The Parthenon was a large temple to Athena on the Acropolis in Athens. It was built between 447 and 438 BC, at the height of Athens’ power.

An altar was located in front of the temple. The cella was the inner chamber. Parthenon Sculptures

The sculptures in the East pediment showed the birth of Athena from the head of Zeus. The West pediment’s sculpture depicted the contest between Athena and Poseidon for the honor of becoming the patron of Athens.

Along all four sides, ninety-two metopes, carved in high relief, illustrated several different mythical battles.

Around the outside walls of the cella ran a frieze of sculpture. It showed the procession of the Panathenaea, the great festival of Athena.

Inside the Parthenon stood a gold and ivory statue of Athena, which was forty feet tall. She held a shield and spear in one hand and Nike, the goddess of victory, in the other.

At Right: A to-scale reconstruction of the Parthenon, located in Nashville, Tennessee.
Greek Pottery

Orientalizing Period
C. 700-550 BC

Geometric Period
C. 1000-700 BC

Classical Period
C. 550-300 BC

Hellenistic Period
C. 300-100 BC
Grecian Sculpture

Archaic Period
C. 800-480 BC

Classical Period
C. 480-330 BC

Hellenistic Period
C. 330-100 BC