AN ARCHITECTURAL ADVENTURE

Objective:
Explore the use of and the effects of using ancient Greek architectural elements in The Art Institute of Chicago and/or in local architecture.

Ancient Greek architecture is characterized by beauty, grandeur, and perfection. It also made a long-lasting impact on subsequent western architecture. For centuries this nation’s architects have recreated ancient Greek pediments, friezes, and columns in American banks, government buildings, museums, office buildings, homes, and schools.

Using the Architectural Adventure activity sheet (page 137), have students find various ancient Greek architectural elements on the interior and exterior of The Art Institute of Chicago. In addition, or as a variation, use the same Architectural Adventure activity sheet and have students look at buildings in their neighborhood, especially old ones, to find relief sculpture or carved decoration. Students may also wish to further explore national monuments such as the U.S. Capitol Building, Lincoln Memorial, and the White House for ancient Greek architectural elements.

During a follow-up classroom discussion, ask students what effect ancient Greek architectural elements have on contemporary American buildings? If the building(s) includes relief sculpture does the subject of the sculpture have anything to do with the name of the building? How might it relate to the function of the building?

Variation:
Project the Architectural Relief Showing a Gigantomachy (image 14) and the Relief of a Fallen Warrior (image 18). These carved reliefs once decorated temples and villas respectively. Have students design and create a relief sculpture for a building of their choice. How will their sculpture tell people what the purpose of the building is? (Note: As an example, discuss how the relief sculpture on the Nike building on Michigan Avenue describes the building’s contents. This is also a good example since Nike is the ancient Greek symbol of victory and students can easily understand the association.)
Find examples of ancient Greek architectural elements on the exterior and interior of The Art Institute of Chicago. Look for examples in your neighborhood too! Can you think of other examples on famous buildings across the country?

**pediment:** The triangle, or low-pitched gable, on the front of temples.
*Location:*

**frieze:** Ornamental band, usually applied to architecture, such as the Parthenon; usually in the form of painting or relief sculpture.
*Location:*

**triglyph:** A decorative feature on a frieze that consists of carved flutes or channels.
*Location:*

**metope:** The spaces between triglyphs.
*Location:*
GREEK ARCHITECTURAL ORDERS
Classical styles of structure determined chiefly by the type of column.

**Doric column:** The most massive of the Greek Orders. The capital (top of the column) consists of simple, geometric shapes—a basic, square shape atop an angled piece.

*Location:*

**Ionic column:** Generally a later development than the Doric Order. The capital consists of two scrolled *volutès* that represent a shell formation or an animal's horns.

*Location:*

**Corinthian column:** This order was employed much less than the other orders, so very few examples survive. The most common design of the capital has an ornate bell-shape decorated with rows of leaves and volutes.

*Location:*

**Composite Order column:** A design that utilizes major aspects of the three prominent Greek Orders.

*Location:*

**Engaged column:** A column that is more decorative than functional, partially sunk into a wall; also called an applied or attached column.

*Location:*