

# AP<sup>®</sup> ART HISTORY

## 2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 7

**The plan and the aerial view show the Great Mosque of Djenné in present-day Mali.**

**Identify specific features in the building that are distinctive to mosque architecture. Analyze how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. (10 minutes)**

#### Background

This question asks students to identify the features of a mosque that are distinctive to the practice of Islam. The question assumes a measure of unity and continuity in mosque architecture, implying that certain features necessary to the correct practice of Islam will appear in all mosques, regardless of time, type, or place. The intent of the question is to prompt students to apply their knowledge of mosque architecture to a specific structure that may be less familiar to them.

The mosque was developed in the earliest days of Islam on the Arabian peninsula. One of the pillars of Islam decrees that Muslims pray towards Mecca five times a day, an activity that does not necessarily demand a designated space, but is certainly assisted both by protection from the elements as well as a permanent and reliable indication of the direction of Mecca. Friday noon prayers, as established in the Quran, were to take place in a mosque in company with other Muslims, so that the faithful could benefit from an imam's sermon on moral, political, or social themes. Thus, every Muslim community requires a Friday mosque, and every Muslim is required, when possible, to live within a convenient journey of a community with such a mosque.

In terms of mosque architecture, many scholars believe that the original mosque form was inspired by Muhammad's own house at Medina, probably constructed in 624 C.E. This building incorporated an open courtyard with rooms for the prophet's family at one end, and an area shaded by palm branches supported by palm trunks at the other. Muhammad reportedly rested on a lance while praying and preaching sermons near the wall of the house towards Mecca, now known as the *qibla*. Thus, while the earliest surviving congregational mosques have demonstrated that a variety of different types of spaces have performed the function of a mosque, the most common form of mosque architecture originally imitated the basic shape of Muhammad's house. It was comprised of an open courtyard, a deep portico with columns or pillars holding a roof on the *qibla* side, and further shallower porticoes around the rest of the open space. This form, known as the hypostyle mosque, has inspired much of mosque architecture. The popularity of the hypostyle hall can also be attributed to the ease in which it can be expanded as the community grows in size.

Many features common to most congregational mosques relate to the practices of Islam. The wall in the hypostyle hall that indicates the direction of Mecca is called the *qibla*. A niche known as a *mihrab* is placed in the *qibla* wall to identify it and thus the direction towards which prayers are to be directed. A *mihrab* can be placed anywhere on the *qibla* wall and some mosques have multiple *mihrabs*. The *mihrab* is commonly understood as a memorial of the spot where Muhammad, as the first *imam*, leaned while preaching in his house in Medina. In the 9th century, a minaret was added to most mosques to call the faithful to prayer, a job formerly accomplished from the roof of Muhammad's house. Other features common to most congregational mosques are the provision of a covered prayer hall with a designated *qibla* wall marked by a *mihrab*, an enclosed courtyard, and one or several minarets. It is also important to note that decorations on the exteriors and interiors of mosques are strictly nonrepresentational.

That said, there is diversity in mosque form, just as there is variety in the features of different mosques, often inspired by regional architectural traditions. For this question, students are asked to apply this knowledge of mosque architecture to the Great Mosque of Djenné, an adobe structure at the heart of the

# AP<sup>®</sup> ART HISTORY

## 2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 7 (continued)

old town of Djenné, Mali. The general outlines of the Great Mosque of Djenné accord with typical mosque complexes, particularly because this is still today a functioning mosque with a local congregation. The first mosque on the site was probably built in the 13th century, following the conversion of the local king to Islam. That mosque was destroyed by fire in the early 19th century. It was rebuilt in 1906–1907 C.E. and followed the footprint of the much older mosque, but its outward appearance was probably dictated in part by the desires of the governing French community, who applied a uniform style to West African structures rebuilt in their colonial domains. Significantly, the Great Mosque of Djenné is made of regionally specific materials, such as sun-dried adobe brick. Timber beams called *torons* are used both decoratively and as a type of permanent scaffolding to assist in the annual replastering of the building. The east, or market, side of the mosque is embellished with three towers which are topped by finials of ostrich eggs, a symbol of fertility and purity unique to some West African mosques of the period.

From the plan and the aerial view of Great Mosque of Djenné, students should be able to identify the prayer hall, enclosed courtyard, and *qibla* wall with the *mihabs* typical of hypostyle mosques, even if they have not studied this particular mosque before. They should be able to relate the prayer hall, *qibla* wall, and *mihrab* to the practices of Islam, given the importance of Islamic religious architecture to Muslim prayer.

