ROCK EAGLE 4-H CENTER

CEMETERY STUDIES
Independent (Teacher led)

Description: Learn about and explore two historical cemeteries located near Rock Eagle property. These cemeteries are located next to the Union Chapel Church, founded in 1855. The two cemeteries are <u>very</u> different from one another. Students will visit the cemeteries and compare and contrast the physical and cultural characteristics of them.

Materials: A Cemetery Studies box will be provided for your school. If you are running out of supplies, please inform your lead staff and they will restock. A map has been included so you can find your way to the cemeteries.

**Please make sure your students treat the cemeteries with respect. Rock Eagle is fortunate to have been granted permission to use these cemeteries for classes. Please help ensure we always have this privilege.

**The privy, or outhouse, behind the church should not be used by students. This comes as a request from the Union Chapel congregation.

Objective:
Compare and contrast two cemeteries, learning about the physical and cultural characteristics of each.

Journal Questions:
1. What two basic facts are generally the only data that we learn from a cemetery marker?
2. How can we use the collective data from a cemetery to help us understand more about the community in which it is taken?
3. What are other venues or areas to which we can apply our cemetery data to give us a better vision of life in the past?
4. What is symbolism? Give an example of symbolism used in the forest cemetery.
5. In many older cemeteries, the headstones face a certain direction. Which direction is this? Why did people position the headstones this way?
6. Why are the graves in the forest cemetery marked in different ways?
7. There is a grave in the forest cemetery which has a date of 1878. What do you think the land at Rock Eagle looked like in that year?

Key Words:
Graph, headstones, footstones, inscription, symbolism

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Class Outline:

I.   Introduction (walk to cemeteries 15-25 minutes, depending on your starting point)
II.   Forest Cemetery
        A. Scavenger Hunt (20 minutes)
        B. Review (5minutes)
III.   New Cemetery
        A. Scavenger Hunt (30 minutes)
        B. Review (5minutes)
IV.   Wrap up
        A. Forest Cemetery (5 minutes)
        B. New Cemetery (5 minutes)
V.   Walk Back (15-25 minutes, depending on your ending point here on camp)

Background: This class utilizes two cemeteries located adjacent to the Union Chapel Church, built in 1855. The first cemetery, which we will call the "New Cemetery," is located directly behind the church and the fellowship hall. Most of the head stones in this cemetery have modern, carved monuments. It is still used today. Most of the people buried in the New Cemetery were members of the church and lived nearby. Much can be learned from the data (dates of birth and death) and arrangements of these graves. We have made information gathered from this site available in a graphic form as well as in table form. In light of the emphasis being placed by standardized tests on student's abilities to interpret information presented in this manner, we hope to enhance your student's abilities with practice in using tables and graphs for our studies. By studying this information in reference to history, one can link these lives to historical events and begin to see more than just the bare facts of birth and death. In the case of the Union Chapel cemetery, we present the lives represented here in light of major conflicts and wars that the United States was involved in. In doing so, we are able to see much more than just a cemetery, but we begin to see into the lives of the people buried here. One could just as easily study other events such as the development of major inventions such as the sewing machine, the cotton gin, the airplane, computers, etc, and get a picture of how these lives were otherwise affected. We hope that by discovering ways to "see" history from one perspective, students will develop an interest to look at other venues that this type of study might be used back in their own communities. From here we move on to the other cemetery located on this site.

      To the right of the church, in the trees, lies the other cemetery. We will call this the "Cemetery in the Forest" The graves in the Cemetery in the Forest have headstones and footstones made from natural stones. It is unknown who is buried in this cemetery or when they were buried. A total of 69 marked graves were found. Many more sunken spots were found without fieldstone markers. The graves varied anywhere from 31 to 102 inches long with most being 47 - 87 inches long (headstone to footstone). They were all 24 to 47 inches

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wide with most falling in the 31 to 39 inch range. It is unknown who is buried in this cemetery or when they were buried. No known excavations have taken place.

