

FRANK THOMAS

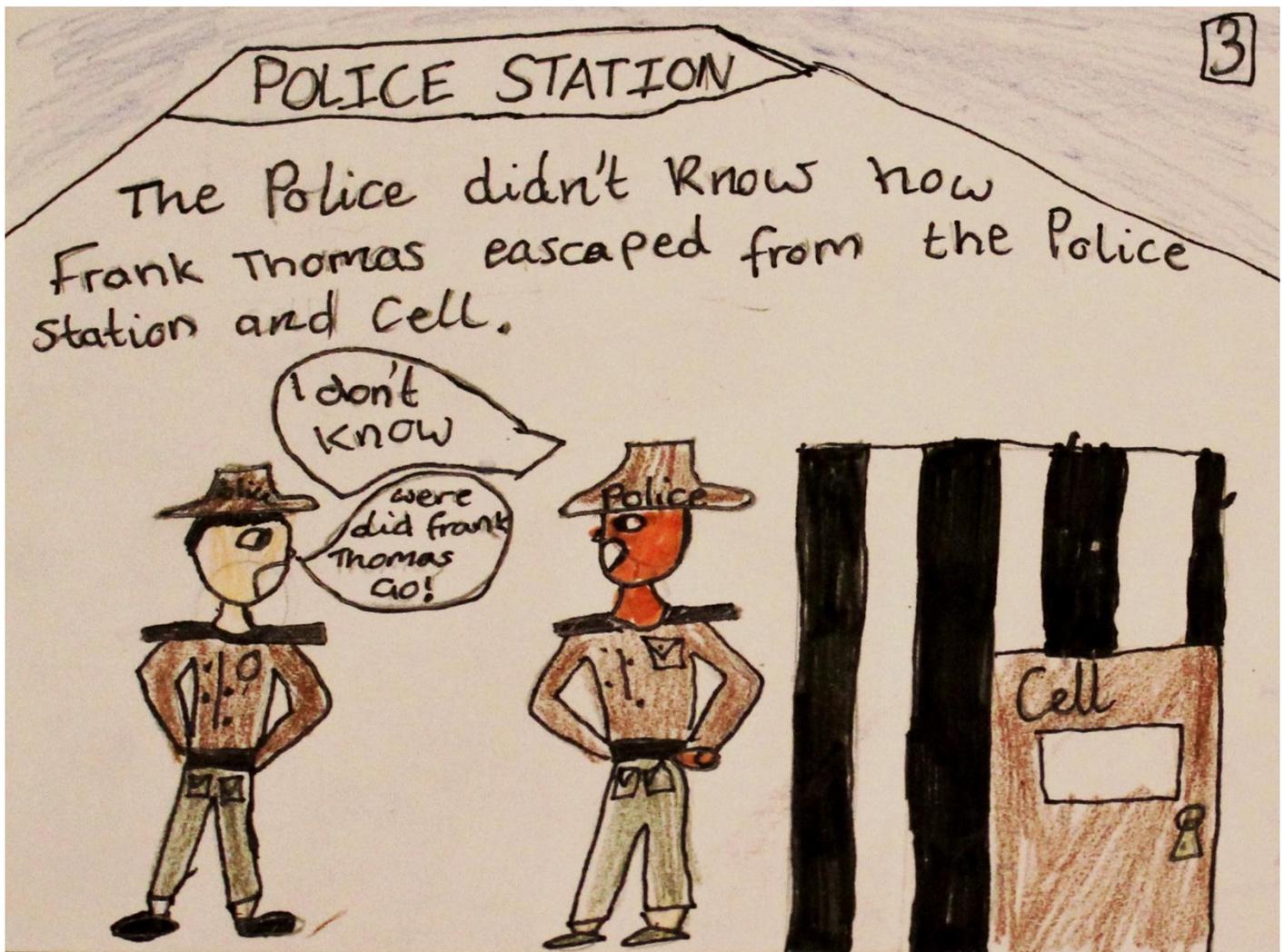
Bushranger Education Resource



ABOUT BUSHRANGER FRANK THOMAS

Frank Thomas was born in Greenough in 1896 and grew up on his parents' farm in Coorow. As a young adult he took to the life of a bushranger. He stole food, saddles and the best of horses from farms, homes, trains and railway stations. He was used to surviving in the bush and was a very good horse rider.

The police repeatedly tried to capture Frank but he usually managed to get away. Many believed he was a terrible nuisance who had to be caught and sent to prison. However, others believed he needed help as he was unhappy, couldn't read or write and hadn't been given a fair go.



On one occasion the police came across his camp, where he was cooking a stolen chicken. Frank took off on a horse with the police following in hot pursuit. As usual, Frank got away, so the police figured they might as well go back and eat his chicken. When they arrived back at his camp the chicken was gone - as he'd already doubled back, taken the chicken and left again!

Frank was captured in Coorow in May 1922 but a few weeks later he escaped from Geraldton Goal. He was then on the run for 140 days before being captured again in Perenjori... but hours later he escaped once more! He was apprehended for the last time at the railway station in Carnamah on 16 November 1922.

HASS & ARTS CURRICULUM LINKS, YEARS 1-6

About bushranger Frank Thomas **Page 4**

Getting Started **Page 5**

Who Am I? **Pages 6-7**

Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS) Australian Curriculum Links

- Questioning: Pose questions to investigate people, events, places and issues
Year 3 (ACHASSI052) Year 4 (ACHASSI073)
- Questioning: Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges.
Year 5 (ACHASSI094) Year 6 (ACHASSI122)

Perspectives of Frank Thomas and Tid Bit Statements **Pages 8-19**

Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS) Australian Curriculum Links

- Analysing: Interact with others with respect to share points of view
Year 3 ACHASSI056 Year 4 ACHASSI077 Year 5 ACHASSI098 Year 6 ACHASSI126

Bushranger Historical Inquiry **Page 20**

Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS) Australian Curriculum Links

- Questioning: Pose questions about past and present objects, people, places and events
Year 1 (ACHASSI018) Year 2 (ACHASSI034)
- Researching: Collect data and information from observations and identify information and data from sources provided
Year 1 (ACHASSI019) Year 2 (ACHASSI035)
- Analysing: Explore a point of view
Year 1 (ACHASSI022) Year 2 (ACHASSI038)
- Evaluating & Reflecting: Draw simple conclusions based on discussions, observations and information displayed in pictures and texts and on maps (ACHASSI025)
Year 1 (ACHASSI025) Year 2 (ACHASSI041)
- Communicating: Present narratives, information and findings in oral, graphic and written forms using simple terms to denote the passing of time and to describe direction and location
Year 1 (ACHASSI027) Year 2 (ACHASSI043)

Tracking Frank Thomas **Page 21**

Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS) Australian Curriculum Links

- Researching: Sequence information about people's lives and events
Year 3 (ACHASSI055) Year 4 (ACHASSI076)
- Researching: Sequence information about people's lives, events, developments and phenomena using a variety of methods including timelines
Year 5 (ACHASSI097) Year 6 (ACHASSI125)

CURRICULUM LINKS (CONTINUED)

Was Frank Thomas insane? **Page 22**

Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS) Australian Curriculum Links

- Evaluating & Reflecting: Draw simple conclusions based on analysis of information and data
Year 3 (ACHASSI058) Year 4(ACHASSI079)
- Evaluating & Reflecting: Evaluate evidence to draw conclusions
Year 5 (ACHASSI101) Year 6 (ACHASSI129)

School Arts Program **Pages 23-24**

Visual Arts Australian Curriculum Links

- Use materials, techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when making artworks.
Years 3 & 4 (ACAVAM111)
- Present artworks and describe how they have used visual conventions to represent their ideas.
Years 3 & 4 (ACAVAM112)
- Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks.
Years 5 & 6 (ACAVAM115)

Searching Historical Sources Blackline Masters (BLM) **Page 25-26**

Humanities & Social Sciences (HASS) Australian Curriculum Links

- Inquiry & Skills: Locate and collect information and data from different sources, including observations
Year 3 (ACHASSI053) Year 4 (ACHASSI074)
- Researching: Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary sources and secondary sources
Year 5 (ACHASSI095) Year 6 (ACHASSI123)

Final Resting Place **Page 27**

Make a Headstone for Frank **Pages 28-32**

Artworks and photographs of bushranger Frank Thomas **Pages 33-43**

Acknowledgements **Page 44**

Other Education Resources **Page 45**

This resource was made possible thanks to the greatly appreciated support of the
Western Australian History Foundation

GETTING STARTED

The story of Frank Thomas really does support the notion that *truth is stranger than fiction*. His exploits were the topic of many a newspaper article and gossip session in the early 1920s across the Mid West region of Western Australia. His cunning and daring behaviour toward the police, as well as the closure to his bushranging days are fascinating. To add to the mix, Thomas is the grandson of a convict!

