

**Q:** What was art to the people of ancient Greece?

**A:** “Art for art’s sake” was likely a foreign concept to the ancient Greeks. Artists were usually considered skilled technical craftsmen. However, we know that artists could attain recognition for their work, since some of their names were recorded in Greek texts. Some would even sign their artworks. Most Greek objects that we consider “art” today because of their beauty (and that we often see isolated in a museum) had a specific symbolic function in their original context that is no longer obvious to us.

Tags: [Ancient Greece](#), [Artists](#)

**Q:** What are some of the characteristics of marble as a sculpting and building material?

**A:** Generally speaking, marble is relatively soft, and therefore allows the sculptor to attain great detail in execution and a smooth finish. Marble is often appreciated as a stone that can render the illusion of many types of textures, depending on how it is treated and finished. Marble also allows light to penetrate its surface, which can contribute to its aesthetic qualities. On the other hand, marble is fairly brittle and cannot span big distances without support, limiting the sculptor’s freedom of composition. Tensile strength, or the ability of a material to span distances without collapsing, is an important factor when evaluating a material’s potential to be used for building. Greeks had to use many vertical supports when constructing a temple in marble.

Tags: [Ancient Greece](#), [Greek Architecture](#), [marble](#), [Sculpture](#)