Take notice of the large pile of stones (grave number 37). These stones are likely what remain of a four-sided wall that once surrounded a grave. With close inspection you can find the four corners. Assuming it is a grave, why did this person have a wall around their grave? Do they also have a headstone and footstone like other graves in the cemetery, or do they have a more recent headstone under the rocks from the wall? Could this have been someone of importance, perhaps a preacher, teacher, or community leader is buried beneath the fallen wall. The six graves immediately surrounding this grave have been measured (headstone to footstone). They all fall between the average length of 47 - 87 inches long and all are 31 inches wide except one (grave number 22), which is 39 inches wide. It has been suggested in the past that these are children. This information is only speculation and no evidence has been presented to confirm this. In fact, due to the fluctuations in measurements of all these graves, we have no way of knowing for sure.

Students studying the cemetery have found a few stones, which appear to have things carved or inscribed in them. One such headstone (grave number 18) has 1878 and another (grave number 42) 1888 inscribed on it. One Grave (grave number 49) stuck out at 118 inches long. That is almost ten feet! Yet another grave (grave number31) has been outlined with quarts stones. You can see there are ample opportunities in this class for students to make observations and draw conclusions.

Cemeteries are places where symbolism is often present. The headstone and footstone of a grave can represent the headboard and footboard of a bed. Some cultures believed that death was a long sleep, so a pillow and blanket might have been added to one's coffin. In early cemeteries, ground-covering plants like *Vinca minor* or English ivy were sometimes planted throughout the cemetery to represent a blanket for the sleeping dead. Most pioneer cemeteries (and many modern cemeteries) have headstones facing the rising sun (east). Some Christians believed when this world ends, Christ would come from that direction.

The file box should include a map of the Cemetery in the Forest, a map of the New Cemetery, Scavenger hunts (Student Activity Worksheets) for both the new and old cemeteries (with a graphical display of the available data and a table display of the same data from the New Cemetery). These will allow students to compare/contrast the two cemeteries.

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Activities:

SCAVENGER HUNT

The walk to the cemeteries takes about 15-25 minutes, depending on your starting point here on camp. The Cemetery Trail (see map in file box) leads you to a small open area near the church. This is a good spot to stop and give a brief introduction about the class. Just a few footsteps from this open area is the Cemetery in the Forest. At this point you can have students complete the activity sheet provided below. Please note that several graves in the forest are marked with blue and/or orange flags. Please do not remove these flags. The Cemetery in the Forest provides a wonderful chance for the students to make observations and formulate theories about who is buried there, when they were buried, why the cemetery is no longer maintained, etc.

DIRECTIONS:

This activity allows the students to actively seek out information to answer questions presented to them on worksheets. These questions vary on difficulty, and level of thought required to answer them. They are intended to create discussion within the groups as they try to "discover" what life might have been like in this small community over the past 150 or so years. First form groups of 3 or 4 students.

Next, give each group a laminated **SCAVENGER HUNT (FOREST)** activity worksheet with the questions on it, as well as a wet erase pen. One member may be the official recorder of their answers on the worksheet with the wet erase pen, while the other 2 or 3 students will physically search the cemetery (students may wish to swap off with each other while doing this). Teachers may use the answer sheets during the activity to assist the students as desired. Upon completion of the worksheet, they will return to the assembly area for review, and the correct answers will be given to all groups. Allow 20 minutes for this activity with a 5 minute review to include cleaning the activity sheets with water and wiping them dry.

After completing work in the Cemetery in the Forest, you can walk directly behind the church and complete the **SCAVENGER HUNT (NEW)** questions about the New Cemetery. The directions are the same as before except for additional time, and students will need a copy of the New Cemetery Data sheet(s) and Graph. Allow 30 minutes for this activity with an additional 5 minute review and clean-up as done in the Forest Cemetery Scavenger Hunt.

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SCAVENGER HUNT (FOREST)
Student Activity Worksheet

Cemetery in the Forest

1. Find a stone with a date carved in it. What year is carved?

_____ _____

2. Who do you think might be buried under the remains of the fallen wall?

_____

_____

3. Find graves that are positioned head-to-head like this?   _____I I_____

 Who might be buried this way? _____

4. Do you think all of the graves in this cemetery have been discovered?   Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

5. Find a grave that appears to be sunken. What causes a grave to become sunken?

_____

_____

_____

6. Give one example of something you see in the cemetery that demonstrates that people cared about those who were buried here.