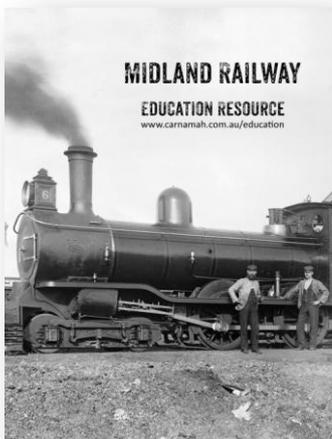
A great way to introduce Frank Thomas to your students is to simply beam up an image of him and ask who they think he is, what did he do, where did he come from, how old is he? Student responses are always interesting and entertaining.



You can use one of the twelve striking artworks created by Di Taylor - which are included at the end of this resource. Or use the ***Who Am I*** black line master on the next page to build up the intrigue and see what type of questions come to mind with your students (the answers are on Page 7). Then use tasks within this resource that are best suited to your students interest level and attention spans.

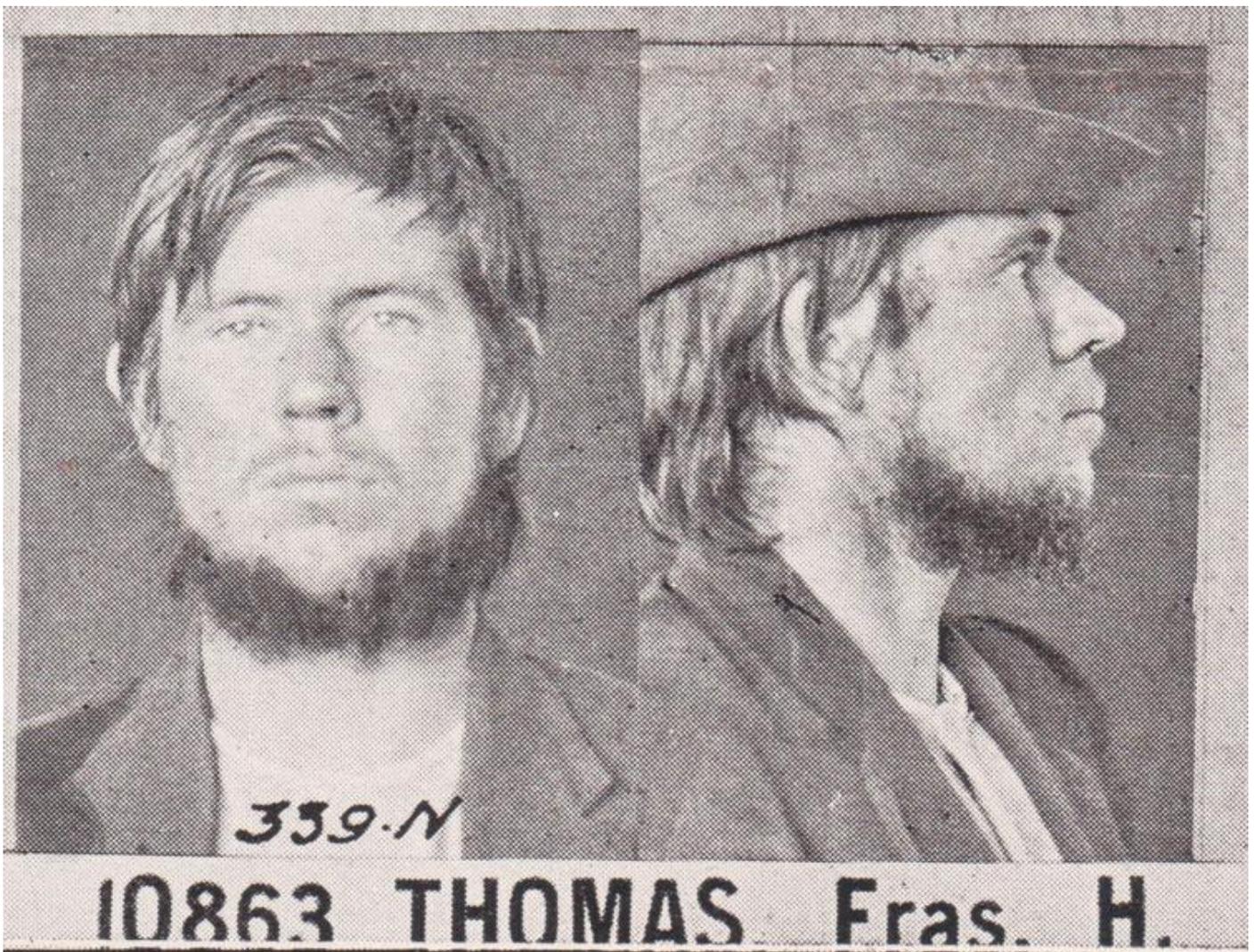
Finish up by exploring the virtual exhibition **10863 Bushranger** at www.frankthomas.com.au which includes twelve artworks by Di Taylor, a short story by Lauren Selfe and a song by Ashlea Reale!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



Your students can learn more about the Midland Railway that Frank Thomas stole supplies from and the importance of the railway to establishing regional communities.

There is a virtual exhibition on the Midland Railway line, which ran from Midland in suburban Perth to Walkaway (near Geraldton) at www.carnamah.com.au/railway. An accompanying education resource on the railway can be found among the free suite of Australian Curriculum resources available at www.carnamah.com.au/education



What do you think my name is?

Where do you think I lived?

What kind of job do you think I had?

How old do you think I am in this photo?

Why do you think this photo was taken?

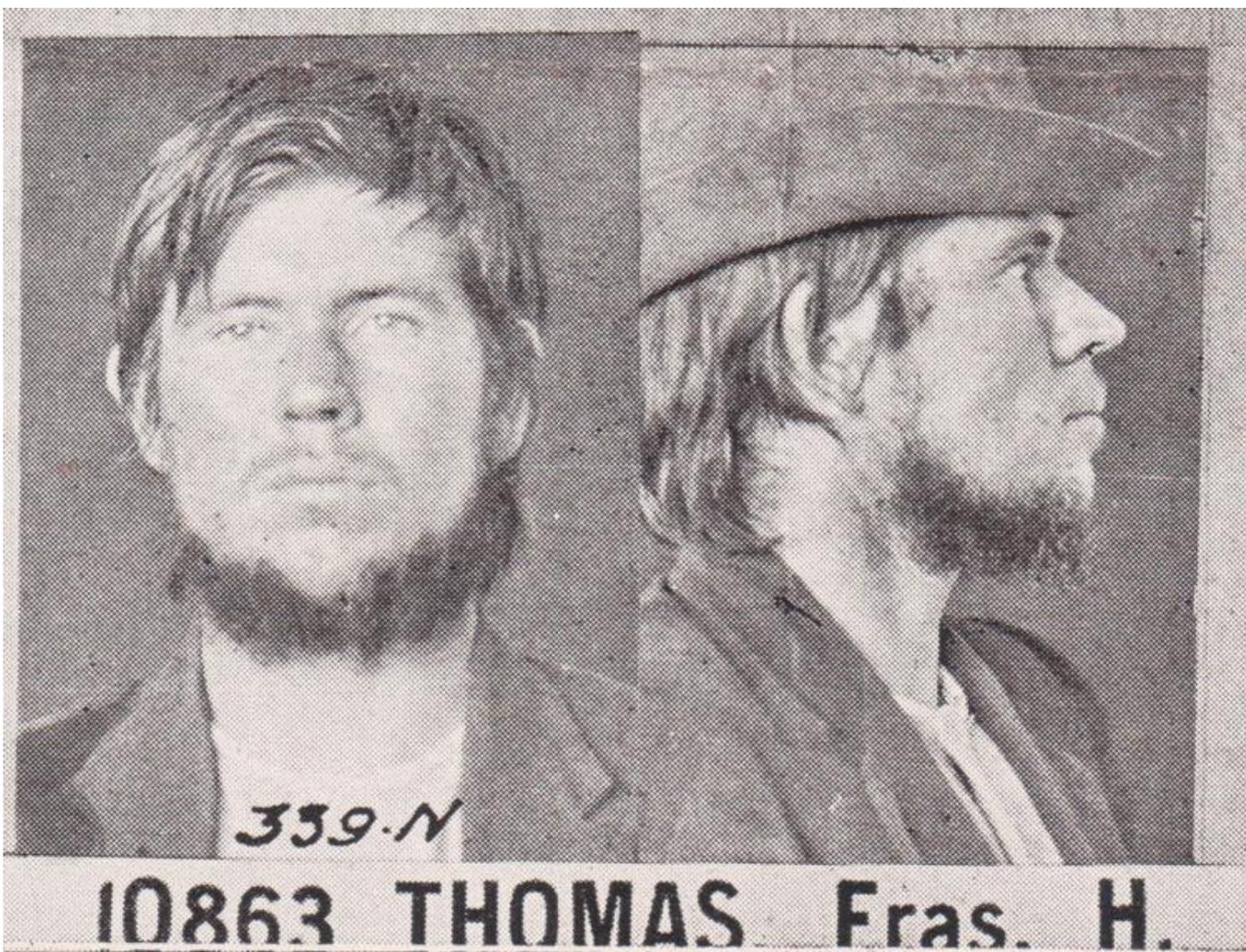
Write four questions that come to mind after spending a bit of time thinking about me?

