

WARM UP

1 Look again at page 195 in your text book then underline the mistakes in these sentences about the Renaissance style and correct them.

- 1 It started in England in the middle of the 15th century. _____
- 2 It was a combination of Norman and Gothic architecture. _____
- 3 One of its main features is towers. _____
- 4 It was concerned about asymmetrical and ornate forms. _____
- 5 Buildings were designed by qualified architects. _____
- 6 Inigo Smith was a famous English Renaissance architect. _____

GLOSSARY

spread: *si diffuse*

pediments: *frontoni*

stonemason: *tagliapietre*

wise: *saggio*

patronage: *mecenatismo, protezione*

Andrea Palladio

The Renaissance was a cultural movement which began in Italy in the late Middle Ages, then spread to the rest of Europe. Its influence touched literature, art, education, politics and science. The English Renaissance started in the Elizabethan era with the work of writers like William Shakespeare and great artists and architects like Inigo Jones, who introduced Italian style architecture to England. Inspired by the simple lines of ancient Greek and Roman architecture, the architects of the Renaissance designed buildings with flat, wide windows which were created with new engineering techniques and simple arches, pediments and columns. The style which emerged is usually known as 'Palladian' after its most original master, Andrea Palladio.



Villa Capra (The Rotonda)

His original name was Andrea Di Pietro della Gondola and he was born in Padua in 1508 where he started his career as a simple stonemason. After moving to Vicenza, he met an important Humanist poet, Gian Giorgio Trissino who took a great interest in his work and financed him to study ancient architecture in Rome. It was also Trissino who began to call the young architect Palladio, meaning 'the wise one' which is the name he would become famous and be remembered by. After Trissino's death, Palladio enjoyed the patronage of the Barbaros brothers who introduced him to Venice where he eventually became chief architect of the Republic of Venice. He developed his own architectural style, 'the Palladian style' which had its basis in classical Roman principles. Most of the great European buildings of the Renaissance are attributed to his innovative ideas and the elegance of his design. He designed palaces for the city of Vicenza, churches in Venice, and his 'Palladian Villas' to be found mainly in the province of Vicenza. The term 'villa' was used to describe a country house belonging to a rich Veneto family who also had a town house called a 'palazzo'. The site including these villas was added to the World Heritage List by UNESCO in 1994. Apart from his designs Palladio also became a writer in later life and is famous above all for his *Four Books of Architecture*, published in Venice in 1570, which explained his architectural principles and provided practical advice for builders.



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READING COMPREHENSION

2 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- 1 Explain the origins of Renaissance culture and how and when it reached England with regard to architecture.
- 2 Describe the main features of Renaissance architecture.
- 3 Name the people who helped Andrea Palladio and describe how they helped him.
- 4 During his lifetime what did Palladio achieve and what posthumous recognition has he received?

VOCABULARY

3 Complete the text with the words from the box.

included • translated • designed • considered • reached • became • divided • copied • spread

Andrea Palladio is (1) _____ by many to be the most influential and most (2) _____ architect in the Western World. His designs (3) _____ models for stately homes and government buildings both in Europe and America. His simple style (4) _____ large windows (5) _____ into three parts, with the centre section being larger than the other two and usually arched. Palladio's written works were (6) _____ into several languages and his ideas not only (7) _____ all over Europe but (8) _____ the New World too. American statesman Thomas Jefferson (9) _____ his house in Virginia according to Palladian ideas.

SPEAKING

- 4** **PET** Villa Capra, or 'The Rotunda', is one of the villas designed by Palladio on the Venetian mainland and has features which remind us of the Roman Pantheon. When American statesman Thomas Jefferson designed his own home 'Monticello' in Virginia, he was inspired by the design of 'The Rotunda' and combined Palladio's traditions with features suitable for the American way of life. Compare the two villas with a partner. Talk about their features, discussing what differences there are, and what they have in common.



Monticello, the Virginia Home of Thomas Jefferson