

A day in the life of an ancient Greek architect - Mark Robinson

Let's Begin...

The year is 432 BCE. As dawn breaks over Athens, Pheidias is late for work. He is the chief builder for the Parthenon— Athens' newest and largest temple— and when he arrives onsite, city officials accuse him of embezzling gold from the temple's sacred central statue. He has until sundown to prove his innocence or face the courts. Mark Robinson outlines a day in the life of a Greek architect.

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Video Comprehension Questions: "The Parthenon: The Architect's Masterpiece"

1. What was Phidias's role in the construction of the Parthenon?

a. Painter

b. Architect

c. Sculptor

d. Carpenter

2. Why did Phidias have to justify the expenses of the temple?

a. To satisfy the city officials

b. To prove his innocence in court

c. To complete the construction on time

d. To secure funding for future projects

3. What architectural style did the people of Athens expect for the Parthenon?

a. Doric

b. Ionic

c. Corinthian

d. Tuscan

4. How did Phidias's plans for the Parthenon differ from the standard Athenian style?

- a. He used only Doric columns
- b. He incorporated both Doric and Ionic elements
- c. He added Corinthian columns for decoration
- d. He designed an entirely new architectural style**

5. What materials were used to build the Parthenon?

- a. Wood and stone
- b. Limestone and marble**
- c. Brick and clay
- d. Steel and concrete

6. What method did Phidias and his team use to solve architectural problems without a precise plan?

- a. Trial and error
- b. Mathematical calculations**
- c. Intuitive guesswork
- d. Consultation with other architects

7. How did the architects ensure that the columns of the Parthenon looked straight from a distance?

- a. They used thicker columns
- b. They incorporated a slight bulge in the columns**
- c. They placed the columns closer together
- d. They added decorative elements to distract from any deviations

8. What did Phidias's sculptors create to decorate the temple?

- a. Statues of Greek gods
- b. Painted frescoes
- c. Intricate mosaics
- d. Engraved scenes of mythical battles**

9. What was the main focus of the Parthenon?

a. An altar for offerings

- b. A treasury for storing valuables
- c. A ceremonial space for religious events
- d. A towering statue of the goddess Athena

10. How did Périclès save Phidias from the accusations?

a. He personally vouched for Phidias's innocence

b. He ordered the gold of the statue to be weighed

- c. He offered a bribe to the city officials
- d. He convinced the judges of Phidias's integrity