

THE CHRYSLER BUILDING

1. Read and underline important information.

The **Chrysler Building** is an Art Deco style skyscraper in New York City, located on the east side of Manhattan at the intersection of 42nd Street and Lexington Avenue. At 1,046 feet, the structure was the world's tallest building for 11 months before it was surpassed by the Empire State Building in 1931. It is still the tallest *brick* building in the world, albeit with an internal steel skeleton.

The Chrysler Building is a classic example of Art Deco architecture and considered by many contemporary architects to be one of the finest buildings in New York City. It was designed by architect William Van Alen.

Construction started on September 19, 1928. In total, almost 400,000 rivets were used and approximately 3,826,000 bricks were manually laid, to create the non-loadbearing walls of the skyscraper.

In the summer of 1929, a "race for the sky" broke out on the island of Manhattan. Automobile tycoon Walter Chrysler battled Wall Street powerhouse Bank of Manhattan Trust Company for the title of world's tallest building. In the spring of 1930, just when it appeared that the bank might capture the coveted title, a small crew jacked a 125 feet needle-thin **spire** hidden in Chrysler's building through the top of the crown to claim the title of world's tallest building at 1,046 feet.

Not only was the Chrysler Building the world's tallest structure, it was also one of the most decorated office buildings in the world. Chrysler wanted "a bold structure, declaring the glories of the modern age" -- and he got it. He decorated his skyscraper with **hubcaps**, **mudguards**, and **hood ornaments**, just like his cars, hoping that such a distinctive building would make his car company a household name. Today, the Chrysler Building is recognized as New York City's greatest display of Art Deco, a decorative style characterized by sharp angular or zigzag surface forms and ornaments.

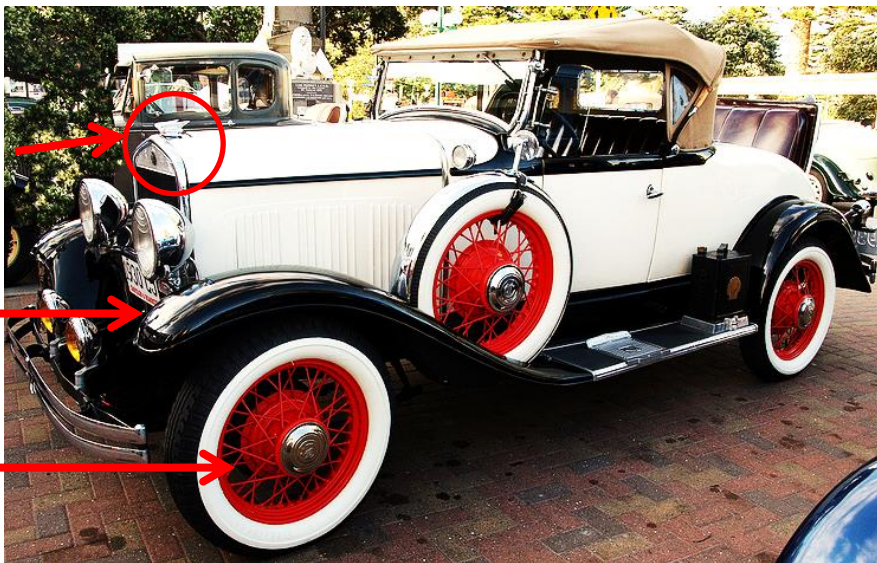
spire



hood ornament

mudguard

hubcap



a 1930 Chrysler Car



ART DECO

2. You have learnt the Chrysler building is an Art Deco building. Read about Art Deco and highlight the main characteristics of this art style.

Art Deco, or **Deco**, is an influential visual arts design style which first appeared in France after World War I, flourishing internationally in the 1930s and 1940s before its popularity waned after World War II. It is an eclectic style that combines traditional craft motifs with Machine Age* imagery and materials. The style is often characterized by rich colors, bold geometric shapes, and lavish ornamentation.

Deco emerged from the Interwar period when rapid industrialization was transforming culture. One of its major attributes is an embrace of technology. This distinguishes Deco from the organic motifs favored by its predecessor Art Nouveau.

Historian Bevis Hillier defined Art Deco as "an assertively modern style [that] ran to symmetry rather than asymmetry, and to the rectilinear rather than the curvilinear; it responded to the demands of the machine and of new material [and] the requirements of mass production".

