



AP[®] Art History 2001 Sample Student Responses

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4. In what ways do this medieval Florentine church and its plan show the influence of Early Christian architectural forms? In what ways do this church and plan show elements of the later medieval period? (10 minutes)

This Florentine church shows the influence of Early Christian architecture, by its use of a basilica plan. Early Christian churches used the basilica plan of Ancient Rome. They were constructed of a Nave, that led down to the triumphal Arch, which in Roman times was where a statue of the emperor was placed, but in Christian times, as seen in this Florentine church, the triumphal arch has a cross, and ends with the semicircular Apse. This shows elements of the later medieval period, though its addition of a transept, that crosses through the nave, right before the Apse. In later churches, the transept will cross over the Crossing square. The pointed arches of this church also shows signs of the Gothic period. The pointed arches were used to support (in this case,) the wooden ceiling. These supports created bays, which would later become less noticeable forming a rush to the altar. This Florentine church is transitional from the Basilica Plan churches of Early Christian, to the transepted, rush to the Altar

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churches of the later medieval period. This church also has stain glass windows but became very popular at end of medieval period.

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4. In what ways do this medieval Florentine church and its plan show the influence of Early Christian architectural forms? In what ways do this church and plan show elements of the later medieval period? (10 minutes)

Early Christian architecture was based around the church. The basic floor plan of the Early Christian church was the Latin cross. This medieval Florentine church is based on that very same plan. It has a long nave with a transept at one end giving the plan a cross-like appearance. Also this church has a wooden roof which is reminiscent of Old Saint Peter's. This church lacks vaulting in the nave but has a series of arches supported by columns running the length of the nave. The choir is on the east end of the church and the entrance is on the west side, which was one Early Christian idea. The Early Christians moved the entrance from the longer to the shorter sides of the church. The church plan is also divided into a regular series of square and rectangle sections. A series of chapels are included on the east end as well as a bell tower to call the faithful to prayer.