_____

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Cemetery in the Forest Answers

1.   Find a stone with a date carved in it. What year is carved?   *There are 2 stones known to have dates inscribed in them. The dates are 1878 and 1888.*

2. Who do you think might be buried under the remains of the fallen wall? *Answers will vary, but may include a preacher, teacher, community leader, etc.*

3. Find graves that are positioned head-to-head like this.   _____I I_____
    Who might be buried this way?   *Answers will vary, but may include siblings, spouses, etc.*

4. Do you think any of the graves in this cemetery have been discovered?   *Yes/No*
     Why do/don't you think this way? *Answers will vary, however, there have been extensive searches to try to eliminate the possibility of omission of any grave.*

5. Find a grave that appears to be sunken. What causes a grave to become sunken? *Answers will vary, but possible reasons can include body/coffin deterioration and/or soil shifting from simply digging a hole.*

6. Give one example of something you see in the cemetery that demonstrates that people cared about those who were buried here.   *Many possible answers including: presence of Vinca minor, presence of a sepulcher (or burial vault), cemetery is next to a church, etc.*

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Student Activity Worksheet

Union Chapel "New" Cemetery

1. At the Scott graves, why are there small blocks marked with an "S" near the graves?

_____

_____

2. During how many wars did Lanier Rufus Carnes live? List them.

_____

3. Of all the men in the cemetery, who most likely was a soldier in the Civil War? How did you come to this conclusion?

_____

_____

4. Were any of the wives older than their husbands? If so, Who?

_____

5. Who died on his birthday and how old was he?

_____

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6. Who died on Christmas Day?

_____

7. Find the person with the oldest date of birth. Who was he/she and when was it?

_____

8. How many people buried in the Union Chapel cemetery were born during WW I, and who were they?

_____

_____

_____

9. How many people live during a time where there was NO listed conflict or war?

_____

10. Based on the information you can gather from the graph or data sheets, do you think any man buried in the Union Chapel Cemetery died in battle in WW II? How did you form this conclusion?

_____

_____

_____

_____

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11. If you were asked to determine the average age of all the males buried in the Union Chapel Cemetery, from which source (graph or table) would you choose to get your information, and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Union Chapel "New" Cemetery Answers

1. At the Scott graves, why are there small blocks marked with an "S" near the graves? *They mark the boundaries of the Scott family plot within the cemetery.*

2. During how many wars did Lanier Rufus Carnes live?
NONE

3. Of all the men in the cemetery, who most likely was a soldier in the Civil War? How did you come to this conclusion?
William Austin Reynolds, because his age would have been around 18 at the start of the war.

4. Were any of the wives older than their husbands? If so, Who?
Yes, Jennett P. Barnes and Janie Moon

5. Who died on his birthday? How old was he?
 Charlie I. Mooneyham – (6/11/1919 – 6/11/1920)   1 year old

6. Who died on Christmas Day?
Ira Newton Barnes - (12/25/1954)

7. Who was the oldest person buried in the Union Chapel Cemetery, and in what year did they die?
Lilly S. Presley (100) – died in 2003

8. How many people buried in the Union Chapel cemetery were born during WW I, and who were they?
Eleven – Annie Elouise Clark: Odis Crawford; Charlie Duckworth; Cecil Johnson; Richard Leggett; William Calvin Leggett; Anna Lula Moon; Baby Irene Scott; William E. Scott; Dorothy Hazel Spencer; and James Ellis Welch

9. How many people live during a time where there was NO listed conflict or war?
Seven – Michael Eugene Woodall; Willie Frederick Welch; James W. Presley, Jr.; Charlie Mooneyham; Miriam Roberta Linch; Lanier Rufus Carnes; and Bobby M. Brooks.

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10. Based on the information you can gather from the graph or data sheets, do you think any man buried in the Union Chapel Cemetery died in battle in WW II? How did you form this conclusion?
No. The youngest man that died during WWII would have been 53, which would be too old for military service.

