

Brief History of Art and design

20th-21st century

04 Minimalism and Brutalism

(1950–1980)

LISTENING
for English lesson



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LAMV
LIEPĀJAS MŪZIKAS,
MĀKSLAS un DIZAINA
VIDUSSKOLA


SUPŠ:UH

Empower ED

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LISTENING

VIDEO: MINIMALISM AND BRUTALISM:

Link to the video "What is Brutalist Architecture? ARCHITECTURE 101"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWLHSHwomkg&t=34s>

TASK 1:

Multiple-Choice Questions: watch and listen to the video about brutalist architecture and choose the correct answer:

1. The term "Brutalism" originally comes from a phrase meaning:

- A) "Honest concrete"
- B) "Raw concrete"
- C) "Brute concrete"
- D) "Heavy architecture"

2. According to the video, Brutalist architecture became popular primarily:

- A) Before World War I
- B) Between World War I and World War II
- C) After World War II
- D) In the 21st century

3. A key feature of Brutalist buildings is that they:

- A) Use lots of decorative elements and ornamentation
- B) Emphasize exposed materials and structural honesty
- C) Are always painted in bright colors
- D) Follow classical architectural styles

4. The geometric shapes in Brutalist design are usually:

- A) Curved and organic
- B) Simple and block-like
- C) Elaborated with decorative curves
- D) Gothic arches

5. The original social aim behind many Brutalist buildings was to:

- A) Create small private homes for the wealthy
- B) Provide large-scale public housing and civic buildings
- C) Reproduce classical palaces
- D) Build shopping malls

6. According to the video, why did Brutalism fall out of favour for some people?

- A) Because concrete became too expensive
- B) Because people disliked the austere, rough appearance of the buildings
- C) Because it was banned by governments
- D) Because architects turned to timber

7. The video suggests that Brutalist architecture values honesty — meaning:

- A) The buildings hide all imperfections under paint
- B) The materials and structure are shown — not hidden behind decoration
- C) The architects lie about materials
- D) Buildings must be symmetrical

8. Many Brutalist structures were built in:

- A) The 18th century
- B) The 19th century
- C) 1950s–1970s
- D) 1990s–2000s

9. The video mentions that some people compare Brutalist buildings to:

- A) Sculptures — because of their bold forms
- B) Fairy-tale castles — because of their beauty
- C) Wooden huts — because of their simplicity
- D) Gothic cathedrals — because of their arches

10. The purpose of using exposed concrete (béton brut) in Brutalist architecture was to:

- A) Make buildings cheaper and faster to build
- B) Hide the real structure behind decorative facades
- C) Emphasize authenticity and simplicity
- D) Make buildings lighter

TASK 2:

True / False Statements: decide whether the given statements are true or false according to the information provided in the video:

1. Brutalist architecture often hides the structure behind ornate decoration.
2. The use of raw concrete is a hallmark of Brutalism.
3. Brutalism emerged after WWII as part of large-scale rebuilding efforts.
4. The buildings in Brutalism are known for delicate and intricate ornamentation.
5. Brutalist design tends to use simple, block-like geometric shapes.
6. The creators of early Brutalist architecture aimed to build functional public housing and civic spaces.
7. According to the video, every Brutalist building is universally loved and praised.
8. The term "béton brut" refers to painted concrete.
9. Brutalist buildings always look warm and welcoming to everyone.
10. One of the goals of Brutalist architecture was to make the construction honest and not disguised by decoration.

TASK 3:

Complete the tasks on vocabulary from the video:

VOCABULARY TASK I

Use the words (austere, raw, functional, massive, texture, durability, iconic, exposed) to complete the sentences.

Brutalist buildings often look very _____, with minimal decoration.

Concrete was chosen not only for its appearance but also for its _____; it lasts a long time.

Many Brutalist structures leave materials _____ rather than covered with paint.

The _____ scale of these buildings can make them feel monumental.

Architects appreciated the _____ quality of béton brut concrete surfaces.

The _____ forms used in Brutalism were meant to express honesty and strength.

These buildings were designed to be _____, prioritizing practicality over ornament.

Some Brutalist buildings later became _____ landmarks admired by architects.

VOCABULARY TASK II

Match the Words to Their Definitions

1. monolithic	a. Related to public buildings or community services
2. utilitarian	b. Relating to shape and form, especially simple shapes
3. geometric	c. Designed for usefulness rather than beauty
4. civic	d. Very large, appearing as one solid block
5. post-war	e. Following a style that avoids decoration and focuses on simplicity
6. structural	f. Connected to the supporting framework of a building
7. minimalist	g. Causing disagreement or debate
8. controversial	h. Occurring or developing after a major conflict

VOCABULARY TASK III

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

Words: *brutalist, imposing, façade, modernist, sculptural, integrity, infrastructure, proportion*

Many _____ buildings use concrete as their primary material.

The _____ of the structure made it seem heavy and dominating on the skyline.

Architects of the period valued the _____ of materials, preferring not to hide them.

The building's front _____ reveals its block-like design. Some Brutalist designs are described as almost _____ due to their artistic, 3-D shapes.

The movement grew out of earlier _____ ideas in architecture.

After WWII, countries needed new public _____ such as schools and government buildings.

The careful _____ of shapes and forms helps create a sense of balance despite the heavy materials.

TASK 4:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

A. General Understanding

1. What surprised you most about Brutalist architecture from the video?
2. Before watching, what did you think Brutalism was? Has your opinion changed?

B. Personal Opinion

1. Do you find Brutalist buildings beautiful, ugly, or something in between? Why?
2. When you walk past a large concrete building, what feelings does it evoke?

C. Values and Purpose

1. Brutalism aimed to be "honest." Do you think architecture should be honest?
2. Many Brutalist buildings were designed for the public (housing, universities, government). Should public buildings prioritize function or beauty?

D. Critical Thinking

1. Why do you think some architectural styles become unpopular over time?
2. Is there a building in your city that could be considered Brutalist?
 - a) If yes, describe it.
 - b) If no, would you like one to be built? Why/why not?