

FAQs

Explain the need to go against the Industrial revolution.

The industrial revolution created a hard mechanical conventional life and remained insensitive to beauty. The so called industrial progress produced shoddy wares, the cheapness of which is paid for by the lives of their producers and the degradation of their users. It was responsible for the turning of men into machines against artificial distinctions in art, and against making the immediate market value or possibility of profit the chief test of artistic merit.

The Arts and Crafts Movement was established in Britain about 1862 in response to the negative social and aesthetic consequences of the Industrial Revolution.

The philosophy behind the Arts and Crafts movement believed that the industrial revolution had made man less creative as 'his' craft skills had been removed from the manufacturing process. One aim of the movement was to put 'man' back in to the design and manufacturing process, Craft skills and good honest design would again be central to the manufacturing process.

Explain the contributions of William Morris to the field of architecture.

William Morris (1834-96) provided greater inspiration.

- Simultaneously a romantic poet and dreamer,
- A businessman, and
- A political campaigner,
- He had an impressively forceful, practical character.
- He had great manual skill, he himself could design and execute work of outstanding beauty in wallpapers, in printed, woven and embroidered textiles, and in book production, he offered a living example to others of what they might achieve.

He founded a firm to retail furnishings produced in his own workshops, where craftsmen were given free rein.

The firm's products, however, while intended to brighten the lives of ordinary people, were too expensive to sell to any but the rich

Morris had set out to train as an architect, in the office of the eminent Gothic Revivalist, G. E. Street. Also working for Street was Philip Webb.

Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. profoundly influenced the decoration of churches and houses into the early 20th century. He was also a major contributor to reviving traditional textile arts and methods of production, and one of the founders of the SPAB, now a statutory element in the preservation of historic buildings in the UK.

Explain the Red House designed by Philip Webb with relevant sketches.

Morris envisioned Red House as being not only a family home, but also a background to his ongoing artistic work.

Red House was fashioned to an L-shaped plan, with two stories and a high-pitched roof made of red tile.

- The large-hall, dining room, library, morning-room, and kitchen were located on the ground floor, while on the first floor were the main living-rooms, the drawing-room, the studio, and the bedrooms.

- The servants' quarters were larger than in most contemporary buildings, reflecting the ideas regarding working class conditions which lead Morris and Webb to become socialists in later life.

Windows were positioned to suit the design of the rooms rather than to fit an external symmetry; thus a variety of different window types are present, including

- tall casements,
- hipped dormers,
- round-headed sash-windows, and
- bull's eye windows.

- The architecture of Red House was inspired by styles of British design from the thirteenth-century, and Morris described the building as being "very mediaeval in spirit".



What were the key principles of Art and Crafts Movement?

Truth to materials

Preserving and emphasising the natural qualities of the materials used to make objects was one of the most important principles of Arts and Crafts style.

Simple forms

Simple forms were one of the hallmarks of the Arts and Crafts style. There was no extravagant or superfluous decoration and the actual construction of the object was often exposed.

Natural motifs

Nature was an important source of Arts and Crafts motifs. The patterns used were inspired by the flora and fauna of the British countryside.

The vernacular

The vernacular, or domestic, traditions of the British countryside provided the main inspiration for the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Many of those involved set up workshops in rural areas and revived old techniques.