

Visual Analysis:

Analyzing How Science, Technology and Culture Influenced Gaudí's Architecture

Project Task

Create a visual analysis learning tool showing how Antoni Gaudí transformed cultural influences, natural forms, materials, color and light across three Barcelona buildings: Casa Vicens, Casa Batlló and the Sagrada Família.

Use the reading, the three provided images below and additional research to trace how Gaudí moved from recognizable architectural influences toward a style increasingly his own.

Guiding Questions:

- What visual evidence shows that Gaudí drew from different architectural and cultural traditions?¹



- How did Gaudí adapt ideas about geometry, materials, color and light for different purposes?²



- What changes across Casa Vicens, Casa Batlló and the Sagrada Família reveal Gaudí's development from influence to innovation?³





The Patio of Lights at Casa Batlló



The interior of the Basilica de la Sagrada Família



The rooftop turret of Casa Vicens

1. Observe and Analyze

Study the three provided images above before conducting additional research.

For each building, record:

Building	What You Observe	Cultural or Architectural Influence	How Gaudí Adapted It
Casa Vicens			
Casa Batlló			
Sagrada Família			

Use the images and the reading, identify which approaches you see in each artist's work. More than one may apply.⁴

Look closely for the following: geometric forms and patterns; tilework and ornament; use of courtyards and interior space; color and materials; natural forms; manipulation of light; relationships between decoration and function.

2. Read and Research

Return to the reading and find evidence explain the features you observed.

Then research each building to determine:

Casa Vicens

- Which features reflect Islamic and *Mudéjar* architectural influences?
- How do tilework, geometry and ornament shape the building's appearance?
- Which influences remain visibly recognizable?

Casa Batlló

- How does the Patio of Lights use color, tiles, windows and a central courtyard to control natural light?
- How does this building differ visually from Casa Vicens?
- What does that difference suggest about how Gaudí's use of architectural influence was changing?

Sagrada Família

- How do branching columns, geometry and stained glass shape the experience of the interior?
- How does Gaudí use light and nature to create meaning?
- Compared with Casa Vicens, how have Gaudí's earlier influences become part of a more distinctive architectural language?

3. Create Your Visual Analysis

Create a poster, brochure, website or digital presentation comparing the three buildings.

For each building, include:

- Building name;
- Location on a map of Barcelona;
- One image of the complete building;
- One detail image showing an architectural feature;
- A short analysis explaining:
 - What students should notice;
 - What influence the feature;
 - How Gaudí adapted or transformed that influence;
 - What effect the feature has on the building or the people experiencing it.

Show the Progression

Your presentation should make this development visible:

Recognizable Influence → Adaptation → Transformation

Use arrows, a timeline or another graphic device to show how Gaudí's architectural language changed from **Casa Vicens** → **Casa Batlló** → **Sagrada Família**.

4. Create an Interactive Experience

Include at least one feature that helps your audience investigate the architecture rather than simply view it.

Examples include:

- Interactive image overlays identifying architectural features;
- Audio commentary explaining a design choice;
- Virtual or 360-degree tour;
- Before-and-after or side-by-side visual comparison;
- Matching activity connecting features with architectural influences;
- Moveable transparency showing how light or color changes within a space.

Reflection

After completing your visual analysis, write one paragraph responding to the following:

What do the three buildings reveal about the relationship between cultural influence and originality in Gaudí's architecture? Use at least two visual or textual examples to explain how he transformed influences into a style of his own.⁵



Common Core Standard(s) Met:

CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and in words.

CCRA.W.6 Use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

1 Students may identify the geometric ornament, colorful ceramic tilework and architectural forms of Casa Vicens as evidence of Gaudí's engagement with Islamic and *Mudéjar* architecture. They may also identify the courtyard and glazed tiles of Casa Batlló and the use of light, geometry and decorative lettering at the Sagrada Família.

2 Students should recognize that Gaudí did not simply reproduce architectural forms. He adapted their underlying principles. At Casa Batlló, for example, graduated blue tiles and changing window sizes help distribute light throughout the courtyard. At the Sagrada Família, structure, stained glass and natural light create both functional and spiritual effects.

3 Possible responses should identify a progression. Casa Vicens contains more readily recognizable references to Islamic and Mudéjar architecture. At Casa Batlló, Gaudí increasingly adapts principles involving courtyards, tiles, color and light. At the Sagrada Família, these influences become integrated with nature, geometry, structure and Christian symbolism into an architectural language distinctly his own.

4 Possible answers:

Casa Vicens

- What You Observe: Geometric patterns, colorful ceramic tiles, exposed brick, straight lines and an ornate rooftop turret.
- Cultural or Architectural Influence: Islamic and Mudéjar architecture, including geometric ornament, tilework and forms associated with Islamic design.
- How Gaudí Adapted It: In his early work, Gaudí incorporated recognizable forms and decorative techniques from these traditions while combining them with other influences in the building's design.

Casa Batlló

- What You Observe: Central courtyard, glazed blue tiles that shift from darker to lighter shades, changing window sizes and abundant natural light.

- Cultural or Architectural Influence: Andalusí and Islamic architectural principles involving interior courtyards, glazed tiles and the control of natural light.
- How Gaudí Adapted It: Gaudí adapted these principles to distribute light more evenly through the building. The influence appears less through copied forms and more through how the architecture functions.

Sagrada Família

- What You Observe: What to Look For: Branching columns, complex geometry, stained glass and changing patterns of natural light.
- Cultural or Architectural Influence: Multiple influences come together, including nature, Gothic architecture and ideas about geometry, light and spirituality that Gaudí encountered in Islamic architecture.
- How Gaudí Adapted It: Gaudí integrated these influences into a distinctive architectural language. Structure, nature, geometry and light work together to shape both the building and the visitor's experience.

Teacher Emphasis: Guide students toward the progression recognizable influence → adaptation → transformation. Casa Vicens displays more readily identifiable Islamic and Mudéjar forms. Casa Batlló shows Gaudí adapting architectural principles, particularly those involving space, color and light. By the Sagrada Família, multiple influences have become integrated into a distinct architectural language.

5 Responses will vary but should:

- Make a clear claim about the relationship between cultural influence and originality;
- Compare at least two of the buildings;
- Use specific visual or textual evidence;
- Explain how Gaudí transformed rather than simply copied influences.

A strong response should recognize that originality does not necessarily mean creating without outside influence. Gaudí's work demonstrates how an architect can study ideas from different traditions, adapt them for new purposes and combine them with other influences to create a distinctive architectural language.

Teacher Emphasis:

The key takeaway is the progression:

Influence → Adaptation → Transformation

Students should leave the activity understanding that Gaudí's originality emerged partly through his engagement with other architectural traditions, not in isolation from them.