

Teachers' notes: Understand a Jewish headstone

These worksheets explore the key features of a modern Jewish headstone. Comparison with a Christian headstone helps to highlight the differences.

1. On the website (www.jewish-gilroes.org.uk) select the tab at the top labelled *Search* then *Database search*.
2. Enter *Levy* in the surname search box and click on the result for *Morris Levy*.
3. Above the photo *Click for large image*.

This headstone shows the key features of a Jewish headstone.

- (i) The design is simple and monochrome.
- (ii) At the centre top is the Star of David, the symbol of Judaism; also found on the flag of the state of Israel.
- (iii) Hebrew is read from right to left. The two letters at the top are the initials of 2 Hebrew words meaning *here lies buried*.
- (iv) Three lines follow giving the Hebrew names of the person buried (Moshe) and his father (Eliezer) and the Hebrew date of death (3 Tevet 5712). These are consonants only. Vowels are not shown.
- (v) The 5 initials under the main Hebrew inscription **תנצבה** abbreviate a phrase from Samuel 25, 29 which can be translated as 'the soul shall be bound in the bundle of life'.
- (vi) The penultimate line is often added- an alternative English version of (v).
- (vii) It finishes with a sentiment chosen by his family (not always included).

Answer sheet summary

Differences:

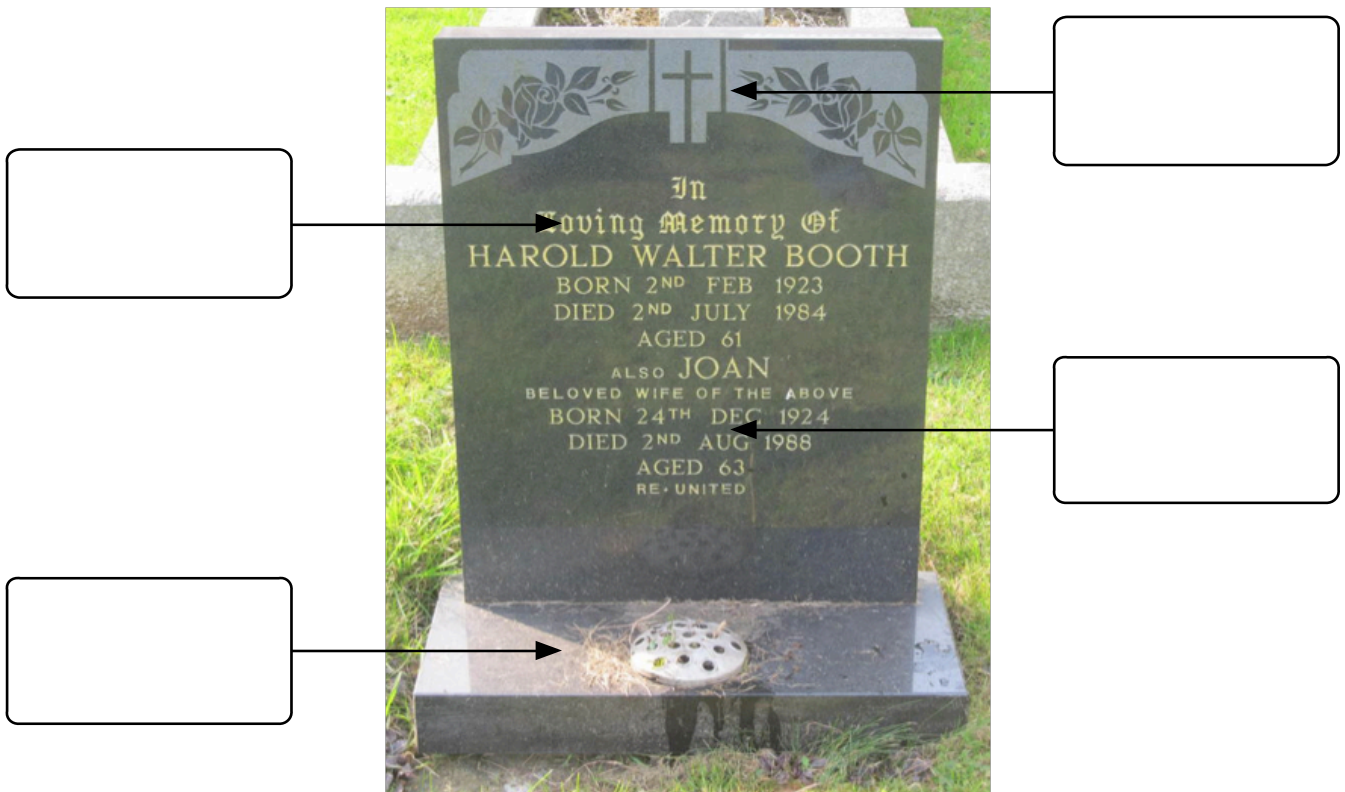
- Presence of cross/Star of David
- English only/English and Hebrew (no vowels)
- Multiple/single use
- Flower vase/no flowers
- Varied stone & lettering/uniform white stone
- Certain set phrases and information

Similarities:

- Variety of style and font size on each stone
- Dates of death and age
- Mention of relatives
- Final sentiment

The worksheets below allow the children to annotate the key features of a Jewish and Christian headstone.

What differences can you see?





In
Loving Memory Of
HAROLD WALTER BOOTH
BORN 2ND FEB 1923
DIED 2ND JULY 1984
AGED 61
ALSO **JOAN**
BELOVED WIFE OF THE ABOVE
BORN 24TH DEC 1924
DIED 2ND AUG 1988
AGED 63
RE-UNITED






























פ"נ
איש תם וישר
ר' משה בן ר' אליעזר
נפטר ג' טבת ה'ש"ב
ת' ג' צ' ב' ה'

IN
LOVING MEMORY
OF
MORRIS LEVY,
WHO DIED 31ST DECEMBER 1951,
AGED 55 YEARS.

DEEPLY MOURNED BY HIS DEVOTED WIFE, SON,
DAUGHTERS, SON-IN-LAW, DAUGHTER-IN-LAW,
GRANDCHILDREN, BROTHERS, SISTER,
SISTERS-IN-LAW, RELATIVES AND MANY FRIENDS.

GONE FROM OUR LIVES
BUT NOT FROM OUR HEARTS.
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.
A MAN'S NAME IS HIS MEMORIAL.

Extension: Can they write their name in Hebrew? (right to left) using the letter sounds (J would be rendered by י yod)

									
Yod (Y)	Tet (T)	Chet (Ch)	Zayin (Z)	Vav (V)	He (H)	Dalet (D)	Gimel (G)	Bet (B/V)	Alef (silent)
									
Ayin (silent)	Samech (S)	Nun (N)	Nun (N)	Mem (M)	Mem (M)	Lamed (L)	Khaf (Kh)	Kaf (K/Kh)	
									
Tav (T)	Shin (Sh/S)	Resh (R)	Qof (Q)	Tsadeh (Ts)	Tsadeh (Ts)	Feh (F)	Peh (P/F)		