Sculpture during the Archaic period became increasingly naturalistic, although this varied depending on the gender of the subject.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**
- Compare and contrast the kouroi and korai sculptures of the Archaic period.

**KEY POINTS**
- Dedicatory male kouroi figures were originally based on Egyptian statues and over the Archaic period these figures developed more naturalistic nude bodies. The athletic body was an ideal form for a young Greek male and is comparable to the ideal body of the god Apollo.
- Instead of focusing on the body, female korai statues were clothed and throughout the Archaic period artists spent more time elaborating on the detailed folds and drapery of a woman's clothing. This reflected the Greek ideals for women, who were supposed to be fully clothed, modest and demure.
- To add an additional naturalistic element to the body, the typical 'Archaic smile' was added to both male and female statues. While today the smile seems false, to the ancient Greeks it added a level of realism.
- Pedimental sculpture in the Archaic period was often scaled to fit into the space of the pediment and served an apotropaic instead of a decorative function.

**TERMS**
- **kore**
  - an Ancient Greek statue of a woman, portrayed standing, usually clothed, painted in bright colours and having an elaborate hairstyle
- **apotropaic**
  - Intended to ward off evil.
- **peplos**
  - An Ancient Greek garment, worn by women, made of a tubular piece of cloth, which is folded back upon itself halfway down, until the top of the tube is worn around the waist, and the bottom covers the legs down to the ankles; the open top is then worn over the shoulders, and draped, in folds, down to the waist.
- **kouros**
Sculpture in the Archaic Period

This developed rapidly from its early influences, becoming more natural and showing a developing understanding of the body, specifically the musculature and the skin. Close examination of the style's development allows for precise dating.

Most statues were commissioned as memorials and votive offerings or as grave markers, replacing the vast amphora (two-handled, narrow-necked jars used for wine and oils) and kraters (wide-mouthed vessels) of the previous periods, yet still typically painted in vivid colors.

Kouros

Kouros statues (singular, kouros), depicting idealized, nude male youths, were first seen during this period. Carved in the round, often from marble, kouroi are thought to be associated with Apollo; many were found at his shrines and some even depict him. Emulating the statues of Egyptian pharaohs, the figure strides forward on flat feet, arms held stiffly at its side with fists clenched. However, there are some importance differences: kouroi are nude, mostly without identifying attributes and are free-standing.

Early kouroi figures share similarities with Geometric and Orientalizing sculpture, despite
their larger scale. For instance, their hair is styled and patterned, either held back with a headband or under a cap. *The New York Kouros* strikes a rigid stance and his facial features are blank and expressionless. The body is slightly molded and the musculature is reliant on incised lines.
Kouros.
As *kouroi* figures developed, they began to lose their Egyptian rigidity and became increasingly naturalistic. The *kouros* figure of Kroisos, an Athenian youth killed in battle, still depicts a young man with an idealized body. This time though, the body's form shows realistic modelling. The muscles of the legs, abdomen, chest and arms appear to actually exist and seem to function and work together. Kroisos' hair, while still stylized, falls naturally over his neck and onto his back, unlike that of the New York *Kouros*, which falls down stiffly and in a single sheet.
Kroisos

*Kroisos, from the Anavysos Group. Marble. Greece. ca. 530 BCE.*
Archaic Smile

Kroisos’ face also appears more naturalistic when compared to the earlier New York Kouros. His cheeks are round and his chin bulbous; however, his smile seems out of place. This is typical of this period and is known as the *Archaic smile*. It appears to have been added to infuse the sculpture with a sense of being alive and to add a sense of realism.

*Kore*

A *kore* (plural *korai*) sculpture depicts a female youth. Whereas kouroi depict athletic, nude young men, the female *korai* are fully-clothed, in the idealized image of decorous women. However, they too have archaic smiles, with arms either at their sides or with an arm extended, holding an offering. The figures are stiff and retain more block-like characteristics than their male counterparts. Their hair is also stylized, depicted in long strands or braids that cascade down the back or over the shoulder.

The *PeplosKore* depicts a young woman wearing a *peplos*, a heavy wool garment that drapes over the whole body, obscuring most of it. A slight indentation between the legs, a division between her torso and legs and the protrusion of her breasts merely hint at the form of the body underneath. Remnants of paint on her dress tell us that it was painted yellow with details in blue and red that may have included images of animals. The presence of animals on her dress may indicate that she is the image of a goddess, perhaps Artemis, but she may also just be a nameless maiden.
Peplos Kore
Later korai figures also show stylistic development, although the bodies are still overshadowed by their clothing. The example of a 520-510 BCE Kore (), shows a bit more shape in the body such as defined hips instead of a dramatic belted waistline, although the primary focus of the kore is on the clothing and the drapery. This kore figure wears a chiton, a himation (a lightweight undergarment) and a mantle. Her facial features are still generic and blank and she has an Archaic smile. Even with the finer clothes and additional adornments such as jewelry, the figure depicts the idealized Greek female, fully clothed and demure.
Kore

Wearing a chiton and hamation. Marble. Athens, Greece. ca. 520-510 BCE.
Pedimental Sculpture

This sculpture, initially designed to fit into the space of the pediment, underwent dramatic changes during the Archaic period, as will be seen at Aegina. The west pediment at the Temple of Artemis on Corfu depicts not Artemis, but Medusa with her children Pegasus, a winged horse, and Chrysaor, a giant welding a golden sword surrounded by heraldic lions. Medusa faces outwards in a challenging position, believed to be apotropaic. Additional scenes include Zeus fighting a Titan, and the slaying of Priam, the king of Troy, by Neoptolemos. These figures are scaled down in order to fit into the shrinking space provided in the pediment.