

Renaissance Connections

MAIN IDEA

The rebirth of art, literature, and ideas during the Renaissance changed European society.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Many accomplishments of the Renaissance are high points of Western culture and continue to inspire artists, writers, and thinkers of today.

TERMS & NAMES

Crusades

Renaissance

Florence

Leonardo da Vinci

William Shakespeare

Reformation

Martin Luther

Protestant

DATELINE

EXTRA

PARIS, FRANCE, 1269

Paris is buzzing with activity as thousands of European soldiers assemble here. This is the starting-off point for the eighth Crusade, which has nearly a thousand miles to travel. King Louis IX of France, who is in command, is confident that his armies can restore European power over the Holy Land.

Since the Crusades began in 1096, the Christians have



fought against the Muslims and founded four states in the eastern Mediterranean. European power has weakened since then. However, King Louis's army looks ready to recapture the lost territory for Christianity.

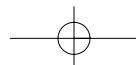
Movement • Crusaders will make their way toward the Holy Land. ▲

Europeans Encounter New Cultures

BACKGROUND

The Holy Land of the eastern Mediterranean is important to Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

The **Crusades**—a series of military expeditions in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries by Western European Christians to reclaim control of the Holy Lands from the Muslims—had a great influence on life in Western Europe. The long distances traveled by the Crusaders opened up trade routes, connecting Western Europeans with people of southwestern Asia and North Africa. This increased contact also helped Europeans rediscover the ideas and achievements of the ancient Greeks and Romans.



Italian City-States, c. 1350



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- Location** • Which city-state does not have access to water?
- Location** • Which city-state was in the best position to trade by land and sea with Asia?

Over time, this interest in the ancient world sparked a new era of creativity and learning in Western Europe. This cultural era, which lasted from the 14th to the 16th century, is called the Renaissance.

BACKGROUND

After Rome fell, many achievements of ancient times were lost. Many books and manuscripts, however, were preserved by Muslim and Christian scholars.

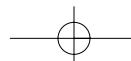
The Rebirth of Europe

The Renaissance began on the Italian Peninsula in the mid-14th century. During this time, many artists, architects, writers, and scholars created works of great importance. These included beautiful paintings, large sculptures, impressive buildings, and thought-provoking literature. As new ideas and achievements spread across the continent of Europe, they changed the way people viewed themselves and the world.

The Italian City-States In the 14th century, the Italian Peninsula was divided into many independent city-states. Some of these city-states, such as **Florence**, were bustling centers of banking, trade, and manufacturing.

Region •
Florence, once a wealthy city-state, remains an important economic and cultural center. The Duomo, shown here, is a symbol of the city's Renaissance past. ▼





Region • The wealthy merchants in Italy built large palaces, called palazzos, such as Florence's Palazzo Medici shown here. ►



The wealthy businesspeople who lived in these city-states were members of a new class of aristocrats. Unlike the nobles of the feudal system, these aristocrats lived in cities, and their wealth came from money and goods rather than from the lands they owned.

A Changing View of the World Religion was important to people's daily life during the Renaissance, but many wealthy Europeans began to turn increased attention to the material comforts of life.

New wealth allowed aristocratic families to build large homes for themselves in the city centers, decorating them with luxurious objects. They ate expensive food and dressed in fine clothes and jewels, often acquired as a result of the expanded trade routes. Aristocrats also placed increased emphasis on education and the arts.

Learning and the Arts Flourish

Wealthy citizens were proud of their city-states and often became generous patrons. A patron gave artists and scholars money and, sometimes, a place to live and work. They hired architects and designers to improve local churches, to design grand new buildings, and to create public sculptures and fountains. As one Italian city-state made additions and improvements, others competed to outdo it.

BACKGROUND

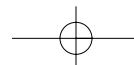
Some Renaissance architects, such as Filippo Brunelleschi (broo•nuh•LEHS•kee), studied the ruins of Roman buildings and modeled their new buildings after ancient designs.

