

- The Renaissance was a time of renewed interest in the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome. Students can conduct a research project on either one of the two great ancient empires, focusing on societies, government, art, literature and architecture. Students can also compare these two empires on a Venn diagram. Useful resources:  
www.internet-at-work.com/hos\_mcgrane/rome/eg\_rome\_menu1.html  
carlos.emory.edu/ODYSEY/GREECE/homepg.html
- Henry VII's ascension to the throne in England marked the end of the War of the Roses. Students can research the war between the Houses of York and Lancaster to discover major battles, important people and outcomes. Useful resource:  
www.geocities.com/Area51/Cavern/5123/roses.html
- Conduct a class research project on the Protestant movement. Each small group can research a particular division of the Protestant religion, or religious leader, that arose as a consequence of the Reformation. To present the information they have researched, groups can act as newspaper reporters and write articles that detail the "who, what, when, where, why and how" of these people or movements. Useful resource:  
www.josts.net/tec912/projects/lbenslay/
- During the Renaissance, wealthy patrons decorated their homes with paintings and sculptures. Have students pretend that they are wealthy patrons of that time. Students should select several Renaissance works of art to decorate their homes and explain their selections. Useful resource:  
www.oir.ucf.edu/wm/paint/glo/renaissance/it.html

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [orb.rhodes.edu/encyclo/culture/books/medbook2.html](http://orb.rhodes.edu/encyclo/culture/books/medbook2.html)  
This site has good information about Renaissance printing with illustrations of printing presses and details about how printed material was created.
- [womenshistory.about.com/library/bio/blbio\\_isabella\\_i\\_spain.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/library/bio/blbio_isabella_i_spain.htm)  
This site provides biographical details regarding both Ferdinand and Isabella.
- [www.providence.edu/dwc/renhist.htm](http://www.providence.edu/dwc/renhist.htm)  
This excellent resource is a "who's who" and "what's what" of the Renaissance.
- [englishhistory.net/tudor/faq.html](http://englishhistory.net/tudor/faq.html)  
A wonderful and entertaining site all about the Tudors, the royal family that was in power in England during the Renaissance

### Suggested Print Resources

- Barter, James E. *Renaissance Florence*. Gale Group, Farmington, MI; 2002.
- Greenglatt, Miriam. *Lorenzo de Medici and Renaissance Italy*. Benchmark Investigative Group, New York, NY; 2002.
- Schomp, Virginia. *Italian Renaissance*. Benchmark Investigative Group, New York, NY; 2002.

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#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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#### COMPLETE LIST OF TITLES

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- A HISTORY OF THE RENAISSANCE
- EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE RENAISSANCE
- RENAISSANCE ART, MUSIC & LITERATURE
- RENAISSANCE SCIENCE & INVENTION
- RENAISSANCE TRAVEL, TRADE & EXPLORATION

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## A HISTORY OF THE RENAISSANCE

Grades 5–9

The Renaissance was a unique, distinctive time in European history. It was a time when people looked back to ancient Greek and Roman civilizations for inspiration, and in doing so ignited revolutions in science, technology, religion, medicine, politics, exploration and the arts. By looking at what was old, Renaissance scientists, artists, explorers and philosophers created something new. This synthesis of old and new, and the exchange and influence of ideas across disciplines is what made the Renaissance a time of great creative endeavors. In *The Renaissance for Students*, viewers will be introduced to some of the people who had the greatest impact on their time: Queen Isabella, Leonardo, Galileo, Shakespeare, Columbus and Luther. Students will also learn about the period's many astounding works of art, the impact of new inventions, like the printing press, on the spread of humanism far and wide, and the improvements in existing tools, like the telescope, which forever changed the way we perceive our world.



## Program Summary

Martin Luther, Francesco Petrarca, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, Henry VII, Pope Leo X, Louis XI, the Medici family and Johannes Gutenberg were some of the movers and shakers of the Renaissance; people who, each in his or her own way, contributed to an era that changed the European landscape forever, and impacted the modern world. During the Renaissance, increased trade (due in part to improved shipbuilding and navigational techniques) created powerful and wealthy families. This in turn made patronage of the arts possible. The patronage of powerful families like the Medicis of Florence fueled an astounding artistic output of painting, sculpture, music, literature and architecture. In addition, a political metamorphosis was underway. Oftentimes, using strategies such as sheer ruthlessness, advantageous marriage and financial savvy, Henry VII of England, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, and Louis XI of France turned their disparate, and often warring countries and states into powerful kingdoms. Add to this the invention of the printing press, which spread Luther's debate and ideas of humanism far and wide to a more educated and literate populace, and the key factors which contributed to the Renaissance were in place.