1.

2.

3.

4.



ANSWERS

What do you think my name is?

My name is Francis Henry William Thomas but most people call me Frank

Where do you think I lived?

I was born in Greenough and grew up on a farm in Coorow called *Jun Jun Farm*

What kind of job do you think I had?

I was a Farmer and Kangaroo Hunter and then became a BUSHRANGER

How old do you think I am in this photo?

I am 23 years of age in this photo

Why do you think this photo was taken?

I was arrested for stealing boxes of food and supplies off trains running from Perth up towards Geraldton and also for stealing horses from farms. This photo was taken upon leaving Fremantle Prison in January 1922 after I had completed a sentence of hard labour.

PERSPECTIVES OF FRANK THOMAS



Colonial history along the east coast of Australia boasts tales of bushrangers who lived off the land and stole from free settlers. This was often a preferred way of life of escaped convicts or was a result of the lack of supplies in early British settlements. Western Australia however, has only a handful of stories in comparison; Moondyne Joe of the 1860s being the most well-known. A number of districts in the Mid West region of WA had to contend with the exploits of outlaw Frank Thomas much later, between 1918 and 1922.

Read one or two of the Tid Bit Statements and ask your students if they think Thomas was a good guy or a bad guy and to explain why. It will be interesting to hear their opinions based on only a brief amount of information. Follow directly with the below activity and see if their opinion changes as they receive more facts and stories.

TID BIT STATEMENTS

Print out and Laminate the Tid Bits statements (over the following pages 9-19). Some of the statements are positive, some are negative and some are neutral by comparison. Pass out a Tid Bit statement to each student or pair and ask them to think about where the statement fits on the spectrum. Does it put Frank Thomas in a positive light? (Good Guy). Does it make him sound like a terrible scoundrel? (Bad Guy). Or, is the information fairly neutral in its content?

After some discussion, ask students to share their Tid Bit statement, place it where they think it fits on the spectrum, and to explain why. When all statement have been placed, refer students back to their initial opinion of Thomas and ask if anyone's perception has changed based on the 'new' information they have processed from the Spectrum activity. Whose opinion changed? Why?

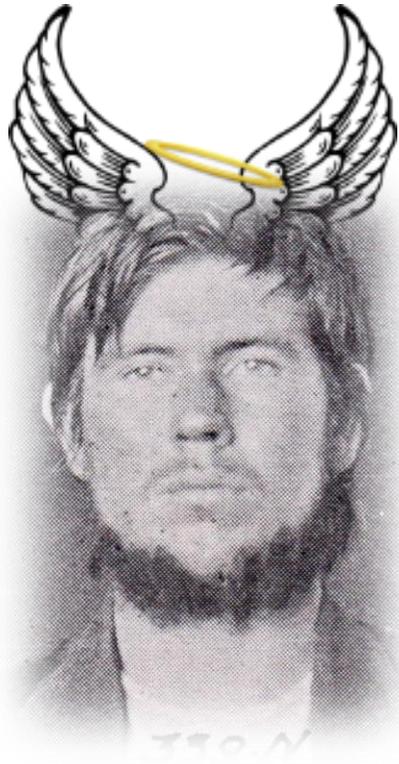
You can take this further by completing the Historical Inquiry on Page 20 and inviting your students to explore the exhibition on Frank at www.frankthomas.com.au. At the conclusion of this research, ask students if their opinion has changed again and discuss how our perspectives can often shift with the inclusion of new material, new knowledge and new understanding of factors and people involved.

If your students really engage with the story of Frank Thomas, they can also explore the much deeper amount of information within Frank's entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Coorow, Carnamah and Three Springs at www.carnamah.com.au/frank. It includes detailed information on his life and a transcript of a letter written by his father.

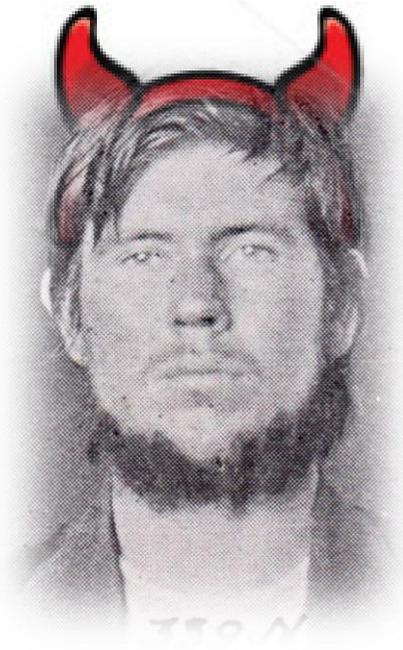




Neutral

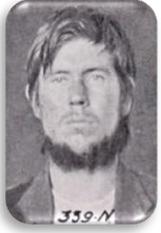


GOOD



BAD

TID BIT STATEMENTS



Born 1896 in Greenough, Western Australia. Son of Francis Henry Reeves THOMAS and Beulah Emily CRIPPIN.

Farmed *Jun Jun* Farm in Coorow with his father and elder brother "Jack" John Fitzgerald THOMAS.

Settlers, storekeepers, tradesmen and railway officials along the Midland Railway line complained to police about thefts. In time, it became known that Frank Thomas was responsible, and his crimes were reported to have begun around December 1918.

One of his regular habits was to jump on goods trains and when in a quiet stretch, he'd throw out cases of goods. Frank Thomas would return later to the side of the railway tracks, go through them, take what he wanted and leave the rest there.

He regularly stole food, clothes, blankets and horses from districts across the North Midlands.

He raided railway sidings and homes, and took horses which he let loose after riding them for as far as he wanted to go. He is said to have done this along the Midland Railway Company's railway line but also the Wongan Hills railway line.

Locally he became known as "Thomas the Bushranger" and "Frank Thomas the Bushranger" who was constantly sought after by police but rarely caught and was "the most talked about topic in the district."

It was stated he'd go through the contents on the train and throw canned food out, then would go back and collect it later. Items he didn't like including whiting, sauce, vinegar, boot polish, essence, pickles and glassware were found by the tacks.

Police are said to have come upon his camp where he was cooking a chicken on a fire. He took off and they followed in hot pursuit but he got away from them so they decided to go back and eat the cooked chook. When they arrived back Frank Thomas had already doubled back and taken the chook.

Frank Thomas often poked his finger through packaged food to see what it was and if he'd like it, as he couldn't read.

It was acknowledged that he hadn't received the same opportunities and education as his brother. He was the "local boy gone wrong," who had "somehow got on the wrong side of the police, and had taken to the bush."

Despite his crimes he was often wrongly blamed for stolen or missing livestock in Coorow, Carnamah and other districts.

"To the womenfolk he was behind every bush, and felt unable to cope" while "men just swore about what a pest he'd become."

While being chased on horseback by police one day his hat fell off, however he circled around a hill, and back to the hat. He jumped off his horse, picked up his hat, got back on the horse and as usual managed to get away.

Constable Charlie KROSCHEL of Three Springs is said to have captured him and handcuffed him to a tree. Charlie left him there, on the west side of the Yarra Yarra Lakes (probably while he went to secure help to convey him to goal). When the constable returned, Frank was nowhere to be seen. Apparently when he was later caught, he still had the handcuffs on his arms, but no one could work out how he'd done it.

