

7-A State Capitol, Columbus, Ohio, 1838–1861,

Thomas Cole (1801–1848) and Others



7-A Ithiel Town and A. J. Davis, architects; design largely by Thomas Cole, Ohio State Capitol, Columbus, Ohio, 1838–1861. Photograph © Tom Patterson, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Art

This is a photograph of Ohio's state capitol. The building was designed by an artist named Thomas Cole and several architects. In the photograph, green grass surrounds both sides of a wide walkway leading to the capitol, which has two flags flying above it on either side of the dome. Tall columns support the white stone building, which is inspired by ancient Greek architecture. There are 14 rectangular pillars attached to the wall, seven on each side, with windows in between and eight round columns that support the porch at the center of the building.

The Artist

Cole was born in Lancashire, England, in 1801. His family moved to New England in 1818. Because he did not have experience as a builder, his nephew helped him draw up the plans for what would become Ohio's capitol.

The Historical Perspective

The time period from start to finish of the Ohio state capitol was 1838–1861. The capitol was designed to recall ancient Greece. It was in Greece that the idea of democracy as a form of government, which the United States adopted, was born. Because of insufficient funding and a failed plan, the building was stalled for eight years. The design of the Ohio capitol took its final form between 1848 and 1854 under the guidance of William Russell West. The capitol building was created during a time when states were becoming more aware of their own governments.



Conversations and Teaching Activities

Head Start Children ages 3 to 5

Encourage children to look closely at this photograph. Introduce new vocabulary and find books that relate to the artwork.

Describing



- ✓ Ask children to look at the building in the front and then the buildings in the back. How are they the same? How are they different?
- ✓ What colors and shapes do you see in the photograph?
- ✓ Look at the sky. Is it cloudy? Sunny? Windy?
- ✓ How many columns do you see? How many flags? How many buildings?

Analyzing and Interpreting



Ask the following questions to stimulate thinking and discussion:

- The name of this artwork is *State Capitol, Columbus, Ohio*. Do you know why the artist gave it that name?
- Have you ever seen a building that looks like this one? Where?
- What do you think people do inside this building?
- Are there other things you would like to say about this artwork?



Connecting and Extending

Introducing Vocabulary

capitol	flagpole	round
circle	gray	square
cloudy	lamppost	statue
dome	pillar	symmetrical
entrance/entry	rectangle	triangle/triangular



Books

Arches to Zigzags: An Architecture ABC by Michael J. Crosbie (Harry N. Abrams, 2000)

Rhymes and color photos introduce both the alphabet and diverse architectural elements, from decorative to structural.

Architecture Counts by Michael J. Crosbie and Steve Rosenthal (John Wiley and Sons, 1993)

Readers are introduced to the numbers one through 10, as well as pictures of architectural features.

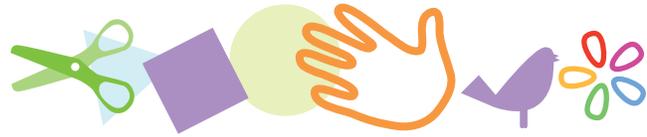


Connecting and Extending continued...

Related Family Literacy Experiences

Parents and children can:

- ✓ take art materials to City Hall and draw the building.
- ✓ sing the song “This Land is Your Land” during long car or bus rides.
- ✓ research local leaders on the Internet and find out how they help their communities.
- ✓ take walks around the neighborhood and identify brick, stucco, wood, and stone buildings.
- ✓ take a walk and identify different buildings, such as a grocery or department store, post office, train station, restaurant, house.



Related Educational Experiences

- ✓ Facilitate shape recognition including three-dimensional shapes in small groups or at tables.
- ✓ Take a neighborhood walk to see how many different types of buildings the children can find. Bring a clipboard so you can take notes as the children identify them. Use the notes to help you talk about them later.
- ✓ Provide time each day for children to explore block-building activities.
 - ◆ Encourage all children to build.
 - ◆ Change the supply and shapes of blocks and small props to create interest and building challenges.
 - ◆ Label buildings. Ask children to describe their structures. Photograph children with their structures.
 - ◆ Add materials to the block center (signs, cars, etc.) to integrate with block building.
 - ◆ To facilitate clean up, outline each block shape and tape it to a shelf so children can match block shapes to the outlines.
 - ◆ Use shape names frequently throughout the day in songs, finger plays, and other activities to describe, label, and identify.
 - ◆ Prepare shape snacks as a class or serve different-shaped crackers at snack or a special time.

The ideas listed are just a few of the many activities that could be used to introduce or extend children’s learning. Your knowledge of your children and families supports your ability to ensure positive learning experiences and outcomes for students. As an educator, you probably have ideas for books, songs, finger plays, and activities that you have thought of when introducing or extending children’s learning related to the “A Head Start on Picturing America” artworks. We encourage you to confer with your colleagues, visit the local library or bookstore, and share your ideas with others.