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91201



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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 2 Classical Studies 2025

91201 Examine the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world

Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Examine the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world.	Examine, in-depth, the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world.	Examine, with perception, the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

You should answer ONE of the questions in this booklet.

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–11 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in the margins (//////). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Merit

TOTAL 06

Page 1

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer ONE of the questions below with reference to one or more **classical art works or buildings**.
You must answer using paragraphs.

QUESTIONS (Choose ONE)

- How did the stylistic features of a classical art work help communicate a message(s)?
- Explain how the design and / or decoration of a classical building served society's needs.
- How did an artist communicate classical ideals through the depiction of the human body?
- In what ways was a later culture influenced by a classical art work?

CLASSICAL ART WORK(S) OR BUILDING(S)

The Erechtheion

PLANNING

1. porch of caryatids - Athens need to appear strong and show their power after the rebuild
2. many different items of religious significance - erechtheion made to worship multiple gods
3. ionic form - reflected athena, showed that Athens was her favorite

ANSWER

Type your answer in the space below. You should aim to write a concise answer of no more than 750–800 words. (The counter will change colour when you reach the recommended word count.) The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your answer.

Support your answer with evidence from one or more classical art works or buildings.

B I U     

The construction of the Erechtheion started in 421 BCE and finished in 406 BCE. It has many features which reflect the needs of society it had to serve, such as its ionic form, or the infamous Porch of Caryatids. Not only those traits, but merely its unusual shape reflects the religious context in which it was built in, as this shape comes from the pre-existing historic sites which remain around the building. As many of these are said to be from the Gods, they could not just be moved, so the architect Mnesikles had to work around them,

The Porch of Caryatids is a remarkable feature of the Erechtheion on the South side of the building. It features six maidens who act

as ionic pillars to hold up a roof. These maidens stand straight ahead and portray strong, expressionless features. They serve a couple of purposes to the needs of Athens, the first being to prove their strength in battle. As the Erechtheion began construction in 421 BCE, this was about 60 years after the Greco-Persian wars, in which the Temple of Athena Polias, which had previously taken up this site, was destroyed. It was burnt down by the Persians to show their dominance over Athens, which angered the proud state. Originally, the site was to remain empty in order to remind the Athenian people of their downfall, but Pericles decided it would be of much bigger benefit if they built a temple more impressive than the last in order to prove their power. This meant that Athens aimed to build something which showed their elegance, and proved that they were not a state to be tampered with. However, this angered the Delian League, which Athens was part of at the time. This was because the Delian League originally gave money to Athens to use on protection and defenses in case of another attack, but instead that money went to the Erechtheion. With the Delian League furious, it was decided by Pericles that Athens must make something fantastic, in order to prove that it was worth the money. Therefore, the Porch of Caryatids, in all their beauty, were created. This shows the societal need at the time for Athens to impress its peers. Additionally, the Porch of Caryatids is also suspected to have a mythic reasoning behind it. It is speculated that the maidens represent women from Caryae, a city in Lacedonia. Although a state in Greece, Lacedonia was one of the few states that sided with Persia in the Greco-Persian wars. These maidens were said to have been captives from Lacedonia as a punishment for their state's betrayal. This shows that Athens was trying to represent what happens to those who cross them, so the porch of Caryatids was a warning sign to all future enemies. The final way in which the Porch of Caryatids shows its value is by supposedly being directly above the grave of King Kekrops, one of the first Kings of Athens. By choosing to put the Caryatids here, Mnesikles is connecting both the religious and the historical parts of Athens together. This is symbolic of the way that Athens flowed harmonically as a state, as all aspects of life were brought together and equally respected.

