



Year 3 Architecture

Lesson Series:

1. Introduction to architecture – The Parthenon
2. Symmetry and line in architecture
3. Inspiration for architecture – Gaudi and nature
- 4/5. Gaudi – different materials and features

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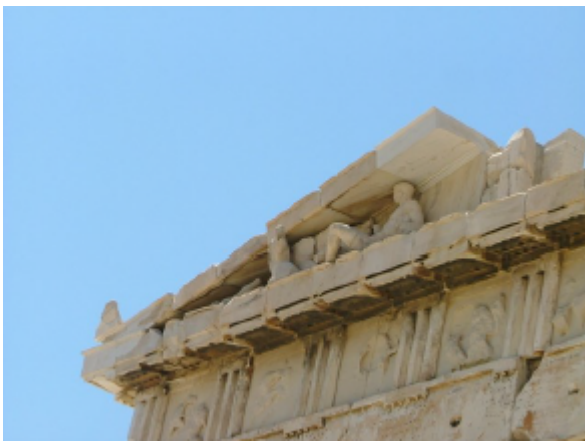
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Lesson 1. Introduction to architecture – The Parthenon

The Parthenon is an ancient Greek temple to the goddess Athena, completed in 432 B.C. It stands on the Acropolis, a hill in Athens.



During its long history it has been used as a church, a mosque and a place to store weapons. In the mist of fighting between the Italians and the Turks it was badly damaged and now has no roof.



There are many sculptures which decorate the Parthenon, the most famous of which is the frieze which used to run all the way around the top of the building showing the ancient procession to mark Athena's birthday. The frieze is an example of sculptures 'in relief'. Part of the frieze was taken by Lord Elgin back to Britain. These sculptures now stand in the British Museum and it is still the subject of much debate whether they should be returned to Athens.

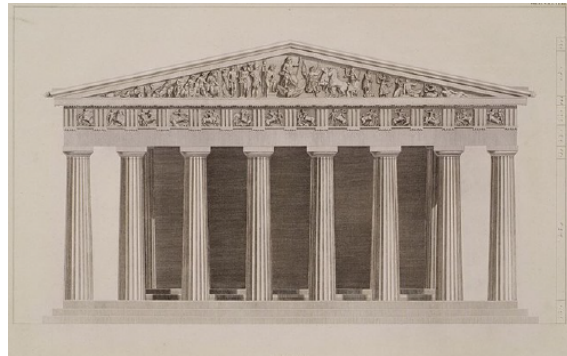


Lesson 2. Symmetry and line in architecture

The ancient Greeks thought that everything in nature was balanced or symmetrical in some way. Many architects of that time designed buildings to copy the proportions and lines of symmetry that they saw in the world around them.



The Parthenon



Look at the lines and the symmetry shown in the design of the Parthenon. Ancient Greek architectural writers stated that the columns were designed to echo the balance between the legs, body and head in the human form.

The balance and symmetrical buildings of the ancient Greeks continue to influence modern architects. In particular, Christopher Wren, in his design of the front of St Paul's Cathedral, borrowed details from classical buildings like the Parthenon.



St Paul's Cathedral, London

Lesson 3. Inspiration for architecture – Gaudi and nature

Antoni Gaudi was a Spanish architect who lived from 1852-1926. Most of his work, including his main work, the Sagrada Familia (a church) is in Barcelona where he lived. He designed it, and it started to be built, more than 100 years ago. It is still not finished - it is now estimated it will be finished in 2026.



It is presently the most visited monument in Spain. Gaudi was greatly influenced by both his religion and nature. He considered and integrated into his designs every element of architecture, including the making of mosaics which decorate many of his buildings using waste ceramic pieces and stunning stained-glass windows.



The natural formation of stalactites and stalagmites inspired Gaudi.

Lesson 4 and 5. Gaudi – different materials and features



Gaudi's work is best described as **free-flowing, full of curving organic forms that are colorful and exuberant**. His works contain shapes that come from nature but move into the realm of the imagination. The materials used by Gaudi ranged from **stone, ceramics and tiles to wrought iron, glass and bricks**. One of Gaudi's most famous works of art is Park Güell (1900-1914), where he created palm-tree trunks, arches and structures of colourful mosaics. \the centre piece of the park is the roof-top terrace of a snake-like continuous bench.



Casa dels ossos (House of Bones) 1904

The ground floor, in particular, has unusual irregular oval windows and flowing sculpted stone work. There are few straight lines, and much of the front of the house is decorated with a colourful **mosaic** made of broken ceramic tiles. The roof is **arched** and was likened to the back of a **dragon**. A common theory about the building is that the rounded **dome** to the left of centre, at the top in a turret and cross, represents the lance of **Saint George** (patron saint of Catalonia, Gaudi's home), which has been plunged into the back of the dragon.