## Vocabulary

**Renaissance** — A period in European history extending roughly from the 1300s to the 1600s. The word "Renaissance" is derived from the French word for rebirth, as the period was characterized by a rebirth of interest in the ancient world. This period is marked by great scientific and artistic achievements, especially in Italy.

**merchant** — A person who buys and sells products for a profit.

**humanism** — An intellectual movement begun in Italy in the 1300s which was characterized by renewed interest in ancient Greek and Roman literature, history and art.

**printing press** — Developed by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-1400s, the printing press used movable metal type and revolutionized publishing during the Renaissance.

**unification** — The joining together of territories under one central government.

**Reformation** — A movement that challenged precepts of the Christian Church, causing one unified church to split into many different churches.

**indulgences** — Certificates issued by the pope, and sold by the Church, that were supposed to shorten the time one spent in Purgatory, a place believed by many Christians to be between heaven and hell, where dead souls were sent to remove or purge their sins.

**Protestantism** — A reform movement which began in protest of Church laws and practices, and resulted in the development of new Christian churches.

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**patron** — A wealthy person or organization who hires artists to paint, build and decorate.

**antiquity** — Ideas, relics and buildings from ancient times.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Discuss with your students why they think it is important to study the history of a particular time period. Four hundred years from now, what people and events from the current era do students think will be studied, admired and remembered?
- In Europe during the Renaissance, more people became literate than ever before. Have students consider the impact of an educated populace. If you were a political leader, would you rather govern people who could read and write, or people who could not? Why?
- During the Renaissance, many protest movements sprang up in response to problems in the Church. Have students think about modern day protests. What forms can protests take? What are some of the positive and negative outcomes of protests?
- During the Renaissance, monarchs consolidated their kingdoms and consequently became more powerful. Have students consider what some rulers of the modern age have done to maintain and increase their power.

## Focus Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word "Renaissance"? Why is this an appropriate name for what occurred in Europe between the 1300s and 1600s?
2. What did Henry VII, Louis XI, and Ferdinand and Isabella manage to do during their reigns that caused their respective kingdoms to become wealthier and more powerful?
3. What is humanism?
4. Why was Francesco Petrarca so important to the Renaissance?
5. What was the connection between increased trade in the Mediterranean and artistic output during the Renaissance?
6. What impact did the printing press have on the Renaissance?
7. What were some of the methods that the monarchs of the Renaissance used to consolidate their power?
8. What is an indulgence?
9. Why did Martin Luther object to the sale of indulgences?
10. What were some of the factors that contributed to the erosion of the Church's authority during the Renaissance?
11. What is the link between the Reformation and Protestantism?

## Follow-up Discussion

- During the Renaissance, Petrarca, along with many others, looked to the great contributions of ancient Greece and Rome for inspiration, instruction and knowledge. As students look at the history of the Renaissance, have them discuss what contributions of this particular era they find most inspiring.
- During the Renaissance, families like the Medicis became patrons of the arts to display their great wealth. Discuss with your students what very wealthy people do today to showcase their affluence.
- In the 16th century, Martin Luther challenged the authority of the Church by raising tough questions about the sale of indulgences. Have students discuss Luther's challenge and the broader aspects of questioning authority. Are there any commonalities between Luther's protests and other movements throughout history, like the Civil Rights Movement?
- France, Spain and England became unified, powerful countries during the Renaissance due to the efforts and actions of their monarchs. Have students speculate about the personalities of these monarchs based on the nature of their actions. What might they have had in common?

## Follow-up Activities

- During the Renaissance, the Church sold indulgences to raise money to support itself. Divide your students into small groups. Provide each with several magazines so that students can analyze print advertisements. After students have become familiar with the nature of print advertising, have them design and create an advertisement for indulgences. Each group can share its ad with the class.
- Students can create a time line that describes and indicates important events that occurred during the Renaissance. Possible entries for inclusion are the unification of countries, invention of the printing press, and births and deaths of pivotal people. Useful resource: [www.ptloma.edu/music/MUH/renaissance/RenTimeline.htm](http://www.ptloma.edu/music/MUH/renaissance/RenTimeline.htm)
- Share with students some maps of Europe during the Renaissance, and compare them to modern day maps of the same areas discussing similarities and differences. Students can also compare maps of different times during the Renaissance and discuss what can be learned about changes in boundaries during Renaissance times. Useful resource: [www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/shepherd/europe\\_1360.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/shepherd/europe_1360.jpg)
- Divide your class into small groups to research an important figure from the Renaissance. Students should select one person from each group to "play" this important person on a Renaissance talk show, which can be hosted either by the teacher or by another student. Guests on the show should be prepared to answer questions about major accomplishments and/or obstacles, how they achieved their goals, family life and other interests.

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