



2B



# ART DECO IN NEW YORK

## MATCHING HEADINGS

1 Look at the first paragraph and, in your head try to summarise in one phrase what the MAIN idea or theme is.

NB. You can spend about 1 minute on each one.

2 Select the heading from that most closely matches your idea.

3 When use use a heading, cross it out. You might want to change your mind later though.



suggested time  
**9 minutes**

# TASK

Read the text on on “Art Deco and Architecture in New York” on the following pages.

Choose the most suitable headings for paragraphs B – G from the list of headings below. (Paragraph A has been done as an example.)

Write appropriate numbers *i – x* in spaces numbered **1 – 6** below.

## REMEMBER

There will be more options than you need, so you won't use all of them.

Also, don't get distracted by details mentioned in the text. It's only the overall idea we need.

- i. **Changing Times, Changing Style**
- ii. **Form and Function**
- iii. **The Origins of Art Deco**
- iv. **From Neglect and Loss to Preservation**
- v. **A Special Place in the City's Heritage**
- vi. **Commercial Appeal**
- vii. **Style and Inspiration**
- viii. **Gone but not forgotten**
- ix. **Proliferation**

**Example** Paragraph A iii

1) Paragraph B \_\_\_\_\_

2) Paragraph C \_\_\_\_\_

3) Paragraph D \_\_\_\_\_

4) Paragraph E \_\_\_\_\_

5) Paragraph F \_\_\_\_\_

6) Paragraph G \_\_\_\_\_

# Art Deco and Architecture in New York

## A

Art Deco was a style of visual arts, architecture and design that first appeared in France just before World War I. Art Deco influenced the design of buildings, furniture, jewelry, fashion, cars, movie theatres, trains, ocean liners, and everyday objects such as radios and vacuum cleaners. It took its name, short for Arts Décoratifs, from the Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes (International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts) held in Paris in 1925. It combined modern styles with fine craftsmanship and rich materials. During its heyday, Art Deco represented luxury, glamour, exuberance, and faith in social and technological progress.

## B

From its outset, Art Deco was influenced by the bold geometric forms of contemporary Cubist art, the bright colors of Fauvism, and the exotic styles of China and Japan, India, ancient Egypt and Maya art. It featured rare and expensive materials, such as ebony and ivory, and exquisite craftsmanship. Many buildings in New York are monuments of the Art Deco style.

## C

Art Deco architecture flourished in New York City during the 1920s and 1930s. The style is found in government edifices, commercial projects, and residential buildings in all five boroughs. The architecture of the period was influenced not just by decorative arts influences from across the world, but also local zoning regulations. With a widespread building boom fueled by *the Roaring Twenties* and speculation, Art Deco buildings in the city ranged in size and sophistication from towering skyscrapers and office buildings to middle-class housing and municipal buildings.

## D

Art Deco in New York became intrinsically linked with property investment and development. Its focus on rich ornamentation and sensory appeal appealed to patrons who wanted an "acceptable" modern style. These developers in turn gave architects a permissive mandate to create in the style, as long as the end result was not too shocking. The buildings rose to the height where the cost of added space equalized with the economic value of that space.

## E

Although first defined by the colourful, lavishly-decorated skyscrapers of Manhattan, the Great Depression and changing tastes pushed Art Deco to more subdued applications in the 1930s. New materials arrived, including chrome plating, stainless steel, and plastic. A sleeker form of the style, called Streamline Moderne, eventually appeared itowards the end of the decade featuring curving forms and smooth, polished surfaces. Art Deco is one of the first truly international styles, but its dominance ended with the beginning of World War II and the rise of the strictly functional and unadorned styles of modern architecture and the International Style of architecture that followed.

## **F**

With the style having fallen out of favour by the late 1940s, the decline in New York City's economic fortunes in the 1960s and 1970s caused the damage and demolition of many Art Deco buildings. The modern historical preservation movement in New York City was sparked by the loss of Old Penn Station, leading to the establishment of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission; an organisation which has successfully given legal protection of many of the city's first Art Deco buildings.

## **G**

Today, New York's Art Deco has been reappraised; among its most treasured and recognizable buildings are the Art Deco Empire State Building and Chrysler Building, and Art Deco skyscrapers which have formed the core of the city's skyline. Groups such as the Art Deco Society of New York produce talks and tours about the city's architecture. New York City Landmarks Commission veteran Anthony W. Robins wrote that decades after the rise and fall of Art Deco, the style "survives and flourishes" in New York, with the once-daring buildings having become historic landmarks of the city.