

# Enquiry Question:

## What does heritage mean?

### Objective

To explore a local environment with historical and natural heritage to discover and develop connections around the concept of heritage.

**1 Additional resources are available to support learning activities - look for the orange number to guide you.**

### Equipment

- Pen or pencil
- Paper and clipboard or a notebook
- Additional resources
- Strips of card - 1 per learner
- Optional: tiles of fabric or card, creative items such as pens/pastels/ink stamps

**Time** - this activity can take around **one hour and a half** to complete unless you wish to explore aspects in more detail.

### Prepare

Introduce Sheffield General Cemetery and explain that today we are going to think about the concept of heritage. Ask learners if they have heard of the concept before.

**What do you think it is?**

Heritage is something of value passed down from previous generations. It could be something **tangible** (a building, monument or tree) or something **intangible** (a memory or tradition).

Today we are going to explore the historical heritage and the natural heritage here at Sheffield General Cemetery. Let's think about these questions as we explore: **Can everything be heritage?**

**Who decides what is of heritage value?**

**What does heritage mean to you?**

1



## Explore

Share a map of the site so the learner is familiar with where you are going to go. Explain that we are going to visit the stops on the map to share an aspect of heritage. *You can choose to do all or a few of the stops.*

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At each stop we are going to take some time to look around and listen so learners have the opportunity to think and talk about heritage and what it means to them. During this time, learners can write notes or words and make small sketches that help them capture their thoughts. They can use what they see and hear in the Cemetery as inspiration.

## Discover

As you visit each stop, learners will be asked to assess its heritage value to themselves personally and then to others. Discuss with learners what criteria they think should be in place to decide if something has heritage value.

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You may want to consider the questions: **What does value mean?**

**Does heritage mean something is popular?**

**Can heritage be found anywhere?**

**Does everyone have heritage?**

At the first stop, the Gatehouse, share with the learners the story of the River Styx. Ask learners whether they think this is **tangible** or **intangible** heritage?

At our second stop we are going to look at the catacombs. These are a **tangible** part of heritage, they were built in 1836 when the Cemetery first opened. Over the years, parts were added like the concrete balustrade in 1937. An important part of a project that finished in 2023 was when sections of the balustrade were removed to protect and conserve the catacombs for many years to come. A wildflower meadow was introduced which has a significant impact on biodiversity within the Cemetery. It is much more beneficial to insects and wildlife than a slab of concrete!

**Do we see many buildings like the catacombs?** No, but they help us to see how people nearly 200 years ago wanted to be buried. It tells us how materials changed the way people built things in the past. The removal of the concrete today highlights the importance of nature and wildlife.

## Share

The final stop on our walk, we are going to hear a story about someone we don't even know the name of. He tells a tale that echoes in so many of the graves here: a story of how many people from all over the world were brought to Sheffield. Sheffield was a home, a place of industry, of opportunity as well as a place of oppression, of pain and of prejudice. For William Jumbo it was likely a mixture of many of these things. William was a man living on the Wicker in the mid-1800s who was pronounced as coming from 'Africa'. He died of apoplexy which was the name given to different forms of internal bleeding, likely in William's case to be a stroke. William was buried in the Cemetery in September 1850.

During the Victorian period, many people came to Britain from places including Africa, America and the Caribbean seeking refuge from enslavement, to settle and to study or to find work. They joined existing generations of Black British people. Many were part of a colonial workforce, brought to England in the navy, army, and other industries.

We do not know William's full story, but we do know that William Jumbo was not his real name. It was a name imposed upon him, connecting him to the colonial actions of Britain. He rests underneath this oak tree, opposite other people whose lives echo across oceans. These large monuments across the way are full of manufacturers, industrialists and men of steel who gained the means through industrial labour to pay to be remembered here today.

In the Cemetery, there are many unmarked graves like William's. One public grave in this Cemetery contains 85 people - mostly small children - and they all have lives and stories to tell.

Find somewhere to sit or stand in the Cemetery park such as the Stone Circle to discuss what the learners think heritage means. **Have your thoughts changed from the beginning of the session?**

Give learners time to share with the group their thoughts and also to share what they understand their heritage to be. **Does anyone want to share something tangible or intangible from their own heritage?**



## Create

After the learners have been given time to think about what heritage means, choose one of the two communal activities or do both if you have more time:

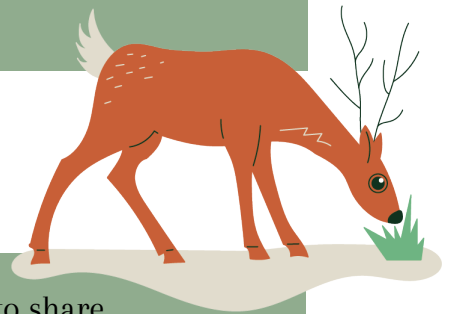
### Option 1. Create a composite poem together

- Hand out a strip of card to each learner and ask them to write a word or phrase that reflects what heritage means to them, reflecting on the session.
- *It is important to stress that there is no right answer, it doesn't need to be spelt correctly, it is just what they feel they want to share and reflect on.* Share the example of the acrostic poem.
- Gather the strips of card in randomly, then lay each one on the floor (if it is not windy!), reading them out as you go.
- Make sure each strip of card starts a new line.
- You have created a composite poem!
- You can ask learners if they think any strips of card should be moved to create a different order or to change the flow of the poem.

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### Option 2. Create a communal heritage art piece

If you are able to bring along materials, the learners could creatively respond to the session. Give learners a square tile of fabric or card to create a piece of art that represents their heritage or something they connected with in the Cemetery during the session.



## Reflect

Provide learners with the opportunity to gather in small groups to share their poetry or explain their heritage tile. Then gather together in a circle. Remind the learners of the enquiry question: **What does heritage mean?**

After a short moment of thinking time, pass a small pebble around the circle so that each learner has a chance to say a final thought about what they have discovered. This may include learners reading out their own poem.

You could take photos to share with others on social media using **#learningatGenCem** and tagging **@sheffieldgeneralcemeterytrust**