



Unit II: Focus on the Capitol - Symbolic Importance of the Capitol



Ideas

Introduce a picture or model of the Capitol building.

Activities:

Level 1

Have students draw the Capitol, the White House and other historic structures such as the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial and the Jefferson Memorial.

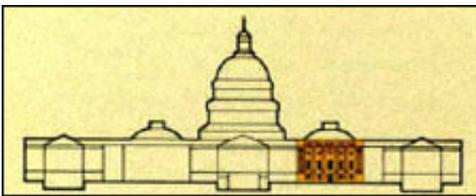
Students should share drawings with each other and ask questions regarding the difference and similarities among the buildings, such as : How is the Capitol different from other buildings? How is it similar? And, what does each building symbolize?

Level 2

Why is the Capitol in Washington, D.C., and not in New York City or Philadelphia?

Who designed the first Capitol? How were the designer and design selected?

Use the schematic drawings/pictures showing the Capitol's development in *We, the People* and below. Have students identify each highlighted section of the building. Finally, compare these sections to a picture of the current Capitol.



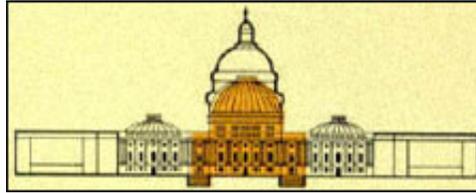
East Front - Box-like Wing of the old Capitol, first to be completed, served Senate, House and Supreme Court.



West Front - The tinted section in the sketch depicts the House wing occupied in 1807.



West Front - Bullfinch's Dome and central addition gave Congress's home this look from 1825 to 1856. City planner L'Enfant called its hill site "a pedestal waiting for a monument."



East Front - Dome and Wings added to the Capitol in the 1850's and 1860's brought the structure to the form so familiar today.

Level 3

Describe architectural differences between your state Capitol and the nation's Capitol. Discuss how various factors (such as geographic location) affect the design and construction of Capitol buildings.

Levels 1, 2, 3

Using what they have learned about the US Capitol and its symbolism, students may design their own version of a Capitol.