During its heyday, Art Deco represented luxury, glamour, exuberance, and faith in social and technological progress.

Deco emphasizes geometric forms: spheres, polygons, rectangles, trapezoids, zigzags, chevrons, and sunburst motifs. Elements are often arranged in symmetrical patterns. Modern materials such as aluminum, stainless steel, Bakelite, chrome, and plastics are frequently used. Stained glass, inlays, and lacquer are also common. Colors tend to be vivid and high-contrast

Art Deco was a globally popular style and affected many areas of design. It was used widely in consumer products such as automobiles, furniture, cookware, china, textiles, jewelry, clocks, and electronic items such as radios, telephones, and jukeboxes. It also influenced architecture, interior design, industrial design, fashion, graphic arts, and cinema.

During the 1930s Art Deco was used extensively for public works projects, railway stations, ocean liners, movie palaces, and amusement parks.

**Machine Age: end of Industrial age, at its peak in between WWI and WWII*

Dates of Art Deco :

Main characteristics :

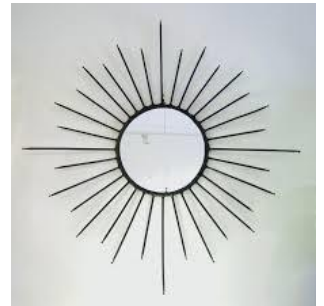
Geometrical forms	Materials	Areas of design



VOCABULARY

3. In the text, find the words corresponding to the pictures

Geometric shapes



Consumer products



CHRYSLER BUILDING IDENTITY CARD

Pair Work : Ask your neighbor for missing information



Tool box



Question words :

What? (object), When? (time), Where? (location), How many? (number), How much? (quantity, price) How + adj (degree of...)

Interrogative structure: Wh + auxiliary + Subject + Verb ... ?

General information

Ordered by : Automotive Tycoon Walter P. Chrysler

Designed by :

Type of Building : Office

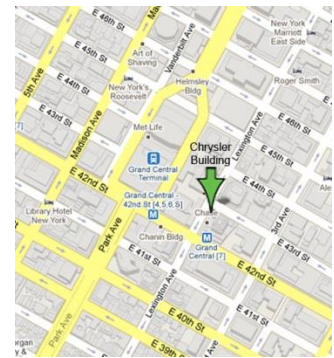
Architectural Style :

Construction started: 1928

Construction completed:

Inauguration: May, 27 1930

Location :



Numbers

Total height : 1046ft

Roof height :

Spire length : 125ft

Number of stories :

Number of elevators: 34

Number of windows:

Estimated Cost: 15 million dollars

Technical Details

Structure: steel frame with metal cladding and brick

Construction materials: 20,961 tons of steel, rivets and 3,826,000 bricks.



United States customary units

In the United States, they don't use the metric system as we do. They use the United States customary units in which 1 foot = 0.3048 meters.

Get the numbers from the Chrysler Building Identity card and make the conversion to find the length in meters and complete the identity card.

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CHRYSLER BUILDING IDENTITY CARD

Pair Work : Ask your neighbor for missing information



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Question words :

What? (object), When? (time), Where? (location), How many? (number), How much? (quantity, price) How + adj (degree of...)

Interrogative structure: Wh + auxiliary + Subject + Verb ... ?

General information

Ordered by :

Designed by : Architect William Van Alen

Type of Building :

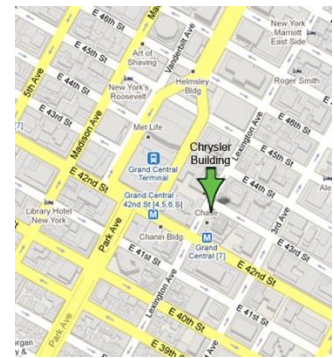
Architectural Style : Art Deco

Construction started:

Construction completed: 1930

Inauguration:

Location : Lexington Avenue and 42nd street, Manhattan, New York



Numbers

Total height :

Roof height : 925ft

Spire length :

Number of stories : 77

Number of elevators:

Number of windows: 3,862

Estimated Cost:



Technical Details

Structure: steel frame with metal cladding and brick

Construction materials: tons of steel, 391,881 rivets and 3,826,000 bricks.

United States customary units

In the United States, they don't use the metric system as we do. They use the United States customary units in which 1 foot = 0.3048 meters.

Get the numbers from the Chrysler Building Identity card and make the conversion to find the length in meters and complete the identity card.

