

Unit 06: Early Christian and Byzantine Art and Architecture

Content Area: **Fine Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **6-8 sessions**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will explore art and architecture as an expression of spirituality in the early Christian and Byzantine eras. They will understand the history and contributions to the development of art and architecture that came out of these eras. They will also understand the origins of the religious iconography used during these eras.

Transfer

Essential Questions

- • In what ways did the design of early Christian and Byzantine religious architecture serve the faithful and evangelize to outsiders?
- • In what ways was early Christian art affected by the various cultures and religions of the era?
- • What significant innovations early Christians and Byzantines make in art and architecture?
- • Why are the images of humans in early Christian and Byzantine so primitive in comparison to those of earlier cultures?

Essential Understandings

- • Early Christian and Byzantine architecture was designed to enhance the spiritual experience of the worshiper and to glorify and publicize the new religion.
- • Early Christian art was in part an evangelical tool that incorporated iconography of pagan sects.
- • Religious beliefs forced a shift from naturalism to symbolic representations of the human form in art.

Students Will Know

- • Basic vocabulary of early Christian, and Byzantine art and architecture (basilica, nave, apse, pendent, domed basilica, mosaic, icons and iconoclasm, monastery, etc.)
- • Major art materials and mediums used by the culture and/or during the time period.
- • The basic history of the time period being explored.

- • The characteristics unique to each structure.
- • The geographical sites being explored.
- • The identification information of selected works of art from the culture/time period.

Students Will Be Skilled At

Evidence/Performance Tasks

- • Answer the essential questions.
- • Completion of homework and in class assignments derived from classroom activities (such as but not limited to: Readings, study guide activities and worksheets on Early Christian and Byzantine Art and Architecture. Written Assignment: How can architecture enhance worship? List the major structural and ornamental elements of St. Marks (Venice). Beneath your list, relate how the elements help the building function as a sacred space. 10 minute AP essay writing.)
- • Ongoing notes, sketches, handouts, and reflections compiled in notebooks.
- • Participation in classroom activities such as: class discussion, Q and A sessions, cooperative group projects, role-playing, critique sessions, etc.
- • Quiz: Early Christian and Byzantine Art and Architecture
- • Self and teacher assessment using teacher generated rubric.

Learning Plan

- • Byzantine Art in Ravenna, Constantinople, and Venice: the rule of Justinian.” o Handouts related to topic of discussion. o Discussion o Homework reading and study guide activity related to next class period topic.
- • Homework debriefing and presentation “The evolution of the Roman Basilica: St. Peter’s Basilica; the shift from naturalism to symbolism in mosaic and ivory carving.” o Handouts related to topic of discussion. o Homework reading and study guide activity related to next class period topic.
- • Homework debriefing and presentation “The transformation of the figure from naturalism to symbolic representation; the significance of architectural site and belief reflected in structure and ornament.” o Handouts related to topic of discussion. o Discussion and Activity o Homework reading and study guide activity related to next class period topic.
- • Homework reading and study guide activity related to next class period topic.
- • Preview the essential questions and connect to learning throughout the unit.
- • Unit Quiz
- • Written Assignment: Written Assignment: How can architecture enhance worship? List the major structural and ornamental elements of St. Marks (Venice). Beneath your list, relate how the elements help the building function as a sacred space.

Materials

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

- • additional time on task
- • alternative outcome options
- • assessment based on individual development in the area of study
- • audio tape of instruction
- • cooperative learning groups
- • handouts of notes, procedures, processes, diagrams, etc.
- • images and visual aids
- • one-to-one instruction and assistance
- • preferential seating
- • reading material modified to student level
- • revised techniques, use of tools and media in hands-on activity
- • study partners
- • testing materials appropriate to student level