11. If you were asked to determine the average age of all the males buried in the Union Chapel Cemetery, from which source (graph or table) would you choose to get your information, and why?(_Students will usually respond with Table, since the data is more accurate and is labled M/F with actual dates of Birth, Death, and ages at death, whereas the graph is less accurate and takes longer to organize, even if it were totally accurate._
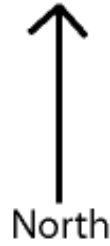
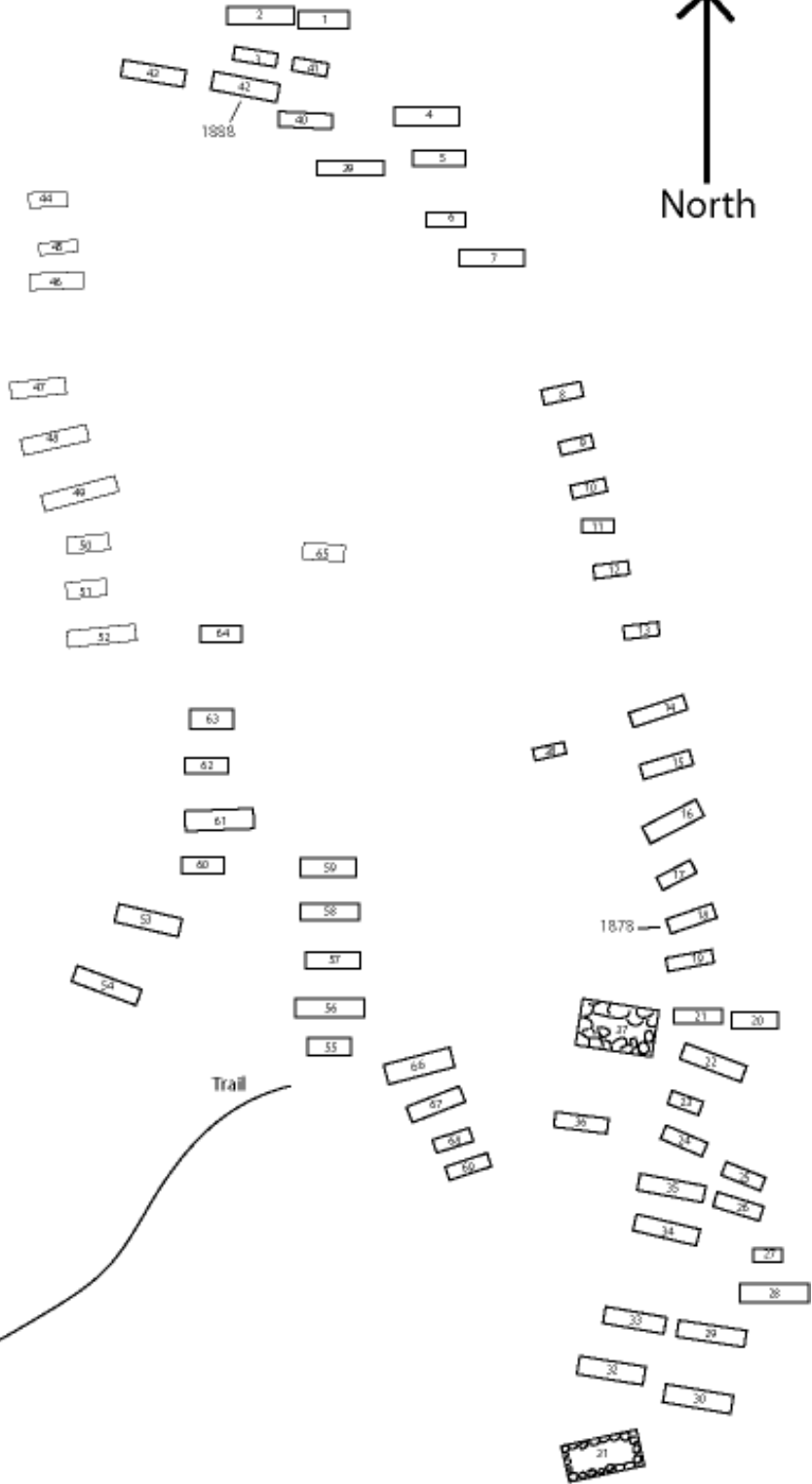***Making the best better!***
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Cemetary In the Forest