Biography

The Medici Family Among the most famous patrons of the Renaissance were the Medici (MEHD•uh•chee). They were a wealthy family of bankers and merchants. In fact, they were the most powerful leaders of Florence from the early 1400s until the 18th century.

Along with Lorenzo, pictured below, the Medici family included famous princes and dukes, two queens, and four popes. Throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, the Medici supported many artists, including Botticelli, Michelangelo, and Raphael. Today, Florence is still filled with important works of art made possible by the Medici.



**Culture •**

Leonardo da Vinci completed the painting *La Belle Ferronniere* in 1495. ▲

As part of the competition to improve the appearance and status of their individual city-states, patrons wanted to attract the brightest and best-known scholars and poets of the time. Patrons believed that the contributions of these individuals would, in turn, add to the greatness of their city-states and attract more wealth.

The Visual Arts: New Subjects and Methods Most medieval art was based on religious subjects. Painters and sculptors of the early Renaissance created religious art too, but they also began to depict other subjects. Some made portraits for wealthy patrons. Others created works showing historical scenes or mythological stories.

Leonardo da Vinci One of the most famous artists and scientists of the Renaissance was **Leonardo da Vinci** (lee•uh•NAHR•doh duh VIN•chee) (1452–1519). Among his best-known paintings are the *Mona Lisa*, a portrait of a young woman with a mysterious smile, and *The Last Supper*. Da Vinci was more than just a talented painter, however.

Reading Social Studies
A. Contrasting

How did the subject matter of Renaissance art differ from medieval art?

Connections to Math

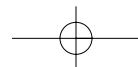
Perspective During the Renaissance, artists began to use a technique called linear perspective. Linear perspective is a system of using lines to create the illusion of depth and distance. In the drawing below, notice how the perspective lines move toward a single point in the distance, giving the picture depth.



Throughout his life, da Vinci observed the world around him. He studied the flow of water, the flight of birds, and the workings of the human body. Da Vinci, who became a skilled engineer, scientist, and inventor, filled notebooks with thousands of sketches of his discoveries and inventions. He even drew ideas for flying machines, parachutes, and submarines—hundreds of years before they were built.

The Northern Renaissance

As the new Renaissance ideas about religion and art spread to Northern Europe, they inspired artists and writers working there. The Dutch scholar and philosopher Desiderius Erasmus (ih•RAZ•muhs) (1466–1536), for example, criticized the church for its wealth and poked fun at its officials. During the late 16th and early 17th centuries, another writer—the Englishman **William Shakespeare**—wrote a series of popular stage plays. Many of his works, including *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*, are still read and performed around the world.



The Reformation

BACKGROUND

In 1516, the English writer Thomas More published a famous book called *Utopia*. It describes the author's idea of a perfect society. Today, the word "utopia" is used to describe any ideal place.

Roman Catholicism was still the most powerful religion in Western Europe. Some of the views of the northern Renaissance writers and scholars, however, were in conflict with the Roman Catholic Church. These new ideas would eventually lead to the **Reformation**, a 16th-century movement to change church practices.

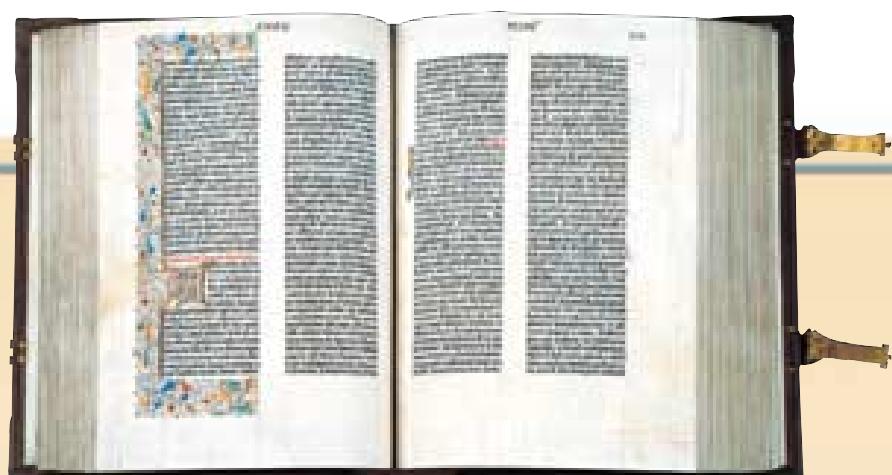
Martin Luther The German monk **Martin Luther** (1483–1546) was one of the most important critics of the church. The wealth and corruption of many church officials disturbed him. Luther also spoke out against the church's policy of selling indulgences—the practice of forgiving sins in exchange for money.

