**Advanced Placement**

**ART HISTORY**

**Key Terms**

**Early Europe and Colonial America I**

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**ambulatory:** An ambulatory is a covered walkway, outdoors (as in a church cloister) or indoors; especially the passageway around the apse and the choir of a church. In Buddhist architecture, the passageway leading around the stupa in a chaitya hall.

**apse:** An apse is a recess, usually semicircular, in the wall of a Roman basilica or at the east end of a church.

**archivolt:** An archivolt is the continuous molding framing an arch. In Romanesque or Gothic architecture, one of the series of concentric bands framing the tympanum.

**atrium:** The atrium is the court of a Roman house that is partly open to the sky. Also the open, colonnaded court in front of and attached to a Christian basilica.

**baptistery:** In Christian architecture, the building used for baptism, usually situated next to a church is known as a baptistery.

**basilica:** In Roman architecture, a basilica is a civic building for legal and other civic proceedings, rectangular in plan with an entrance usually on a long side. In Christian architecture, a church somewhat resembling the Roman basilica, usually entered from one end and with an apse at the other.

**buttress:** A buttress is an exterior masonry structure that opposes the lateral thrust of an arch or a vault. A pier buttress is a solid mass of masonry; a flying buttress consists typically of an inclined member carried on an arch or a series of arches and a solid buttress to which it transmits lateral thrust.

**chevet:** The east, or apsidal, end of a Gothic church, including choir, ambulatory, and radiating chapels is known as the chevet.

**chiaroscuro:** In drawing or painting, the treatment and use of light and dark, especially the gradations of light that produce the effect of modeling is chiaroscuro.

**choir:** The choir is the space reserved for the clergy and singers in the church, usually east of the transept but, in some instances, extending into the nave.

**codex (pl. codices):** A codex is a separate pages of vellum or parchment bound together at one side; the predecessor of the modern book. The codex superseded the rotulus. In Mesoamerica, a painted and inscribed book on long sheets of
bark paper or deerskin coated with fine white plaster and folded into accordion-like pleats.

crossing: The space in a cruciform church formed by the intersection of the nave and the transept is the crossing.

crossing square: The area in a church formed by the intersection (crossing) of a nave and a transept of equal width, often used as a standard module of interior proportion is the crossing square.

crossing tower: The tower over the crossing of a church is the crossing tower.

cruciform: Cruciform refers to cross shaped buildings plans.

diptych: A diptych is a two-paneled painting or altarpiece; also, an ancient Roman, Early Christian, or Byzantine hinged writing tablet, often of ivory and carved on the external sides.

fresco: Fresco is a painting on lime plaster, either dry (dry fresco or fresco secco) or wet (true or buon fresco). In the latter method, the pigments are mixed with water and become chemically bound to the freshly laid lime plaster.

icon: A icon is a portrait or image; especially in Byzantine art, a panel with a painting of sacred personages that are objects of veneration. In the visual arts, a painting, a piece of sculpture, or even a building regarded as an object of veneration.

iconoclasm: The iconoclasm is the destruction of images. In Byzantium, the period from 726 to 843 when there was an imperial ban on images. The destroyers of images were known as iconoclasts. Those who opposed such a ban were known as iconophiles or iconodules.

illuminated manuscript: Illuminated manuscripts are luxurious handmade book with painted illustrations and decorations.

lunette: A lunette is a semicircular area (with the flat side down) in a wall over a door, niche, or window; also, a painting or relief with a semicircular frame.

mandorla: A mandorla is an almond-shaped nimbus surrounding the figure of Christ or other sacred figure.

mihrab: A mihrab is a semicircular niche set into the qibla wall of an mosque.
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**minaret:** A minaret is a distinctive feature of mosque architecture, a tower from which the faithful are called to worship.

**minbar:** In a mosque, the pulpit on which the imam stands is the minbar.

**mosque:** The mosque is the Islamic building for collective worship. It comes from the Arabic word masjid, meaning a “place for bowing down.”

**nimbus:** A nimbus is a halo or aureole appearing around the head of a holy figure to signify divinity.

**pointed arch:** A pointed arch is a narrow arch of pointed profile, in contrast to a semicircular arch.

**qibla:** The qibla indicates the direction (toward Mecca) Muslims face when praying.

**Pantocrator:** A Pantocrator is an image of Christ as ruler and judge of heaven and earth.

**pendentive:** A pendentive is a concave, triangular section of a hemisphere, four of which provide the transition from a square area to the circular base of a covering dome. Although pendentives appear to be hanging (pendant) from the dome, they in fact support it.

**narthex:** A narthex is the porch or vestibule of a church, generally colonnaded or arcaded and preceding the nave.

**nave:** The nave is the central area of an ancient Roman basilica or of a church, demarcated from aisles by piers or columns.

**nimbus:** A nimbus is a halo or aureole appearing around the head of a holy figure to signify divinity.

**orant:** In Early Christian art, an orant figure was a person depicted with both arms raised in the ancient gesture of prayer.

**parchment:** Parchment is lambskin prepared as a surface for painting or writing.

**relics:** The body parts, clothing, or objects associated with a holy figure, such as the Buddha or Christ or a Christian saint are known as relics.

**squinch:** A squinch is an architectural device used as a transition from a square to a polygonal or circular base for a dome. It may be composed of lintels, corbels, or arches.
tracery: Tracery is the ornamental stonework for holding stained glass in place, characteristic of Gothic cathedrals. In plate tracery the glass fills only the “punched holes” in the heavy ornamental stonework. In bar tracery the stained-glass windows fill almost the entire opening, and the stonework is unobtrusive.

transept: The transept is a part of a church with an axis that crosses the nave at a right angle.

vellum: Vellum is calfskin prepared as a surface for writing or painting.

woodcut: A woodcut is a wooden block on the surface of which those parts not intended to print are cut away to a slight depth, leaving the design raised; also, the printed impression made with such a block.