⊙ rock pile
possible
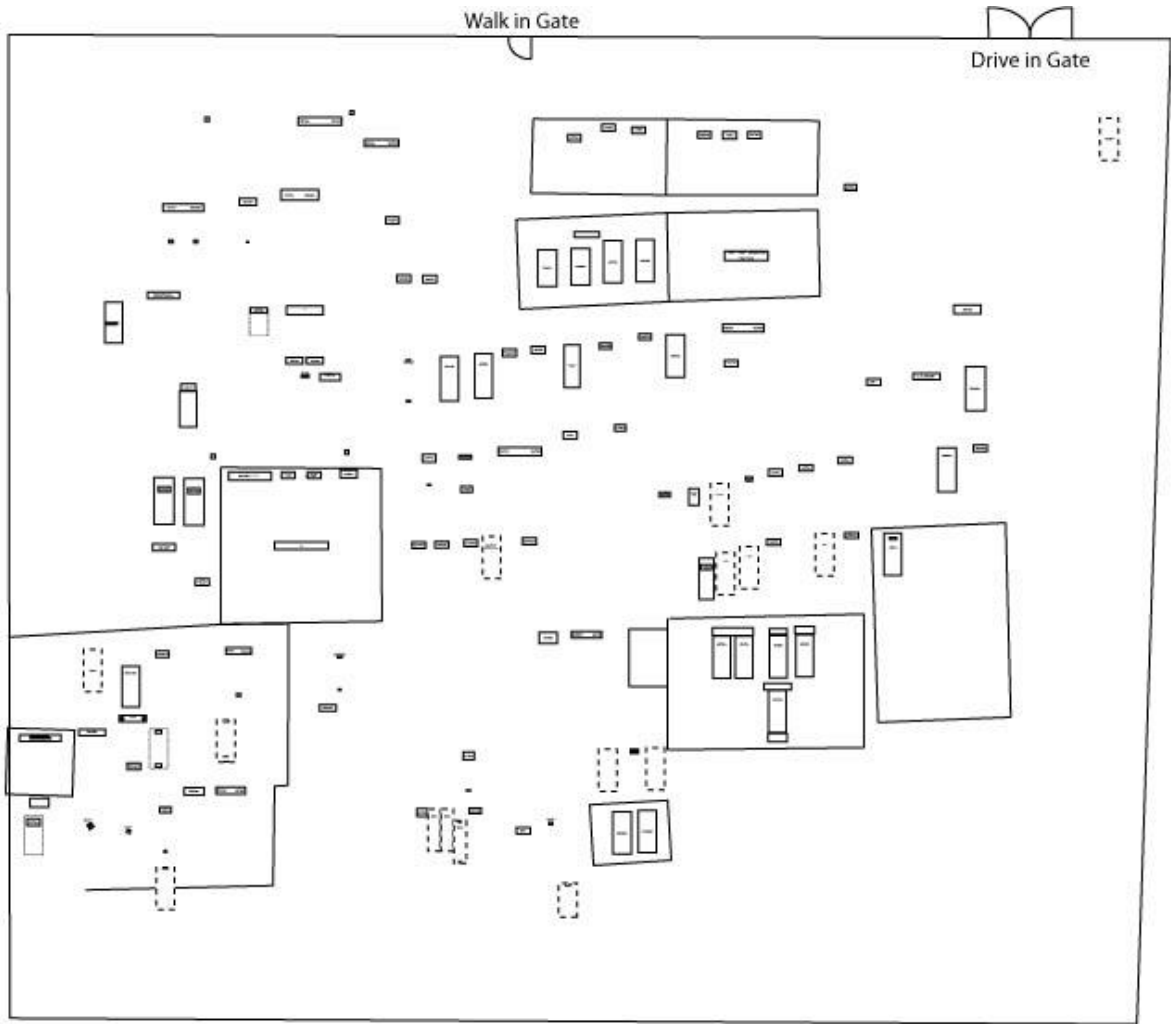fence coner

North

Big Tree

1888

1878 —

Trail

To Rock Eagle

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New Cemetery

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Time: 5 minutes Plus 5 minute wrap-up
Materials Needed: Paper (or students' journals, if they have them), crayons

-This activity brings students in direct contact with tombstones in the cemetery. Please remember to take special care as not to disturb or alter the graves and/or items placed on or around them.