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SYMBOLISM OF ORNAMENTS AND MATERIALS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

GENERAL STRUCTURE

Shape:

Compare the basis and the top of the building.
Use the adjective LARGE

.....
.....

Read the text and explain the reason why the architect used such a shape.

.....
.....

Effect?

.....



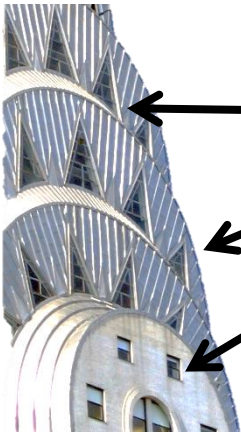
The shape of the Chrysler Building was dictated by a 1916 zoning ordinance requiring buildings to be stepped back as they rose to allow sunlight and more air to reach the streets below.

This restriction allowed architects to take a more sculptural approach to urban design.

Instead of the tall, bland, rectangular boxes that had begun to colonize the city, inventive and dynamic forms began to lend interest and variety to the Manhattan skyline.

The ordinance also focused attention on the summit of a building.

ROOF AND SPIRE



SHAPES:

.....
.....
.....

recalls:



Materials:

Look?

Reference?

.....

Write everything you know about the spire:

.....
.....

Symbol?



ORNAMENTS

61st Floor



Shape:

Recalls:

Symbol:

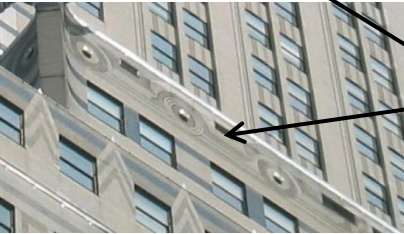
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Material: recalls

31st Floor



Shape: symbol:
.....
.....
.....



Recalls:
Shape:
Recalls:

LOBBY

Deco design



Entrance



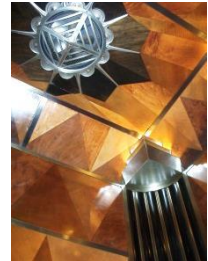
Doors from the inside



Stair case

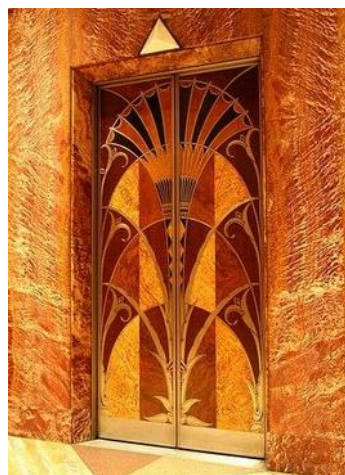


Ventilation



Lightning

Ceiling murals tell us about...



The and their motifs recall and the 1922 discovery of



The materials used are definitely (marble from all over the world, fine woods, chrome, etc.)

LET'S RECAP : REMEMBER THE ESSENTIALS

The Chrysler is a 319m high Art Deco style building ordered by Walter Chrysler (Automotive industry) designed by William Van Allen and Philip Johnson from 1928 to 1930. It is situated in New York City at the 405 of Lexington avenue and 42nd street.

Art Deco: the building characterized by its geometric look with its sharp shapes (squares, triangles, half-circles), its modern materials (chrome, glass). It produces an impressive effect, representing Mr. Chrysler's success and the general prosperity of the time, with its 40m setbacks and its recessed top, forming a pyramidal top.

The steel and details on the façade recall the American automotive world like the radiator of the 61st floor and the replicas of the Chrysler wing and the frieze of the 31st, or the wheel-like top of the top.

The inside of the building is decorated in an Egyptian style (fine wood and marbles) due to the discovery of Tutankhamun in 1922, which made Egyptian motifs (lotus flowers, ...) very popular. There again, you can find many geometric shapes (see ventilation details or elevator doors).

Practice superlatives: use the adjectives HIGH, FINE, DECORATED

In 1930, the Chrysler building was for 11 months.

It is one of and buildings in the world.

GO FURTHER

Learn more about Walter Chrysler and William Van Allen

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Chrysler

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Van_Allen

Read about Art Deco:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_Deco

Art Deco Architecture in New York City :

Empire State Building, Radio City Music-Hall, Rockefeller Center, Fuller Building, Waldorf Astoria and much more

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Art_Deco_architecture_in_New_York_City