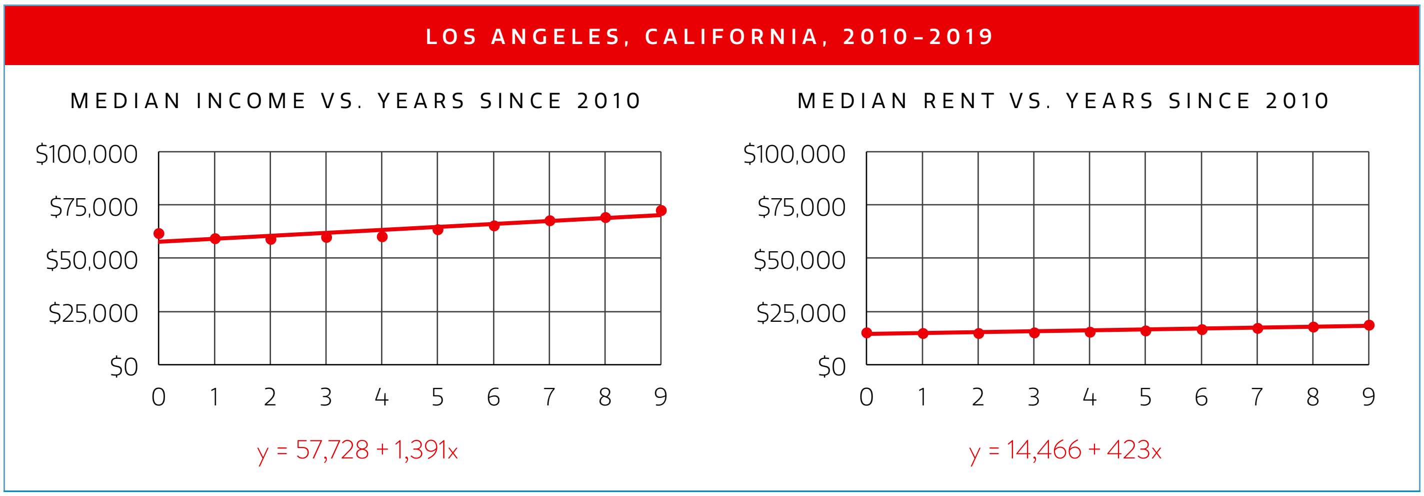
Student Handout

Name

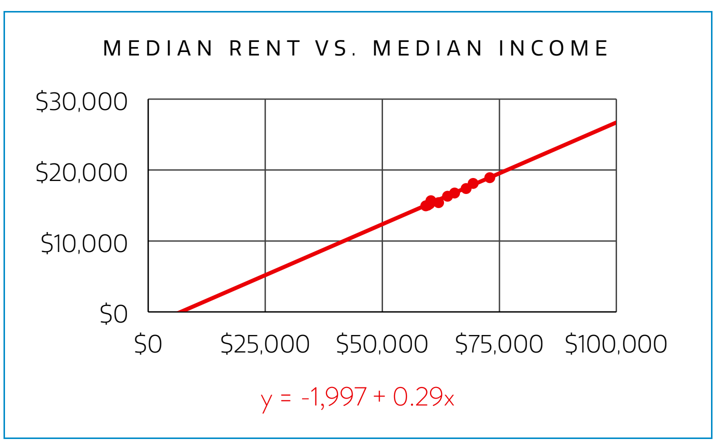
PART ONE: RISING TIDE

1 Every day across the United States, people relocate to new cities. Many of them do this to start new, higher-paying jobs. As a city's residents earn higher incomes, the cost of living there often goes up.

The graphs below show how the median annual income and the median annual rent changed from 2010-2019 in Los Angeles, CA. Judging from the graphs, would you conclude that the average household did better off or worse off over that decade? Explain. *(Note: On the graphs, the x-axis represents years since 2010, where 0 = 2010, 1 = 2011, etc.)*



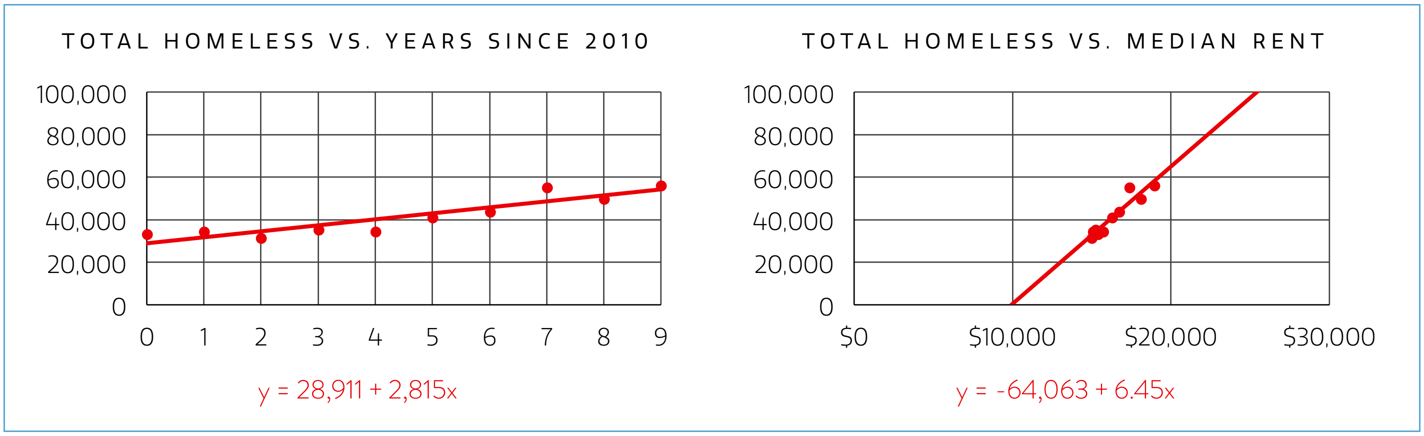
2 The graph below shows the relationship between the median annual rent and income in Los Angeles, CA from 2010-2019. For every additional dollar that the typical household earned, how did the typical rent change? Does this surprise you?



PART TWO: UNDERWATER

3 At any given moment in the United States, more than 500,000 people are experiencing homelessness. Many of them had homes but lost them when they could no longer afford the rent. Watch the video about some of these people.

Then look at the graphs about homelessness in Los Angeles between 2010-2019. Over this period, how did the homeless population change as the rent increased, and what does this suggest about the relationship between homelessness and income?



4 In 2017, internet giant Amazon announced that it would build a second headquarters somewhere in North America. It promised 50,000 new highly paid jobs and invited cities to apply to be home of the so-called "HQ2."

Imagine you're the mayor of a city. If a high-paying employer such as Amazon moved to your area, what are some things that you could do to address unintended consequences like increased rents and homelessness?