

## 8th Grade Literature - Text

### When We Build, Let Us Think That We Build Forever

When we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held as sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, "See! This our fathers did for us."

For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stone, nor in its gold. Its glory is in its age, in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, yes, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel on walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity.

- John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*

#### Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think the author is trying to express with his use of the word "sacred" in this text? What is it that would be considered "sacred"? Why, would you say?
2. What might be meant by "voicefulness" in a building?
3. How do you think these considerations might address a kind of "building" that isn't simply physical construction? Explain.