#### Two Tasks for Students:

1. Identify specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture.
2. Analyze how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam.

#### Points to Remember

This question asks students to combine skills of both formal and contextual analysis to apply what they know about mosque architecture in general to the specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné.

Students must identify practices of Islam in at least a general way. Otherwise, it will be difficult to analyze mosque architecture in a manner relevant to the question.

The question does not ask students to identify regionally specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné, such as the *torons*, ostrich egg finials, or mud-brick architecture. Such information is irrelevant to the question.

Students do not have to discuss both the plan and the aerial view to receive credit.

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## 2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 7 (continued)

#### Scoring Criteria

##### 4 points

**Response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response clearly and correctly identifies specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture. The response clearly and correctly analyzes how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. The response may include minor errors that do not have a meaningful effect on the analysis.

##### 3 points

**Response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response correctly identifies specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture. The response correctly analyzes how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. However, the response may be somewhat unbalanced—with either a stronger discussion of the specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture or a stronger analysis of how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam, although both are represented—and/or may include minor errors that have some effect on the analysis.

##### 2 points

**Response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response correctly identifies the features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture, although the identification may be implied rather than stated directly (describing what is seen rather than connecting to mosque norms). The response attempts to address how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam, but the discussion of that evidence is less analytical than descriptive. It may be overly general, simplistic, or unbalanced. For example, the discussion of the Great Mosque of Djenné may be mostly accurate, whereas the discussion of how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam includes errors that affect the response.

**OR**

The response correctly identifies features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture or correctly analyzes how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam, but not both.

**NOTE:** This is the highest score a response can earn if it does not discuss both features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture and how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam.

##### 1 point

**Response demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the question.**

The response demonstrates some general familiarity with the issues raised by the question by discussing features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture and/or how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. However, the response is weak, overly descriptive, and/or contains significant errors.

##### 0 points

**Response demonstrates no discernible knowledge or understanding of the question.**

The student attempts to respond, but the response makes only incorrect or irrelevant statements about the Great Mosque of Djenné. The score of 0 points includes crossed-out words, personal notes, and drawings.

— This is a blank paper only.

mehrib

7A,

7. The plan and the aerial view show the Great Mosque of Djenné in present-day Mali.

Identify specific features in the building that are distinctive to mosque architecture. Analyze how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. (10 minutes)

Specific features in this building that are distinct to mosque architecture are the hypostyle hall, the pointing of the building's mehrib ~~to~~ in the direction of the Kabah, and the minarets. ~~There~~

Firstly, the hypostyle hall is very distinctive for Islamic architecture because of the fact that the Muslims need a prayer hall large enough to fit a lot of individuals that go to the mosque every Friday for Jummah prayer, or the Friday Prayer. Even daily, Muslims go to their local mosque to pray the 5 daily prayers. Especially in areas where Islam is the accepted religion, muezzins climb the minaret every prayer time to call the azzan, or the call to prayer. The minaret is a very distinctive piece of Islamic architecture. When the Muslims took over the Hagia Sophia, they even put up minarets around it to transform ~~it~~ the church into a mosque. Finally, an important part of a mosque is its directional placement. In order to be functional, a mosque must ~~point~~ be facing the direction of the Kabah, because a Muslim must face the Kabah everytime they pray. On the wall that is facing the Kabah, there is a small indent in the wall where the imam stands to lead prayer called the mehrib, which is included in this mosque in Mali. Although the interior furniture is not there, a minbar is sure to be also against the wall facing the Kabah.

7A<sub>2</sub>

because that is where the imam sits + preaches.

Mosque architecture is probably the most distinct structure in the world. The ~~function~~ family relates to function

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

7. The plan and the aerial view show the Great Mosque of Djenné in present-day Mali.

Identify specific features in the building that are distinctive to mosque architecture. Analyze how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. (10 minutes)

The Great Mosque of Djenné has many features of muslim mosque architecture, which focus on modeling form for the function of prayer.

One feature of the building is the hypostyle hall. This distinction is prevalent in muslim buildings because their style of prayer includes a large congregation of people on the floor or carpets praying towards ~~the~~ <sup>mecca</sup> ~~direction~~ ~~with~~. The hall provides for a vast space to accommodate a large amount of people. ~~the~~ the Qibla wall is an innovation of islam because they stress the importance of praying towards Mecca. The wall faces the direction of their great monument and allows them to clearly carry out religious obligations correctly. Innovations such as the Mihrab provide an area for the Imam to preach, usually raised to allow acoustics to flow.

stress on praying toward Mecca is the essential practice of Islam is the idea formed around mosques. Muslims have an intense tradition so they emphasize practices by conforming praying spaces to their five pillars of Islam, in this case, intense prayer 5 times a day.

