

Key Stage 2: Greek temples

The final page of these notes can be copied and given to students who you think may need additional support during the workshop or to adult helpers.

Important: This session can be followed by a teacher-led visit to the Parthenon sculptures using an enquiry sheet provided during the session. If you wish to do this, we recommend you do not visit the Parthenon sculptures before the session.

About this session

This session takes place in the Samsung Digital Discovery Centre. It uses an interactive website to introduce students to the design and decoration of Greek temples, helps students understand that the Greek world was wider than Greece itself and that across that world there was considerable diversity.

Session outline

- The session begins by introducing students to the two main orders of Greek architecture and some of the component parts of Greek buildings. They discuss what temples were for.
- The students then build a virtual Greek temple using an activity on the Museum's interactive website on ancient Greece.
- The students divide into groups and are told that they are architects commissioned by a Greek city state to build a new temple. Each city state is allocated a budget and the students make decisions about an affordable design using budget sheets and individual computers. A selection of the city states' temples are compared and discussed on the interactive whiteboard.
- If you wish, you can then take the students to visit the Parthenon sculptures (Room 18) to investigate the decisions made by the ancient Athenians in building the Parthenon. Enquiry sheets for this gallery-base work are available for collection during the session in the Samsung Centre.

Key themes: architectural components, the religious purpose of temples and how they also represent a city state's status, the diversity of the Greek world

Key vocabulary: columns, frieze, metopes, pediments, marble, limestone, Acropolis, Parthenon, Athena, budget

Preparing for your session

- Explore the idea of Greek temples with your students – e.g. what they were used for, what objects were in them, where they might be situated, and what materials they were built from; look at pictures of as many as you can find on the internet.
- You might like to discuss the key vocabulary before the session.
- Discuss what messages buildings can communicate through their appearance or position.

- Use the Explore section of the British Museum website to search for Greek architectural objects in the Museum's collection and look at them on the whiteboard: www.britishmuseum.org/explore
- Visit resources about Greek architecture, the Nereid Tomb and the Parthenon are available on the British Museum website at: www.britishmuseum.org/learning/schools_and_teachers/primary/ancient_greece.aspx

Following up your session

- You may like to continue looking at objects from ancient Greece in the British Museum's collection via the Explore section of the Museum's website at www.britishmuseum.org/explore/introduction.aspx
- There is a British Museum interactive learning site at www.ancientgreece.co.uk where you may like to direct students to the section on the Acropolis www.ancientgreece.co.uk/acropolis or the city of Athens at www.ancientgreece.co.uk/athens/home_set.html
- Do some map and atlas work to locate the Greek states for which the pupils designed temples in groups: Thespieae (central Greece), Miletus (modern Turkish coast), Syracuse (Sicily), Pherae (northern Greece), Cyrene (north coast of Africa), Tarentum (Italy), Olbia (southern Russia), Massilia (southern France), Naukratis (Egypt), Mytilene (on island of Lesbos). Discuss why Greeks may have left the mainland to found cities elsewhere around the Mediterranean Sea.
- Discuss buildings that look like Greek temples - the British Museum, for example, or local buildings such as town halls or libraries.
- Design and build a Greek temple. If the roof can be lifted off or temple opened up in some way you can design and decorate the interior too.

Galleries with related objects

Room 17: The Nereid Tomb

Room 18: The Parthenon Sculptures

Room 77: Greek and Roman Architecture (subject to gallery availability - check opening hours at the Information Desk in the Great Court on the day of your visit).

Curriculum links

Key Stage 2 History: ancient Greece

QCA Art and Design schemes of work Unit 2C: *Can buildings speak?*

KS2 Maths: arithmetic

KS2: Greek temples

Summary sheet

In this workshop you will learn about:

- the different parts of Greek temples
- decisions that have to be made when you are building a temple

Key words

columns - the posts that go round the outside of a temple

frieze - a stone band that goes round a building that can be decorated

metopes - square sections of a Doric frieze that can be decorated

pediments - the triangular spaces at the end of buildings that can contain sculptures

Doric and Ionic - different styles of designing a temple

limestone - a type of stone used in building

marble - a very fine, white type of limestone

Acropolis - a hill in the centre of a Greek city such as Athens

Parthenon - a temple to Athena on the Athenian Acropolis

Athena - an ancient Greek goddess; patron goddess of Athens

budget - a plan for spending an amount of money

Designing a Greek temple

- You will find out about the different parts of a temple and what they were made of and how temples were decorated.
- We will design a temple using a computer game.
- Then you will try to design a temple when you only have a certain amount of money and we will compare the differences.

Investigating the Parthenon

- You may go with your teacher to see the real sculptures from the Parthenon. If you do, you will have a question sheet so that you can compare the decisions the ancient Athenians made about building the Parthenon with the ones you made in the session.