

What is Art Nouveau Architecture?

Worksheet

Art Nouveau is an ornamental style using flowing, whiplash curves, floral and organic motifs, and new materials like iron and glass to create a unified, nature-inspired design across buildings, furniture, and decoration, roughly 1890-1910.

Questions

1. Art Nouveau architecture is best characterized by
 - A) Straight geometric zigzags
 - B) Flowing, organic 'whiplash' curves
 - C) Gothic pointed arches
 - D) Bare industrial concrete
2. Which architect designed Casa Batll in Barcelona?
 - A) Victor Horta
 - B) Antoni Gaud
 - C) Hector Guimard
 - D) Le Corbusier
3. Art Nouveau design motifs are primarily drawn from
 - A) Machine-age geometry
 - B) Nature - plants and flowers
 - C) Religious iconography
 - D) Military symbolism
4. The Paris Mtro entrances by Hector Guimard are made of
 - A) Reinforced concrete
 - B) Cast iron in organic shapes
 - C) Marble columns
 - D) Wood and thatch
5. Explain how Victor Horta's Htel Tassel (Brussels, 1893) is considered the first true Art Nouveau building.
6. Antoni Gaud's Casa Batll (Barcelona, remodeled 1904-1906) uses about 300 tons of stone shaped into wave-like facades. What does this show about Art Nouveau construction?
7. Compare the entrance arches of the Paris Mtro (Hector Guimard, from 1900, over 140 built) with a typical Neoclassical entrance.
8. Define: What is the defining line of Art Nouveau design?
9. Define: What inspired Art Nouveau motifs?
10. Define: Name a key Art Nouveau architect.

Answer Key

1. B) Flowing, organic 'whiplash' curves - Its signature is the sinuous, nature-inspired curved line.
2. B) Antoni Gaud - Antoni Gaud remodeled Casa Batll between 1904 and 1906.
3. B) Nature - plants and flowers - Floral and organic forms define the style.
4. B) Cast iron in organic shapes - Guimard used cast iron shaped like plant stems and dragonfly wings.
5. Its iron staircase and wall decoration use continuous, whiplash curved lines Organic plant-like motifs cover the ironwork, mosaic floor, and stained glass The open-plan layout dissolves rigid rooms, letting curves flow through spaces No direct historical style (Gothic, Classical) is copied - it's original organic design
6. 300 tons of stone were individually carved to create undulating, non-repeating forms This contrasts with mass-produced, repetitive classical or industrial elements The facade's skeletal, bone-like balconies mimic organic natural forms Such labor-intensive, unique carving shows Art Nouveau's handcrafted, nature-first philosophy
7. Guimard's Mtro entrances use cast iron shaped into plant-stem and dragonfly-wing forms A Neoclassical entrance would use straight columns and a triangular pediment The Mtro ironwork is asymmetrical and organic; Neoclassical is symmetrical and geometric This contrast shows Art Nouveau's break from classical revivalism
8. The 'whiplash' curve - a flowing, asymmetrical organic line.
9. Plants, flowers, insects, and other natural forms.
10. Victor Horta (Belgium) or Antoni Gaud (Spain).

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