7. The plan and the aerial view show the Great Mosque of Djenné in present-day Mali.

Identify specific features in the building that are distinctive to mosque architecture. Analyze how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. (10 minutes)

Mosque architecture is, for the most part, in a rectangular or circular shape; unlike ~~the~~ cathedrals which sometimes like to take the form of a cross. This mosque has a courtyard attached to it, a feature seen in several other mosques as well as pointed towers decorating the building. Since having an iconic image is forbidden in mosques this one is simply decorated with wooden poles. There are several columns inside as well as what looks like is a mihrab (or indent in the side of the building that is faced toward mecca for prayer).

**AP<sup>®</sup> ART HISTORY**  
**2013 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 7**

**Overview**

This 10-minute question dealt with the Great Mosque of Djenné in present-day Mali. Students had to identify specific features in the building that are distinctive to mosque architecture. Students were then asked to analyze how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. The question assumes a measure of unity and continuity in mosque architecture, implying that certain features necessary to the correct practice of Islam will appear in all mosques, regardless of time or location. The intent of this question was to prompt students to apply their knowledge of mosque architecture to a specific structure that may be less familiar to them.

**Sample: 7A**

**Score: 4**

This response clearly and correctly identifies specific features of the Great Mosque of Djenné that are distinctive to mosque architecture. The response clearly and correctly analyzes how mosque architecture relates to the practices of Islam. The hypostyle hall is identified as a prayer hall that is “large enough to fit a lot of individuals that go to the mosque every Friday for Jummuah [*sic*] prayer, or the Friday prayer,” and also states that “[e]ven daily, Muslims go their local mosque to pray the 5 daily prayers.” The response further relates mosque architecture to the practices of Islam by stating, “In order to be functional, a mosque must be facing the direction of the Kabah, because a Muslim must face the Kabah every time they pray.” The response notes that on this wall is a “small indent” called the “mehrib [*sic*],” which is correct, although the architectural element known as a mihrab is misspelled. The response notes that near the mihrab “the imam stands to lead prayer” indicating further knowledge of the practices of Islam. Reference to the inclusion of minarets at the Great Mosque of Djenné is a minor error that does not affect the response because the statement “muezzins climb the minaret every prayer time to call the azzan, or the call to prayer” is evidence of the student’s knowledge of how architecture facilitates the practices of Islam. Although no interior view is provided, the student proposes that the interior wall facing the Kabah might contain a minbar “because that is where the imam sits and preaches.” In this way, the response demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the question.

**Sample: 7B**

**Score: 3**

This response correctly identifies the hypostyle hall of the Great Mosque of Djenné as distinctive to mosque architecture. The response correctly analyzes how the hypostyle hall relates to the practices of Islam: “their style of prayer includes a large congregation of people on the floor or carpets praying towards Mecca.” The response goes on to identify the qibla wall as important because Islam stresses “the importance of praying towards Mecca” and the qibla indicates “the direction of their great monument and allows them to clearly carry out religious obligations correctly.” The response uses the term mihrab, but incorrectly attributes its use as “an area for the Imam to preach, usually raised to allow aucoustics [*sic*] to flow,” perhaps confusing it with a minbar. The response indicates knowledge of the practice of Islam by noting that “their five pillars of Islam” includes “intense prayer 5 times a day.” In this way, the response demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding of the question.

**Sample: 7C**

**Score: 2**

This response correctly identifies the “courtyard” as a feature of the Great Mosque of Djenné that is distinctive to mosque architecture, but the response fails to relate it to the practice of Islam. The response correctly identifies a mihrab as a feature of the Great Mosque of Djenné that is distinctive to mosque



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**2013 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 7 (continued)**

architecture, and relates it to the practice of Islam, “in the side of the building that is faced toward mecca [*sic*] for prayer.” The response notes the abstract decoration on the exterior of the Great Mosque of Djenné and relates it to the practice of Islam, “Since having an iconic image is forbidden in mosques this one is simply decorated with wooden poles.” However, the discussion is general and simplistic. The response contains some discussions that are irrelevant to the question. In this way, the response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the question.