

A nighttime photograph of a city skyline with a prominent bridge over a river. The bridge is illuminated with warm lights, and the city buildings in the background are lit up, reflecting on the water. The sky is a deep blue, suggesting dusk or dawn. The bridge has a sign that says "WELLS STREET".

SAVVAS

Build A Bridge, Change A City

Architecture

Hook & Inspire! Connections to Today

Ignite students' interest by sharing these resources, which demonstrate connections between the past and present. Please be sure to preview all resources.

Architecture

When traveling to Chicago, a major city in the United States, one can ride on a riverboat and take an architecture tour. This architecture tour takes viewers on a tour of many of the famous and infamous buildings throughout the city. Some buildings are from the founding times of the city, some are modern, and some work against the laws of nature. One such building uses enormous water tanks that add or deplete water as the building moves with the wind. The Vista Tower, designed by Studio Gang Architects, is a unique display of architectural design.

This unique design is made possible by the advancements in technology today. Technology advancements since the Industrial Revolution continue giving architects and designers new ways to make their visions a reality. Centuries ago, houses were made to give shelter and warmth. As time went on, architects designed buildings for comfort and shelter. They also followed guidelines of the times and added various items to give the building a unique look. The Parthenon in Greece gives a glimpse into the design influence of the day and the craftsmanship. The stone columns still stand today and offer visitors insight concerning architectural influence of that time.

As civilizations grew and invented new technologies, architecture became a dreamer's paradise. Architects designed elaborate buildings like the Notre Dame and Taj Mahal. People spared no expense. The architects could dream big and use the most elaborate details in their designs. Just when it seemed that the buildings of Notre Dame and Taj Mahal were the highest and largest, technology improved and paved the way for skyscrapers.

Skyscrapers continue to reach into the clouds, with the Burj Khalifa in Dubai winning the title for tallest. The Burj Khalifa reaches over 2,500 feet. The architect, Adrian Smith, is currently working on another project in Saudi Arabia, projected at beating the Burj Khalifa in Dubai in height. The architecture of the Burj Khalifa is detailed and reflects the culture of the area.

Culture is a large part of architecture. Throughout the centuries we see the culture of an area through the architecture. From the most elaborate buildings to those with straight walls and a modern flair, it gives viewers a glimpse of the cultural elements of that time. Architecture shows what the civilization deemed important or of relevance. This cultural awareness is helpful in planning for our future generations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share the online resources below with your class to stimulate discussion on these questions. Be sure to preview the clips before showing or sharing them in class to ensure the content is appropriate for your students.

1). In the early centuries, what was the primary focus of architecture? Why would a focus be given more on survival versus design?

Student answers may vary depending on experiences. The lack of technology made it difficult to design elaborate buildings. People built structures to provide shelter and protection from the elements. There wasn't a big push for design because there wasn't a tool available to help create the design. Things were just too heavy. As technology improved, buildings became more elaborate and reflected the culture of the day.

2). What role would climate play in a design? How would an architect need to change up a design based on the location of the structure?

Student answers may vary depending on experiences. The climate of an area impacts a building design and materials used with the design. For instance, concrete would be a better choice for a building in the path of a hurricane. Long glass doors may not be the best in areas of high humidity because of swelling in the structure. Brick structures would be less safe in areas with frequent earthquakes.

3). How was medieval architecture different from our modern day architecture? What was the primary focus?

Student answers may vary depending on experiences. Medieval architecture was all about providing protection. This protection might be from the elements but more often it was from other invaders. This is why we see so many castle structures from small to large.

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Student answers may vary depending on experiences. Prior to the Industrial Revolution people didn't have the tools for creating elaborate structures. This is especially true concerning skyscrapers. As tools such as excavators and concrete pourers became convenient, so did the ability to design various buildings.

5). What is your favorite building? What cultural elements do you see within this building? Is there a specific style of architecture present?

Student answers may vary depending on experiences. Students might discuss a modern building by Frank Lloyd Wright. He used slick lines and modern elements.

LINKS TO RESOURCES

Videos

- 1). [I Want To Be An Architect!](#); This video discusses how to become an architect.
- 2). [10 Eco-Friendly and Sustainable Houses](#); This video shows some unique, eco-friendly homes.
- 3). [Architecture Adventure](#); This video is one of a series of episodes for kids involving architecture.
- 4). [What is the Difference Between an Architect and an Engineer?](#); This video discusses the differences between architects and engineers.
- 5). [Meet an Architect](#); This video is an interview with an actual architect.

Media

- 1). [Column: Vista Tower tour reveals the engineering secrets that hold up Chicago's latest skyline standout](#); This article reviews the Vista Tower details in Chicago. It has an auditory version as well.
- 2). [Vista Tower](#); This article discusses the Vista Tower.
- 3). [Architecture for Kids](#); This website gives many links to other architecture websites for kids.
- 4). [Medieval Architecture](#); This website discusses the Medieval versus Gothic architecture styles.
- 5). [15 Awesome Architecture Books for Kids](#); This website has some architecture picture book ideas.

Websites

- 1). [Architecture](#); This is a great architecture website for kids.
- 2). [Architecture facts for kids](#); This website gives a history of architecture.
- 3). [10 Tallest Skyscrapers In The World](#); This website discusses the tallest buildings in the world and how they affect culture.
- 4). [Resources to Learn About World Architecture for Kids](#); This website is a great tool for kids to learn more about world architecture.
- 5). [Dollar Street](#); This website looks at architecture through the lens of a child's viewpoint.

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