Mrs Maude GREENWOOD of Waddy Forest carried a matchbox of pepper when out in case she encountered a bushranger. Her theory was that she would be a missing quantity by the time the bushranger stopped sneezing.

There were stories of a meeting held at Winchester to discuss how best to capture him but he listened in from underneath the floorboards - so knew their plans!

Frank Thomas was fond of fine horses and would help himself to the best in the district.

Frank Thomas was successfully captured on 29 December 1919, after twelve months living the life of "an audacious thief." He was captured by Police Constable Charlie KROSCHEL of Three Springs and another police constable.

Following Frank Thomas' first arrest in 1919, his father wrote a 'Letter to the Editor' to a newspaper called *The Midlands Advertiser*, which was produced in Moora. The letter closed with:

"He (Frank) is a fine man and worth a little trouble. I must add my son has been very peculiar all his life. Maybe the complaint is coming to a head now and on the turn to recovery and I hope he will get such treatment as will help him along in that direction."

On 10 January 1920 in Geraldton he pleaded guilty to charges of stealing, unlawful possession and unlawfully using a horse. The Resident Magistrate in Geraldton sentenced him to two years hard labour. After being released from his two year jail sentence he returned to Coorow in 1922 and was soon wanted by the police.

After leading police around the bush for weeks, he was captured again in May 1922. He was taken to the Geraldton Goal but picked a lock and escaped.

He was said to have stolen a horse and rode it to Field's Find and Wurarga in the Murchison goldfields. He abandoned the horse in an almost broken condition at Wurarga, with the horse expected to never be the same again.

It was believed Frank Thomas wouldn't use a rifle against anyone, but he had stolen one and hid it in the bush. He never told police where it was.

After 140 days on the run he was recaptured by Police Constable WREFORD in Perenjori on Friday 10 November 1922. His recapture on 10 November 1922 was noted at the top of one of the pages of the diary of Coorow pioneer Ernest A. LONG. Frank was taken to Buntine and imprisoned at the lock-up there until he could be taken back to Geraldton. Within very little time he escaped from the lock-up in Buntine and was once again on the run.

Frank Thomas was caught by a Police Constable from Mingenew as he was stealing a box of groceries from the railway station in Carnamah. As he went to run away, Frank tripped on the railway points charger and hurt himself. The constable held a gun to him and demanded he surrender.

The Sunday Times newspaper headed their story "Thomas'... Sensational Capture at Carnamah - Surrendered at Revolver's Point." Frank Thomas was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment in Geraldton on Saturday 18 November 1922.

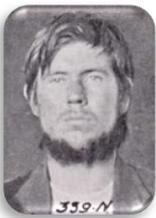
He was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment in Geraldton on Saturday 18 November 1922 and was later given another 13 months imprisonment, making a total of 25 months. He pleaded guilty to charges of stealing in the Midland and Victoria districts, improperly using horses and of escaping custody.

Many of the supplies that he stole items from were ordered by people who had little money themselves and couldn't afford to replace the stolen supplies. They had to go without.

Frank Thomas's defence claimed he needed special consideration as "he had never really had a chance in life" and couldn't read or write. The magistrate declared he'd previously been imprisoned which should have taught him not to do such things.

The West Australian newspaper reported him as "A Fugitive from Justice" and compared his exploits as comparable to those of Ned Kelly and his gang.

Frank Thomas was admitted to the *Claremont Asylum for the Insane* in Perth and held there for many years.



Frank Thomas died on 23 April 1960 and was buried at the Karrakatta Cemetery in Perth.



START HERE!

6

Reflection Task

What do you think?

Is Frank Thomas an evil criminal mastermind, or a cunning kid who was never given a chance?

Write a reflective essay revealing your thoughts and reasons why. Use sources to back up your opinions and insights.

What questions come to mind about the life of Frank Thomas the Bushranger?

- *Why did he steal?*
- *How did he become so skilled with horses?*

2

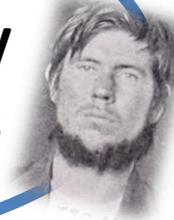
Historical Inquiry

- The Man Himself
- Crimes committed
- The Escapes
- Public Opinion
- Geography of Thomas's Life
- Use of Horses

Choose one or create your own theme to research and report on.

BUSHRANGER

Historical Inquiry Frank Thomas



5

Narrative Tasks

- Write a newspaper report relating to an incident involving Frank Thomas.
- Imagine you are Frank Thomas and you're on the run! Describe events from the eyes of Frank Thomas himself in First Person.

4

Presentation of Findings

- Power Point Presentation
- Role Play Performance
- Poem or Song
- Narrative Audio File Photo Story
- Presentation
- Oral Presentation

3

How Reliable Are Your Sources?

Check the sources you have used for your research and reflections. Where do they sit on the Good Source Bad Source Spectrum?

Tracking Frank Thomas



Locate the places where Frank Thomas grew up, farmed, travelled during his life as a bushranger, as well as his final resting place, through the geographical timeline below. Use an atlas, map, or Google Maps to locate the places listed. *Tick them off when you've found them!*

Date	Event & Location	☑
1896	"Frank" Francis Henry William Thomas is born in Greenough , Western Australia.	
<i>From</i> 1902	Frank lives with his parents in Coorow , Western Australia.	
<i>About</i> 1917	Frank works as a Kangaroo Hunter in the Murchison district.	
1918	Frank begins stealing from locations along the Midland Railway line. He steals food, clothes, blankets and horses multiple places, including Carnamah .	
1918	Details of Frank's crimes during this time are given to the local Justice of the Peace in Winchester , who passes them onto the police.	
1918	Frank steals a racehorse named 'Karara Boy' from Carnamah. It is later tracked and found by the police in Perenjori .	
1919	Frank is captured by the policeman from Three Springs .	
1920	Frank goes before a court and pleads guilty to stealing, unlawful possession and unlawfully using a horse. He is imprisoned in Fremantle for his crimes.	
<i>March</i> 1922	Shortly after being released from prison, Frank is wanted again by the police. It's alleged that he stole three cases of groceries from Marchagee .	
<i>April</i> 1922	Frank is accused of stealing a horse and two cases of stores from a railway truck in Three Springs .	
<i>9 May</i> 1922	After two weeks of chasing Frank through freezing weather, two policemen catch him while he's sleeping in a stable on a farm north of Coorow. He is arrested and taken to the Geraldton lock up to await trial.	
<i>23 May</i> 1922	Frank escapes from the Geraldton Gaol. He steals from a number of camps at various places between the Wongan Hills and Midland railway lines, stealing valuable horses and considerable quantities of stores.	
<i>10 November</i> 1922	Frank is captured in Perenjori and taken to the to the police lock-up in Buntine prior to his transfer back to Geraldton Gaol. He escapes from Buntine and is once again on the run.	
<i>22 November</i> 1922	Frank is recaptured in Carnamah by police constable Salvador Reynolds from Mingenew and is sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.	
1920s to 1960	Frank spends much of the remainder of his life at <i>Claremont Hospital for the Insane</i> in the Perth suburb of Claremont .	
<i>23 April</i> 1960	"Frank" Francis Henry William Thomas died at the age of 63 years dies and is buried at the Karrakatta Cemetery in the Perth suburb of Karrakatta . His grave is never marked by a headstone.	

WAS FRANK THOMAS INSANE?

From reading a recorded oral history, it's apparent that Frank Thomas might not have been insane at all! Read the information below, from an oral history recording with Doris Broun who talked about Frank Thomas.