A second decorative feature that showed societies needs at the time was the many religious sites that were placed all around the Erechtheion. All of these have a very sacred meaning to Athens, as they represent its rich religious culture. As Greece was a polytheistic state at the time, many of these landmarks represent different Gods. For example, Athena's sacred olive tree, also on the South side of the building, shows the way that the city came to get its name, and the importance of Athena to the Athenian people. It was believed that the city used to have a different name, and be ruled by King Kekrops. However, both Athena and Poseidon saw how the town was flourishing, and they wished to become the patrons. So, King Kekrops held a competition, whichever potential patron gave the best gift to Athens could become its patron. Poseidon gave a beautiful fountain, however it spewed salt water, so it was no use to the people. Athena, on the other hand, gifted Athens its first ever olive tree. This tree could provide wood, food, shade and sap, so had much more uses than the fountain. This led to Athena becoming the patron of Athens. However, as Athens is polytheistic, they still show their appreciation to Poseidon by keeping his salt water fountain. Poseidon is still a very important figure to Athens, due to their love of the sea. Athens was a very sea centred military nation, due to the fact that no other state was as keen as them to explore the oceans, so they quickly became the dominant navy power. This is why they still show their appreciation to Poseidon. Additionally, there was a societal need at the time to worship multiple Gods, due to the belief that each God controlled a different aspect of life. While Athens did hold Athena on a higher pedestal, they still had to appreciate other Gods in order to ensure no ill fell upon them. By worshipping Poseidon, they hoped for favour in their sea adventures, and by worshipping many other deities, Athens aimed for its society to be safe in all aspects. With all that being said, Athens believed it was still important to remember the God of the most value to them, Athena. This can be seen in the cella in which the Athenians chose to worship this God in. Due to the site being on a slope, the North and East side of the building are raised, and the East side is completely dedicated to Athena. This could be because it was believed the closer you were to the heavens, the more connected you could be to the Gods. This meant that the Athenians were aiming to be the closest to the Gods through their worship of Athena, therefore showing the societal need of Athena being the most valued deity to Athens.

Finally, the Erechtheion's ionic form also shows the needs to the society at the time, as they wished to not only show their state's power, but its elegance as well. Due to the Athens previously wanting to leave the old site of the Temple of Athena Polias empty, this meant the Parthenon was built before the Erechtheion could be. The Parthenon was a large, doric style building. It was a perfect display of Athens, masculine power. However if Athens wanted to continue to prove their fluid ability to be the most powerful state in every aspect, they could not build another enormous doric building. This meant they chose an ionic style for the Parthenon, as it was more soft, detailed and feminine. Not only did this give a different message to outsiders than the Parthenon did, but it also reflected the way the Erechtheion was, for the most part, dedicated to Athena. It represented how she was viewed, as beautiful and feminine. Additionally, the ionic form of the building can be seen in the Porch of Caryatids, as while they are shaped as women, look somewhat like pillars. This can be seen in their drapery, which flows naturally down their body but also emulates that of a pillar's fluting. Their heads have a flat surface on top of them, perhaps representing a basket, which looks just as a frieze would. Through making these women appear more like columns, Athens is showcasing the talent its architects display, and showing how refined of a state it is. The buildings ionic form also speak to how it connects all the Gods, through an ongoing blue marble entablature which runs throughout all sections of the building. This is an important feature of the decorations, as the Erechtheion could be seen as quite a disjointed temple, due to its multiple cella and its different heights. However, with an ongoing frieze around the building, Mnesikles managed to bring everything together, in order to make the building feel connected. This was important as while the Gods all had their individual areas of importance, they were still seen as one pantheon, and therefore should be treated as such. This shows that from the context in which it was built in the Erechtheion had to serve a different purpose to the Parthenon, and satisfy a different part of the Athenian society's needs.

Through its delicate form and features, the Erechtheion serves many purposes to the context in which it was created in. Through its unique features, it speaks to the religious, political, and societal needs that Athens required at the time. Through Pericles and Mnesikles vision, the Erechtheion is one of the cornerstones of the Acropolis as it is a showcase of the mighty power that is Athens.

1479 WORDS / 800 RECOMMENDED

Merit

Subject: Classical Studies

Standard: 91201

Total score: 06

Grade score	Marker commentary
M6	<p>This response demonstrates informed understanding of the significance of the art work. The response includes a thorough discussion of the context of the Erechtheion and how the site of the temple was used by Athenian society over time.</p> <p>The candidate uses consistent detailed description, such as in their description of the form of the Caryatids, and has ensured they use subject appropriate terminology throughout.</p> <p>Though the candidate attempts to answer all aspects of the question thoroughly, it would benefit from more focus on the art work itself.</p>