

# An Architectural Revolutionary

## General

### Grade Level

High School

### Author Info

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### Type of Lesson

Document Analysis

### Duration

One Week

### Interdisciplinary Connections

This unit explores Jefferson's architecture through the lens of history and art history. From examining monumental architecture to reading primary source documents, students will gain a deeper understanding of Jefferson, the influence of the ancients, and Jefferson's lasting architectural legacy.

## Objectives

### Overview

Wrought with simplicity, purpose, functionality and beauty, Thomas Jefferson created models of architecture for Americans to emulate. Jefferson looked to the past for inspiration while forging a new future in American architecture. This Unit seeks to examine Jefferson's architectural legacy through a close examination of two ancient monuments, Monticello, primary source documents, and examples of

Jefferson's civic architecture.

## **Prior Knowledge**

Not necessary, but some reading on Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, and Thomas Jefferson would be helpful.

## **Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

Students will examine monumental architecture of the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Romans.

Students will gain a clear understanding of how the Enlightenment defined beauty.

Students will read and analyze primary source documents.

Students will develop a keen appreciation for Jefferson's legacy and his personal residence of Monticello as well as what he thought the important role of architecture in culture.

Students will analyze photographs of buildings and develop their knowledge of architectural terminology and be able to apply those concepts.

## **Technology Connections/outcomes**

Students will link the past and the future through studying selected structures from Greece, Rome, and America.

Students will connect the symbolism of architecture with the creator and view a structure as a reflection of that individual or cultural time period.

## **Additional Learning Outcomes**

Students will be able to analyze a structure and find meaning in the creation.

Students will be able to write thoughtful observations. They will learn to notice details and apply concepts to their descriptions by using a glossary of terms.

Students will be able to analyze primary source documents systematically through a historical method that stresses creator, context, content, and the consequence of the document.

Students will learn to think critically as a result of a scavenger hunt where they have an image and need to look for that image in the rooms of the digital Monticello explorer site.

Students will be able to create a narrative about Jefferson through a deep understanding of his writings and the monuments (structures) he creates.

## Essential Questions

How were the ancient relevant to Jefferson?

How was Monticello a reflection of Thomas Jefferson?

What is the Enlightenment concept of beauty? How does it apply to architectural structures?

How do the Enlightenment thinkers prove the validity of their philosophy?

What were Jefferson's guiding principles in regards to architecture?

How did Jefferson's contemporaries view his designs?

How did Jefferson emphasize "the orders" of Palladian architecture?

In two instances, Jefferson uses an ancient temple for his projects: The Virginia State Capitol and the Rotunda at the University of Virginia, why? What do you think?

## Procedures

### 1. *One Week*

The entire lesson is contained in these two pdf documents which may be downloaded.

The Two PDF Downloads:

\* James Newman Barringer Fellowship Jefferson's Architecture

Activity 1 – The Concept of Beauty in the Classical World and the Enlightenment

Activity 2 – Thomas Jefferson's Architectural Vision and the Influence of Palladio

Activity 3 – The Concept of Redesign: Comparing Monticello I with Monticello II

Activity 4 – Scavenger Hunt Through the Rooms of Monticello

Activity 5 – Thomas Jefferson's Designs Beyond Monticello: Scope and Impact

\* Jefferson Architecture Worksheets and Assessments

## Related Assets

### Handouts and Downloads

- [An Architectural Revolutionary Lesson Plan Packet](#)

## Assessment

### Homework

There are a combination of assessments from written observations, discussions, scavenger hunt, and movie making like a documentary.

### Assessment

The pdf file has assessments for each of the five activities.