In 1517, Luther wrote 95 theses, or statements of belief, attacking the sale of indulgences and other church practices. Copies were printed and handed out throughout Western Europe. After this, Luther was excommunicated, or cast out and no longer recognized as a member of a church, and went into hiding. While in hiding, he translated the Bible from Latin into German so that all literate, German-speaking people could read it. Under Luther's leadership, many Europeans began to challenge the practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

Spotlight on CULTURE

The Printing Press Until the Renaissance, each copy of a book had to be written by hand—usually by monks or nuns. A Renaissance invention, however, changed that forever. Around 1450, a German printer named Johannes Gutenberg (Yoh•HAN•es GOOT•en•burg) began to use a method of printing with movable type. This meant that multiple copies of books, such as this Bible, could be printed quickly and less expensively.

Although many Renaissance books dealt with religious subjects, printers also published plays, poetry, works of philosophy and science, and tales of travel and adventure. As greater numbers of books were published, more and more Europeans learned to read.



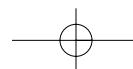
THINKING CRITICALLY

1. Recognizing Effects

What were three effects of the invention of Gutenberg's printing press?

2. Synthesizing

Before the printing press, who produced the books?



Reading Social Studies

B. Clarifying How did Protestants get their name?

A Conflict over Religious Beliefs

Luther's followers were called **Protestants** because they protested events at an assembly that ended the church's tolerance of their beliefs. Many people in Western Europe still supported the church, however. This conflict led to religious wars that ended in 1555. At that time, the Peace of Augsburg declared that German rulers could decide the official religion of their own state.

The Spread of Protestant Ideas By 1600, Protestantism had spread to England and the Scandinavian Peninsula. Protestants pushed to expand education for more Europeans. They did this because being able to read meant being able to study the Bible. They also encouraged translation of the Bible into the native language of each country.

The Counter Reformation The Roman Catholic Church responded to Protestantism by launching its own movement in the mid-16th century. As part of this movement, called the Counter Reformation, the church stopped selling indulgences. It also created a new religious order called the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits. Jesuit missionaries and scholars worked to spread Catholic ideas across Europe, to Asia, and to the lands of the "new world" across the Atlantic Ocean.



Region •
Martin Luther's writings and actions changed Christianity forever. ▲

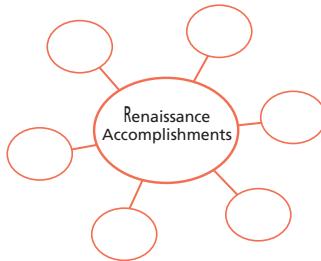
SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

Terms & Names

- 1. Identify:** (a) Crusades (b) Renaissance (c) Florence (d) Leonardo da Vinci
(e) William Shakespeare (f) Reformation (g) Martin Luther (h) Protestant

Taking Notes

2. Use a spider map like this one to chart the characteristics and accomplishments of the Renaissance.



Main Ideas

- 3. (a)** Where and when did the Renaissance begin?
(b) In what ways were the wealthy Europeans of the Renaissance different from the wealthy Europeans of feudal times?
(c) What was the Counter Reformation?

Critical Thinking

- 4. Hypothesizing**
Why do you think Protestantism spread so quickly in Northern Europe?

Think About

- ◆ new methods of printing
- ◆ the ideas of the northern Renaissance
- ◆ the work of Martin Luther

ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Write a **letter** to an imagined patron asking for support to create a project—such as a public sculpture, park, fountain, or building—to beautify your community.