

# BEFORE YOUR TOUR

*Here are some points to think about and share with your students before you take them on a Walking Tour of West Lawn Cemetery:*

1. There is no reason to be afraid of a cemetery. Markers are placed to honor loved ones who are no longer with us. People often come to visit these loved ones and remember them. There is a lot of history to learn about individuals and your community. Cemeteries are also a nice, quiet place to walk, jog, take pictures, think, write, read, or draw.
2. It is important to be respectful of the graves you visit. You should not run, shout, or fool around in a cemetery.
3. BE CAREFUL when walking between the grave sites. There are uneven spots of land, tree roots, slippery leaves, and small markers that may cause you to trip. Always be aware of your surroundings and watch where you are walking. Cars may drive on the cemetery roads when you are visiting. Move into the grass when you see them coming.
4. Pay attention to what you see when you are walking around a cemetery. There are many interesting statues, monuments, and writings on the stones that might catch your eye.
5. Many small animals make West Lawn their home. Look around for birds, squirrels, chipmunks, and even deer who might be waiting to say hello to you! Please don't chase them or scare them. Don't forget to look at other natural things too, like trees, flowers, bushes, streams, and waterfalls.
6. It goes without saying that you should never harm any of the stones you see in the cemetery. Vandalism is not only illegal and disrespectful, it is very expensive for the cemetery to clean up. Some of the stones are so old, they cannot be repaired if they are broken. Try to think of how you would feel if someone destroyed something very valuable to you.
7. It is often fun to do grave rubbings of the stones in a cemetery, but you must be very careful that you do not destroy anything about the stone. Fragile inscriptions that have been worn away over time may flake away even more during the process of rubbing. For more information on how to safely do a grave rubbing, contact the Association for Gravestone Studies and ask for "Field Guide No. 5: Gravestone Rubbing for Beginners."