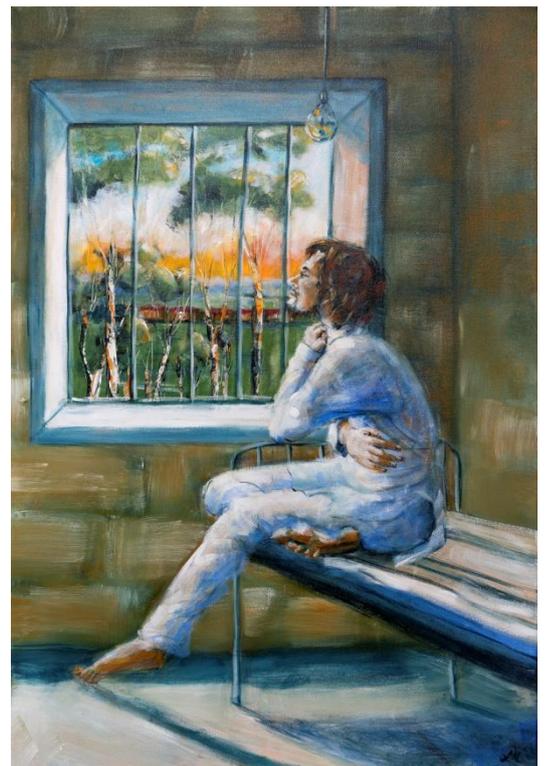
"One night when Charlie Kroschel, [a policeman] was playing his accordion for a dance, and the rest of the police had locked their horses in the railway trucking yards for safety as the yards were high and strongly built. But our Frank was a big strong man. Finding the gate padlocked with a chain, he proceeded to lift the gate off its hinges, put his weary horse in, took the best police horse, and returned the gate to its original position. When the police finally worked out how he had acted, they, I'm told, were not amused."

"The Sergeant told them angrily to go out and bring him back, so they went out and luckily caught sight of Thomas and chased him to a point where two fences intercepted. But Frank leaped off took off the bridle and saddle, jumped the fence and disappeared into the scrub. The frustrated police returned and relayed the news to the irate sergeant that they had everything but Frank."

"They came to our house next evening as we were neighbours, and knowing Frank was desperate would possibly try to steal one from his home. It was a bright moonlit night that night, and about three a.m. Dad saw three men walking across the paddock heading for our house and he knew they had caught Frank. As they approached one of the men said, "Give me your strongest chain." They led Frank to the house and chained him to a fence post. Mother told me it was a very cold morning so she took him a cup of tea. As soon as it was daybreak Dad harnessed the horse to the spring-cart then took them to Coorow to catch the train to Perth."

"We later heard Frank was sentenced to 28 months in jail for stealing, but the police were so afraid he would escape that they had him certified as criminally insane and locked in Claremont Asylum for life. Father said that the morning they caught him, he and Thomas talked about the places they both knew around the district as they waited the dawn and he was perfectly sane. What a terrible life for a healthy young man used to Gods wide-open spaces. I learned recently, that he was there for thirty-seven years before he died."

What are your thoughts on this? Do you think he deserved to go to an asylum for the rest of his life? Or, do you think this is an extreme punishment for someone who was a nuisance more than he was a menace? Explain why you feel this way.



SCHOOL ARTS PROGRAM

Small scale effort – one lesson only! (*Listen & Draw*)

Read the fascinating information about Frank Thomas contained in his entry in the Biographical Dictionary of Coorow, Carnamah and Three Springs at www.carnamah.com.au/frank

While narrating this source, students draw and write whatever comes to mind onto the Frank Thomas BLM (on Page 24). Photocopy it A3 size for plenty of drawing space and paste each completed sheet into a Frank Thomas Visual Diary.

Materials

Frank Thomas BLM
A print-out of the Frank Thomas entry from the Biographical Dictionary

Medium scale effort – one to two lessons (*Perspectives*)

Print out the Frank Thomas Historical Tid Bits statements on Pages 9-19. Some of the statements are positive, some are negative and some are neutral by comparison (i.e. they simply contain factual information). Place the heading signs: Good Guy, Neutral and Bad Guy on the whiteboard to make three columns. Pass out a Tid Bit statement to each student. Does their Tid Bit put Thomas in a positive light? (Good Guy) Does it make him sound like a terrible scoundrel? (Bad Guy) Or, is the information fairly Neutral in its content?

After some thinking time, ask students to share their Tid Bit statement with the class, place it where they think it fits on the spectrum, and explain why. Students can follow this up by drawing/painting an image related to the Frank Thomas Tid Bit they received, or create one for a Tid Bit that really resonated with them. Display their visual interpretations in a joint Frank Thomas Visual Diary.

Materials

Frank Thomas BLM
Good Guy Bad Guy BLMs
Frank Thomas Tid Bits
Blu Tac
Whiteboard or Blackboard

Full scale effort – three to four lessons (*Research & Interpret*)

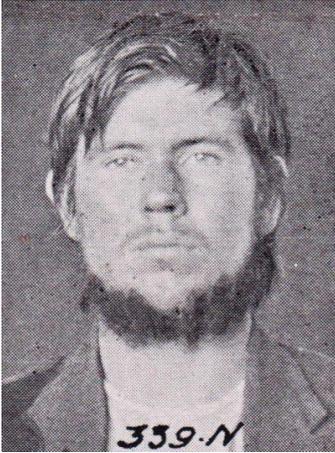
Complete the above two tasks. Students can then further enhance their historical skills; increase their understanding of local history; and utilise a national database, by completing the Trove Research BLM. This provides instructions on how to locate newspaper articles (secondary sources) about Frank Thomas via the National Library of Australia's collection of digitised newspapers. After finding and reading two newspaper articles, students can choose an interpretation task to represent their findings:

- 1) Write a narrative about Frank Thomas in 'first perspective' that highlights an event or opinion expressed in one or both the articles. Students can write it from Thomas' perspective or of one of the police officers, the Aboriginal tracker, a community member or someone else.
- 2) Create a cartoon and captions that illustrate the events revealed in one or both of the articles.
- 3) Draw or paint a scene that is mentioned in one of the articles and write a paragraph about what is taking place. Give it a title too! Display these creations in a collective Frank Thomas Visual Diary.

Materials

Frank Thomas BLM
A print-out of the Frank Thomas entry in the Biographical Dictionary
Good Guy Bad Guy BLMs
Frank Thomas Tid Bits
Blu Tac
Whiteboard or Blackboard
Trove Research BLM
Pencils, Textas, Watercolours, Brushes, Paper

Images and words that come to mind are...



"Frank"

Francis Henry William Thomas

1896-1960

www.carnamah.com/frank

SEARCHING HISTORICAL SOURCES



1. Go to www.trove.nla.gov.au
2. Click onto tab option: **Digitised Newspapers and more**
3. Type into the Search Box: **Frank Thomas, bushranger, Coorow**
4. Select two articles from the results and record your findings in the boxes below:

Secondary Source One

Name of Newspaper:

Date:

Title of Article:

Interesting snippets of information found in this article are:

Secondary Source Two

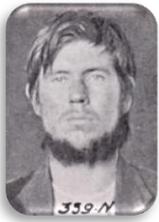
Name of Newspaper:

Date:

Title of Article:

Interesting snippets of information found in this article are:

SEARCHING HISTORICAL SOURCES



1. Go to www.carnamah.com.au
2. Click on **Biographical Dictionary**
3. Locate the entry for "Frank" Francis Henry William Thomas
4. Record some of the interesting information about Frank in the below boxes:

Biographical Dictionary Item One

An interesting snippet of information I found

Biographical Dictionary Item Two

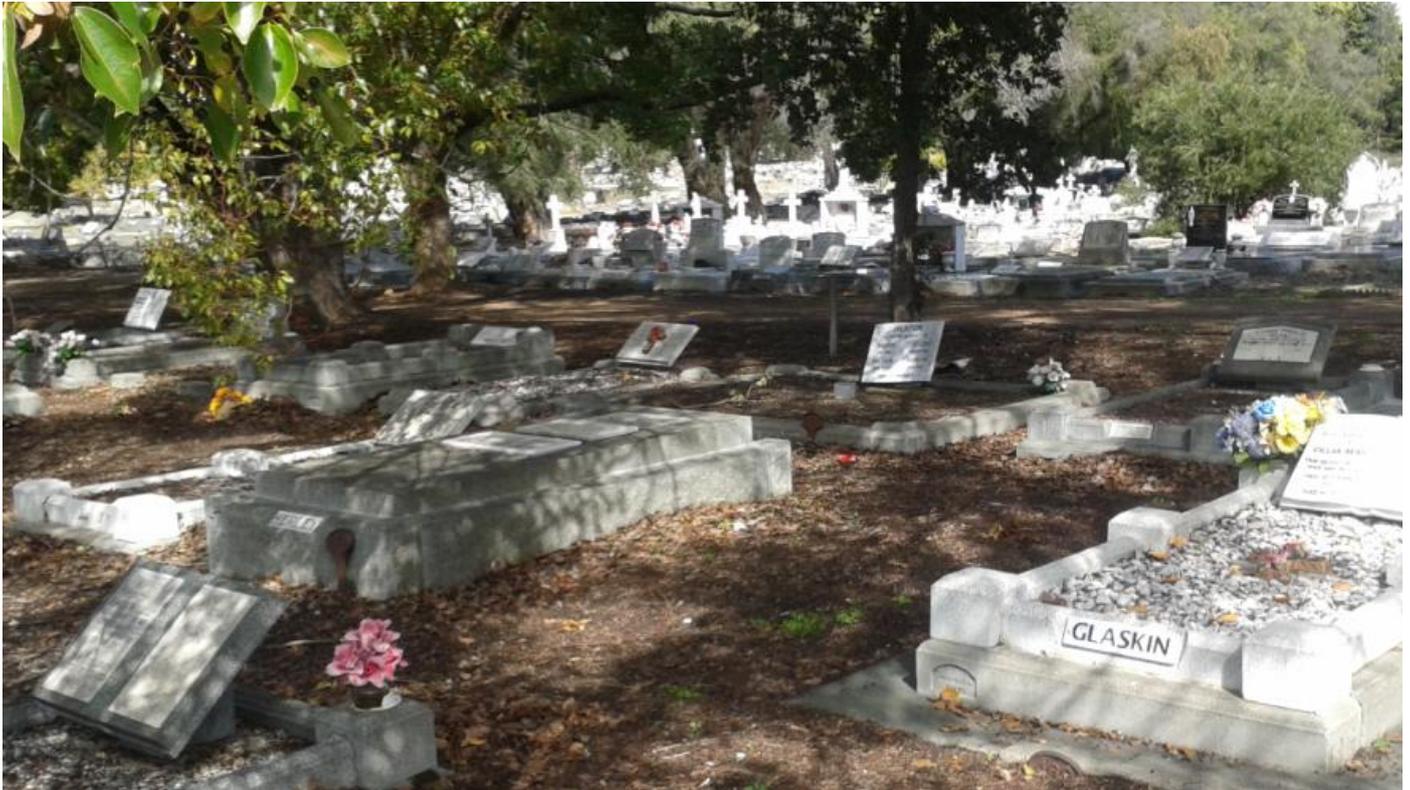
An interesting snippet of information I found

Biographical Dictionary Item Three

Biographical Dictionary Item Four

FINAL RESTING PLACE

After being captured for the last time in 1922, Frank Thomas spent the remaining 37 years of his life at Claremont Hospital for the Insane. He was buried at the Karrakatta Cemetery in Perth in 1960. A gravestone or headstone was never erected to mark his final resting place. There is simply an empty plot, as can be seen in the photograph below.



Headstones are a 'primary historical source' as they are a record of a point in time. Headstones often provide a great deal of information about a person: their full name; birth and death dates; names of family members; and symbols that might reveal military service, that they were a Freemason or their religious or other persuasions.

Questions to pose to your students:

- Why do you think a headstone wasn't erected on Frank Thomas' grave?
- Why do you think he was buried at the Karrakatta Cemetery?
- What religious persuasion do you think he was? How could we find out?
- What would you write on Frank Thomas' headstone if you were to create one for him?



METROPOLITAN
CEMETERIES BOARD



Invite your students to search the database of the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board at www.mcb.wa.gov.au/research to locate Frank's plot details. Students will need to pay close attention as there is more than one Francis Thomas on record.

MAKE A HEADSTONE OR MONUMENT FOR FRANK

Part One – Design Phase

Collect a *Headstone Design Sheet* and start drawing and planning how you'd like a headstone for Frank Thomas to look. It must include the following items:

- His full name: Francis Henry William Thomas
- Year of Birth and Year of Death (1896 - 1960)
- An image of Frank Thomas
- One to two sentences about him
- Headstone decorations(don't go overboard)
- At least one symbol relevant to Frank Thomas' life, such as a horseshoe, railway track, etc.

Part Two – Construction Phase

Collect all the materials and tools you'll need to construct the physical structure of your headstone, such as cardboard, scissors, tape, stapler. How much cardboard will you need for your headstone? How will you ensure that the headstone won't fall over?

Part Three – Decoration Phase

This involves painting your headstone, writing text on the headstone, including symbols and subtle decorations, plus an image of Frank Thomas himself. Be sure to paint the entire headstone with undercoat first. This will provide a much better finish.

Part Four – Reflection Phase

Now that you've created a monument to honour Frank Thomas (and his final resting place), it's time to reflect on your opinion of him. A full page reflection is required to explain why or why not you think Frank Thomas was a good person. Back up your opinion with examples and knowledge you have learned from the tasks we've completed together, and the stories we've read in class.

Part Five – Presentation Phase

This involves reading your reflection piece to the class and explaining the design of your headstone monument.

Assessment

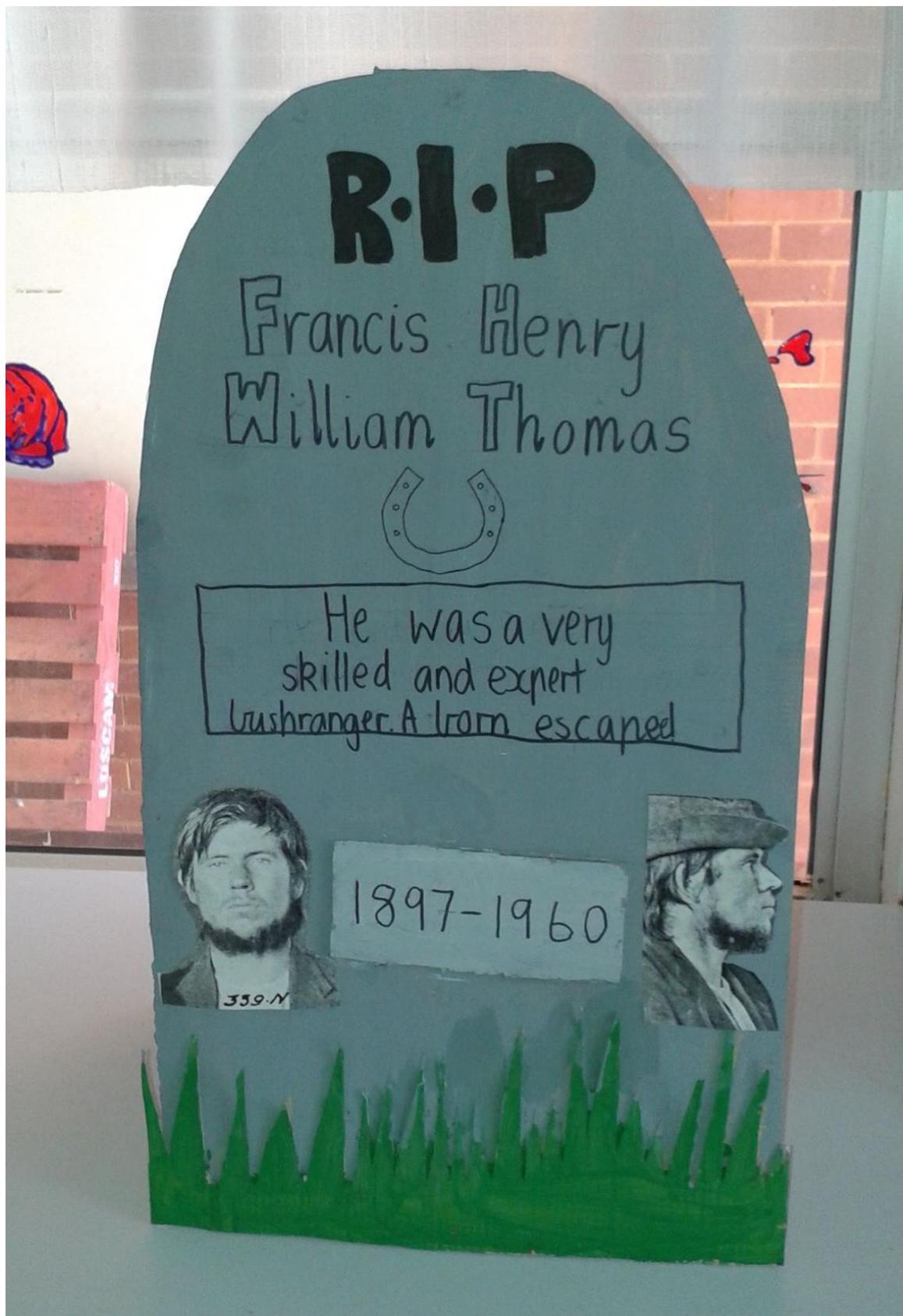
Our work will be marked according to:

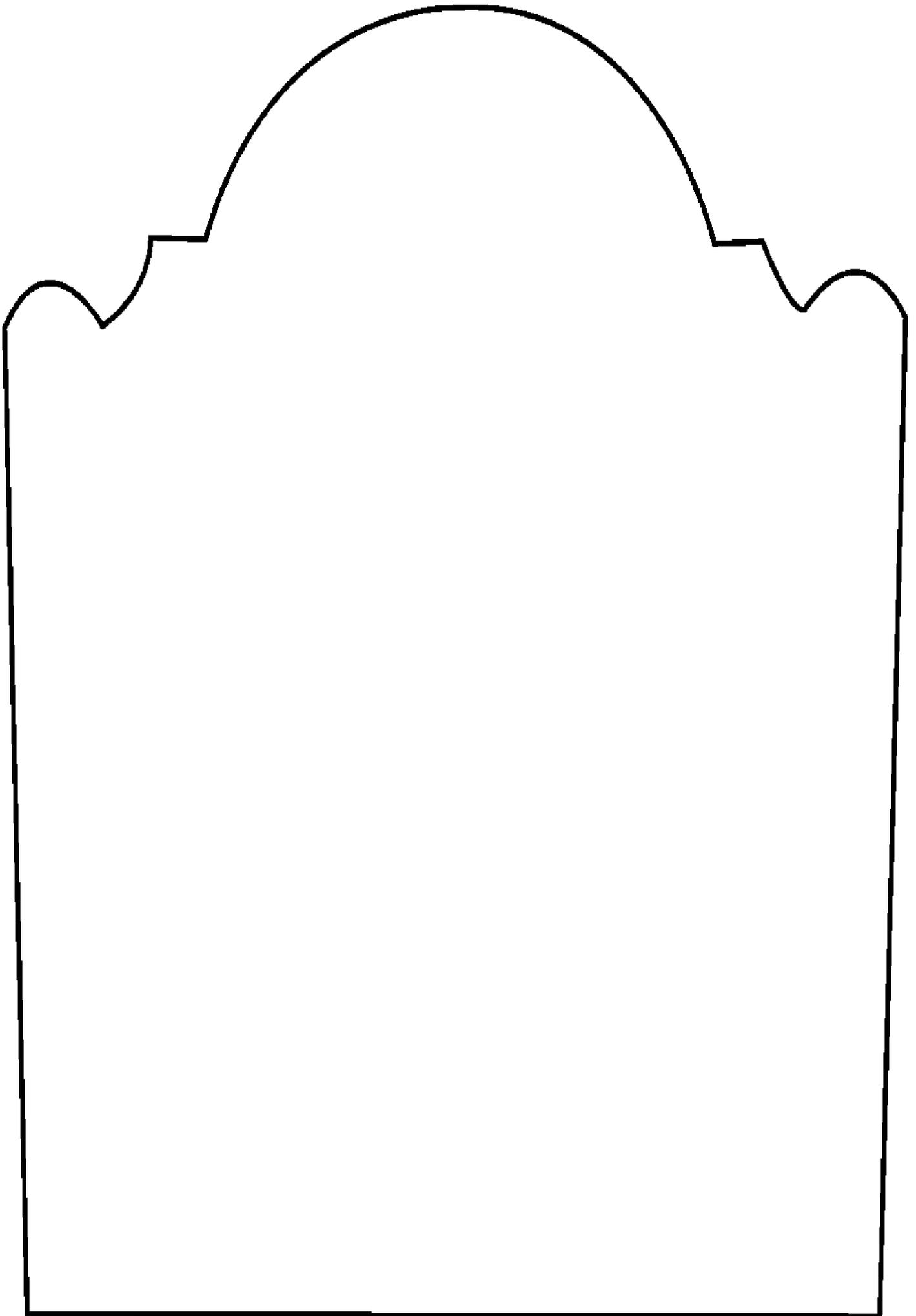
- Correct spelling and correct information about Frank Thomas
- Adhering to the required information to be displayed on a headstone
- The presentation quality of your headstone – it must look good and be able to stand up
- The quality and length of your written reflection about Frank Thomas
- The quality of your presentation to the class - be positive, engaging and interested

