

WHAT CAN GRAVESTONES TELL US?

Inscriptions and lettering



- ✍ Gravestones usually have writing on them called inscriptions.
- ✍ **This is to** give **you** information about the person buried in the grave, and their family.
- ✍ You will notice the gravestones in Dunfermline Abbey Churchyard can have different styles of letters and different types of information carved on them.

Activity 1: Styles of letters

- ✍ Look at these two gravestones.
- ✍ Do you think the letters look similar to **those** printed in books or do they look more like handwriting?
- ✍ What else do you notice about the writing?
- ✍ Why do you think these look different? Which style of lettering do you think is earliest in date?

Write your answers below



On a gravestone, the word rooms mean the number of burial plots (spaces)



Activity 2:

- ✍ Have a look around the rest of the graveyard and see what styles of lettering you can find. Write your name using different style of letters copied from gravestones (fill in separate handout)

Activity 3:

- ✍ It is not just the style of writing that is different between different gravestones. The type of information included about the people who died can also be different.
- ✍ Have a look again at the two inscriptions above and the inscription on this stone what do they tell us about the people who died?



Name of Person	What I found out about them

Name of Person	What I found out about them

- ✍ Have a look around the graveyard at some more gravestones.
- ✍ Try to find 2 gravestones with lots of writing, and 2 without and record what you find.

Name of Person	What I found out about them

Name of Person	What I found out about them

✍ Can you think of any details that might not appear on a gravestone?

✍ Why do you think it does not appear on a gravestone?

What might not appear on a gravestone?	Why?

Instructions for Activities

- Pupils can work individually, in pairs or small groups.
- The activities are in order but do not have to be completed in this order.
- Pupils answer the questions about the given gravestones and then investigate other gravestones within the graveyard.
- Alternatively, the different activities can be completed by different groups within the class and can be reported back as part of a whole class discussion at the end.
- The photographs of gravestone inscriptions can be used to complete Activity 2 instead of looking at gravestone lettering in the Abbey Churchyards.
- The booklet of gravestone inscriptions can be used to complete Activity 3 instead of looking at gravestone inscriptions in the Abbey Churchyards.