Procedure:
Have students choose a tombstone that appears interesting to them. Instruct students to carefully place a piece of paper over the tombstone, in particular over areas that may be more difficult to read or decipher. Next, instruct students to use the broad side of a crayon and gently rub the paper while holding the paper firmly against the stone. A gentle stroke will ensure that the finer intricacies of the tombstone can slowly be revealed, plus this method will prevent students from breaking through the paper or losing control such that they end up coloring on the grave.
After each student has completed their grave rubbing ask if they happened to notice anything different between their rubbing and the actual tombstone. Perhaps even discuss how grave rubbings might be useful to people studying old cemeteries. What might be revealed through a grave rubbing that is harder to notice with the naked eye?

Students can also share their work with each other and discuss what they would like to have on their tombstone. If someone were to do a grave rubbing of their grave, how might that look?

EULOGIES
(optional activity)

Eulogies (an optional activity)**:**
Time: 10 minutes with a 5 minute wrap-up.
Materials Needed: Paper (or students' journals, if they have them), pencils or crayons

-This activity deals with dying. It may or may not be appropriate for your particular group.
Have the students sit down somewhere. Ask the students if they have ever been to a funeral. Talk to them about what a **eulogy** is.   Do they remember hearing someone give a eulogy?

Ask the students to pretend they have died. Who would give their eulogy and what would that person say in the eulogy? Have the students write down what they think someone would say for their eulogy. This gives the students a chance to reflect upon their lives up to this point.

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Here is another way to approach this activity. Tell the students to imagine themselves in the future. They have died at the age of 91. Have them write what they think their eulogy might say then. This gives the students a chance to think about what their lives may be like for the next 80 years.
You may want to have some of the students share their eulogies with the class.

A shorter variation of this would be to have the students write their own **epitaph**. What do the students think would be written on their epitaph if they were to die tomorrow or 20, 40, 60, etc. years in the future?

Vocabulary:
graph - *noun* – 1886 – **:** a diagram (as a series of one or more points, lines, line segments, curves, or areas) that represents the variation of a variable in a comparison with that of one or more other variables

epitaph – *noun* – 14th century – **1 :** an inscription on or at a tomb or a grave in memory of the one buried there **2 :** a brief statement commemorating or epitomizing a deceased person or something past

eulogy – *noun* – 15th century – **1 :** a commendatory oration or writing especially in honor of one deceased < she delivered the *eulogy* at his funeral > **2 :** high praise

headstone – *noun* – 1775 - **:** a memorial stone at the head of a grave

footstone – *noun* – 1724 - **:** a stone placed at the foot of a grave

inscribe – *transitional verb* – 15th century - **:** to write, engrave, or print characters upon

symbolism – *noun* – 1654 - **:** the art or practice of using symbols esp. by investing things with a symbolic meaning or by expressing the invisible or intangible by means of visible or sensuous representations: as **a :** artistic imitation or invention that is a method of revealing or suggesting immaterial, ideal, or otherwise intangible truth or states **b :** the use of conventional or traditional signs in the representation of divine beings and spirits

Sources Used:
(2008). In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.
        Retrieved November 25, 2008, from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary

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MATERIALS in the file box:

1 Curriculum Guide
1 Cemetery Trail Map
2 Forest Cemetery Map (for Instructors)
2 New Cemetery Map (for Instructors)
10 Wet Erase Markers
10 Laminated Graphic /Table Data Sheets
10 Laminated Scavenger Hunt Sheets for the <u>Forest</u> Cemetery
2 Answer Keys to the <u>Forest</u> Cemetery Scavenger Hunt
10 Laminated Scavenger Hunt Sheets for the <u>New</u> Cemetery
2 Answer Keys to the <u>New</u> Cemetery Scavenger Hunt
Assorted Crayons
Scrap Paper (for rubbings, calculations, etc.)
1 cloth (to erase laminated sheets)
1 full Water Spray Bottle

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