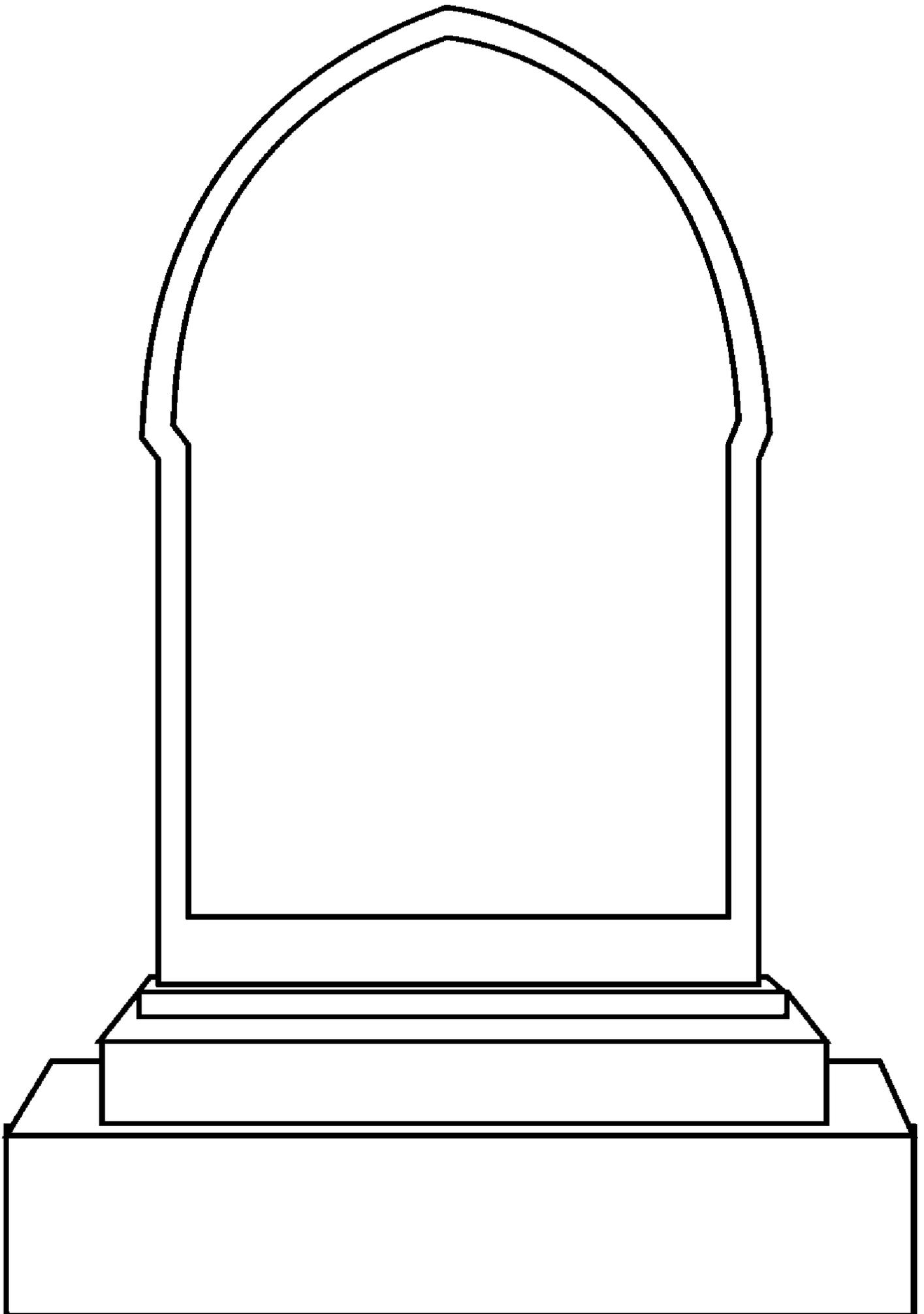
AN EXAMPLE HEADSTONE

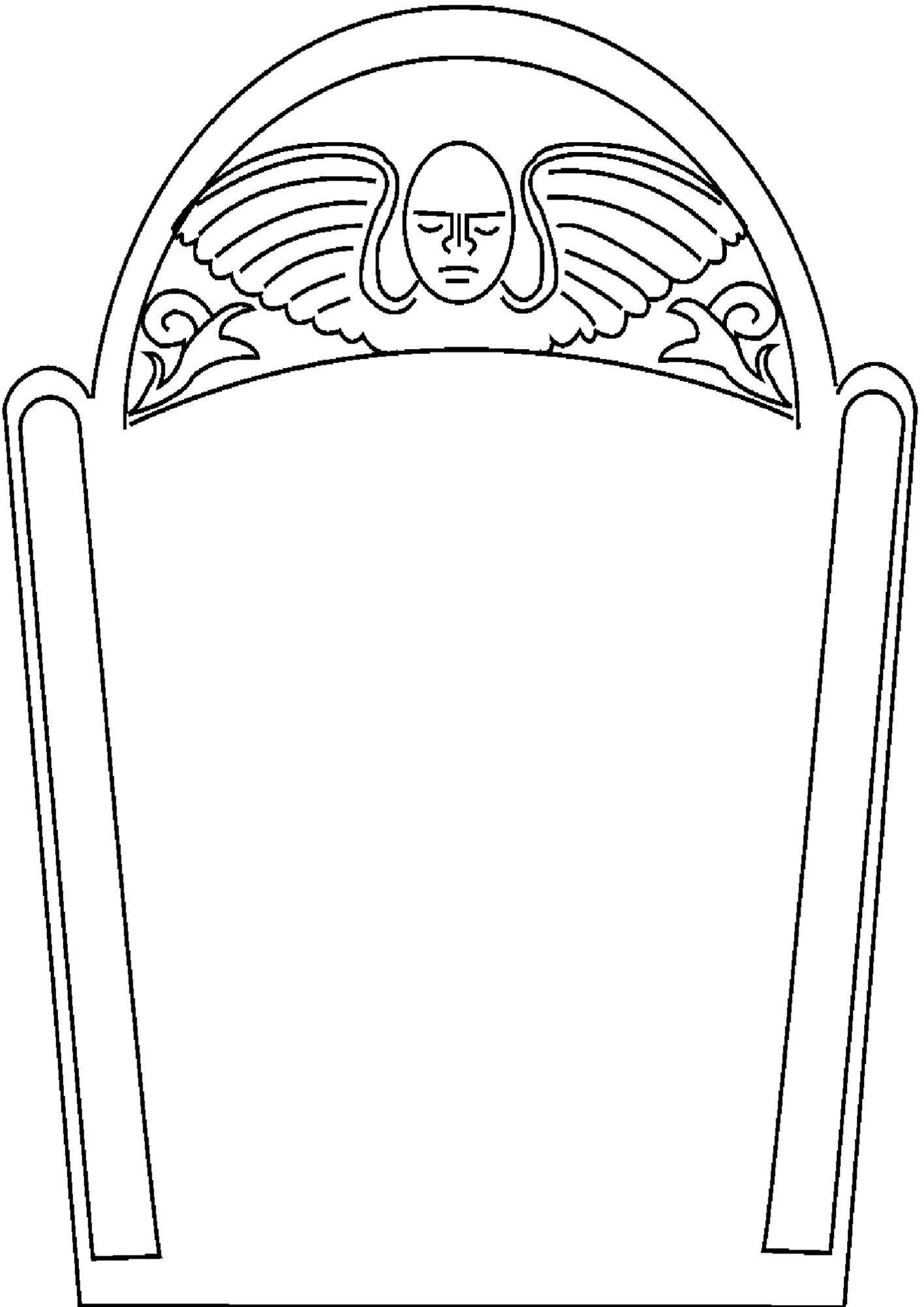
Here's a great example, made by a student from the Three Springs Primary School.

"He was a very skilled bushman. A born escapee."





















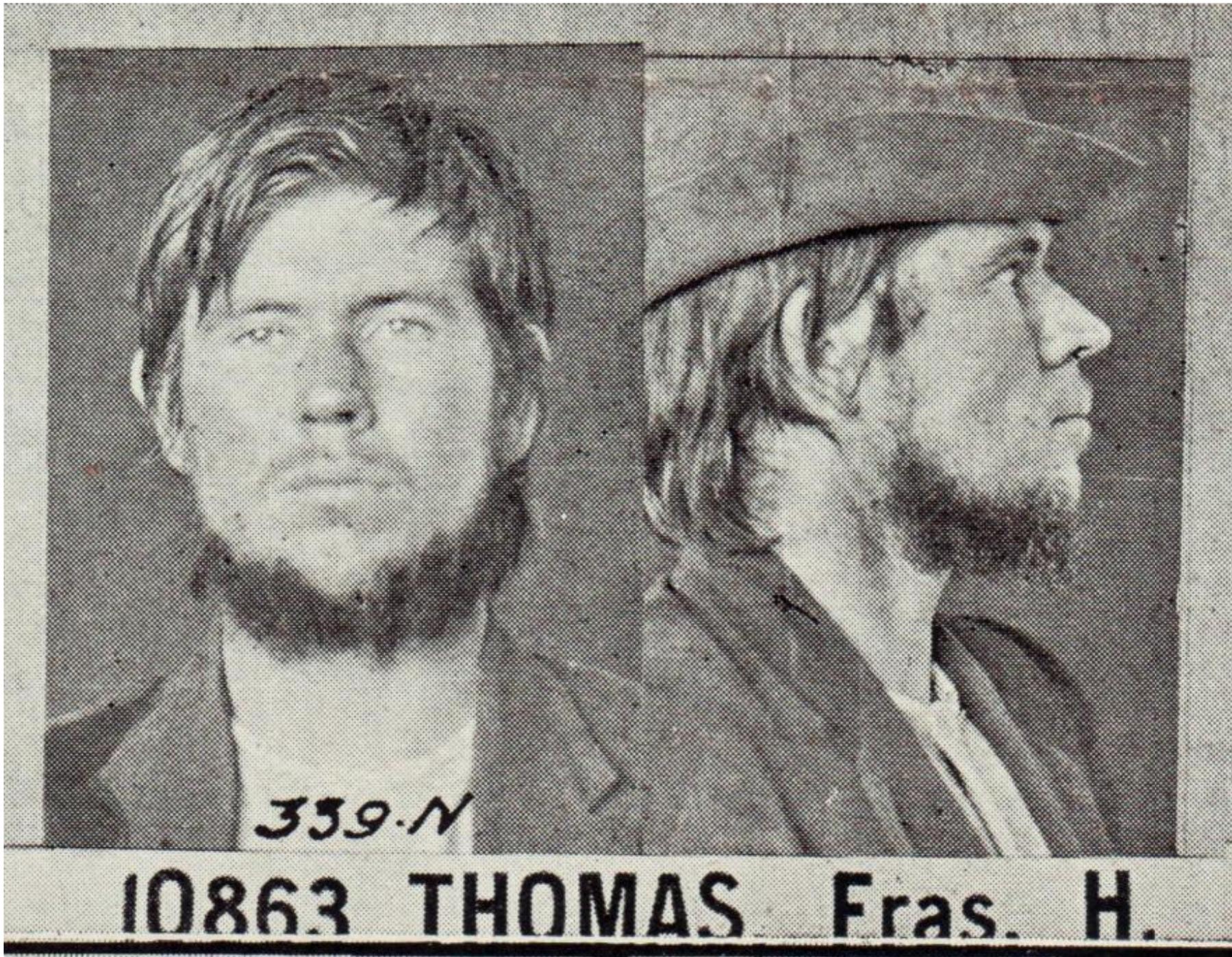
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10863 THOMAS Eras. H.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This resource was made possible thanks to the greatly appreciated support of the **Western Australian History Foundation**.

It was created by the [North Midlands Project](#) and the [Carnamah Historical Society & Museum](#) under the skilful direction of Shiona Herbert of Ignite Your Audience. All artworks featured in this resource were created by leading Western Australian visual artist [Di Taylor](#) during her 2017 residency with the North Midlands Project and The Bank Gallery Space in Carnamah.

Our thanks to [Healthway](#) for supporting the accompanying exhibition *10863 Bushranger presented by Act-Belong-Commit*, which is now accessible online at www.frankthomas.com.au

We'd also like to acknowledge and thank Michael & Tamara Hedstrom for the headstone templates used in this resource, which came from www.hedstorm.net/HAUNT/instructions/tombstone_templates/



OTHER RESOURCES

The Carnamah Historical Society & Museum has a suite of free Australian Curriculum resources, rich in Western Australian content, which can be viewed and saved from www.carnamah.com.au/education

