

CONCRETE, STEEL, AND STONE: THE STRUCTURE and MATERIALS OF FALLINGWATER

Fallingwater remains famous largely because of its structure. Wright's use of the then unusual cantilever construction allowed him to place the house so memorably above a waterfall. Without cantilever construction, Fallingwater simply wouldn't exist! While cantilever construction and reinforced concrete buildings have become rather common since the 1930s, at its time, Fallingwater was a revolutionary structure.

Possibly the most important lesson in this unit is helping students understand the difference between conventional construction (post and beam) and cantilevering. This concept is key to understanding how Frank Lloyd Wright was able to change the look of American houses, especially on the inside.

The background information in this guide will explain in detail how the building works and why this is so notable.

BEST RESOURCES:

www.fallingwater.org

- *The Plan to Save Fallingwater* in Scientific American, September 2000
- *Saving Fallingwater* video
- *Why Buildings Stand Up* by Mario Salvadori
- *The Art of Construction* by Mario Salvadori

The books and video are available for purchase through the Fallingwater Museum Store.

