

# 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

## “Adopt a Dead Person” Project

### Guidelines for Picking a Dead Person

1. Your person should have died between 1860 and 1930. You can tell this by reading the dates on the gravestone.
2. Do not pick anyone in your family. We want to research a stranger.
3. Pick an adult. You will probably find gravestones of children, but it will be easier to research an adult. You can tell how old the person buried under a gravestone was when he or she died by subtracting the year of birth from the year of death.
4. Pick an interesting gravestone. Is there a cool or weird design on the gravestone? Is there something odd about the way it looks in relationship to the other stones around it? Does it make you ask questions? THAT is a good gravestone for this project!
5. Large gravestones tend to belong to wealthier (richer) people, smaller ones to poorer people.
6. The newest stones will be made of granite (different colors, kind of pebbly looking, but very smooth and shiny). Most of the stones you will want to look at will be made of marble (white and soapy looking). The oldest stones will be made of slate (dark gray, you will be able to see layers of stone at the edges); most of these will be too old for our project.
7. When your team has found a gravestone you want to do choose, check with the teacher on duty to make sure that nobody has picked that grave yet. Then, fill out a grave information sheet and go over it together to make sure that it is correct. This will involve sketching the gravestone, copying the information carved on it and taking down a few other pieces of information. You will measure how far the grave is from point one and point two and write that down. This will help us make a map of the cemetery. Then, go to the teacher on duty and have him or her take a digital picture of it for you.
8. If it is hard to read some of the information on the grave, you may carefully clean it enough to read. Please, please, please be **very, very gently** clean it out with a toothbrush provided by your teacher.
9. Be very gentle and respectful. Remember that you are guests in the last home these people will ever have. Treat it and them with respect.