

- Have students visit the “Leonardo — Left to Right” page at [www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/LeonardoRightToLeft.html](http://www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/LeonardoRightToLeft.html) to learn about Leonardo’s special shorthand. Then have students perform the “Leonardo Right to Left” activity. In this activity, students will write in reverse and create a hypothesis about why Leonardo did this.
- Perspective was an important innovation in Renaissance painting. To demonstrate how the technique is achieved, divide your class into small groups and have them perform the “How Far? How Small?” activity located at [www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/HowFarHowSmallAct.html](http://www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/HowFarHowSmallAct.html)
- Have students watch a filmed version of one of Shakespeare’s plays. There are many available including *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Henry V*. After students have watched the play, they can either write about or reenact their favorite parts of the play.
- Have students create an imaginary museum. Each student should select a subject for a sculpture, a portrait or a scene from everyday life. After students have made their selections, they should write descriptive paragraphs telling why they have selected their subjects. Display students’ writing to create an imaginary museum.
- Divide your students into small groups. Instruct each group to select an artist from the Renaissance and create ten interview questions to ask this person. Then have students write up a mock interview.

### Suggested Internet Resources

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

- [www.rdg.ac.uk/globe/](http://www.rdg.ac.uk/globe/)  
Shakespeare’s Globe Research Database has extensive information about Shakespeare and the Globe theater.
- [www.csupomona.edu/~jcclark/emusic/renaissa.html](http://www.csupomona.edu/~jcclark/emusic/renaissa.html)  
On this Web site students can listen to music of the Renaissance.
- [www.cps.ednet.ns.ca/pageone.htm](http://www.cps.ednet.ns.ca/pageone.htm)  
A charming Web site filled with student-friendly information about The Bard.
- [www.michelangelo.com/buon/bio-splash.html](http://www.michelangelo.com/buon/bio-splash.html)  
A wonderful Web site that provides information about the life and works of the great Italian artist, and many opportunities to view his work.
- [www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/renaiss.htm](http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/renaiss.htm)  
A site with many Renaissance and Leonardo links.

### Suggested Print Resources

- Cooper, Susan and John Clapp. *King of Shadows*. Aladdin Paperbacks, New York, NY; 2001. A fictional tale about a young boy who is transported back to Renaissance England.
- Dommermuth-Costa, Carol. *William Shakespeare*. Lerner Publishing Group, Minneapolis, MN; 2001.
- Greenhill, Wendy and Paul Wignall. *Shakespeare: Man of Theater*. Heinemann Library, Melbourne, Australia; 2000.
- Schomp, Virginia. *Italian Renaissance*. Benchmark Investigative Group, New York, NY; 2002.
- Stanley, Diane. *Michelangelo*. HarperCollins Children’s Books, New York, NY; 2000.

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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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## RENAISSANCE ART, MUSIC & LITERATURE

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

There are few periods in history that can boast the creative endeavors and artistic output of the Renaissance, for it was during this particular period of European history that Shakespeare wrote his plays, the musical forms of opera and madrigal came into being, Michelangelo sculpted David and Leonardo painted the Mona Lisa. Renaissance art, music and literature are both unique and distinctive, a consequence of a fortunate blending of ideas, science, patronage and ability. Humanism impacted the arts as it encouraged artists and writers to see humanity as it really was, and to render it as such. It was during the Renaissance that the depiction of people, both in sculpture and painting, became much more realistic. The development of perspective, allowing painters to create three-dimensional images on a two-dimensional surface, further enhanced this realism. New anatomical knowledge learned from the dissection of cadavers helped artists to understand the subtle workings of muscle, bone and tissue, which influenced the artistry of the sculptor. Writers began to pen tales about the state and nature of man as they saw them, not as they thought they should be. Shakespeare's rousing plays about love, war, political intrigue, and the base and noble instincts of man became hits at the Globe Theatre, one of the first permanent theaters in London. Machiavelli's depiction of man — warts and all — in his book *The Prince* caused such a major controversy that he was referred to as "Old Nick" — the devil! The Renaissance has given the world some of its most enduring words and images. Five hundred years hence and the world still marvels at the magnificence of the *Mona Lisa* and the mighty words of William Shakespeare.

## 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 was also marked by great scientific and artistic achievements, especially in Italy.

**patron** — A wealthy person or organization who hired artists to paint, build and decorate. Patrons hired artists to showcase their wealth and power.

**perspective** — A technique used by artists to represent three dimensions on a two-dimensional surface.

**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.

**Mona Lisa** — A painting by Leonardo, completed between 1503 and 1506.

**The Last Supper** — A painting by Leonardo, completed in 1498.

**sculptor** — An artist who uses wood, marble or other hard materials to render a three-dimensional form.

**David** — A sculpture by Michelangelo, completed in 1504.

**fresco** — The technique of painting directly onto walls and ceilings consisting of fresh plaster.

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**madrigal** — A popular poem set to music, containing multiple parts to be sung in harmony.

**lute** — A stringed instrument popular during the Renaissance.

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

**opera** — A drama (in the Renaissance, usually based on a Greek or Roman myth) that is set to music.

**The Globe** — One of the first permanent theaters built in London in the late 1500s.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Discuss with your students what they think they can learn about a particular period in time by studying the artistic output of that time.
- Have students think about contemporary creative expression including film, television, popular books and music. What do the themes in these media say about contemporary society? What do we think is important? Funny? Scary? Evil?
- During the Renaissance, visual artists developed the technique of perspective, which enabled them to make paintings look three-dimensional, and therefore more realistic. Have students think about the advances in computer-generated images and discuss how the two are similar.
- Niccolò Machiavelli's book *The Prince* was greatly misunderstood and Machiavelli himself was often criticized for its content. Have students think of contemporary artists who have also been criticized or misunderstood for things they have said in books, songs, etc.
- The art, music and literature of the Renaissance is still being viewed and performed today. Why do students think these great works have stood the test of time? Why do they continue to be relevant?

## Focus Questions

1. Name some of the important artists and writers of the Renaissance.
2. What contributed to Renaissance painting being different from the painting of previous periods?
3. What were some of the causes of the artistic boom during the Renaissance?
4. What is the relationship between anatomy, painting and sculpture?
5. Why was the concept of making things look real important to Renaissance artists?
6. How did artists create fresco?
7. Why was Machiavelli nicknamed "Old Nick"?
8. What was the role of the patron during the Renaissance? (Continued)

9. Describe what it might have been like to have been a commoner attending the Globe Theatre.

10. What made Shakespeare's plays so popular?

11. What were some of the hardships that Renaissance artists faced?

12. What literary form was used to compose madrigals?

13. What were patrons trying to achieve by commissioning artists?

## Follow-up Discussion

- Discuss with your students the relationship between the patron and the artist. Do they think having a wealthy patron would help and/or hinder an artist's creative expression?
- Discuss with students the role of the artist in society. Why is creative expression and artistic endeavor important to a culture? How does the artist contribute to his or her society? How did Renaissance artists contribute to theirs?
- Based upon what students have learned about Renaissance art, have them generalize about what the nature and content of the art says about this period in history. What did Renaissance people find interesting and/or meaningful?
- Based upon what students know about Shakespeare's plays, have students discuss why these would have been popular with so many different types of people at the time. Can students think of any contemporary equivalents?

## Follow-up Activities

- The sonnet was a popular poetic form during the Renaissance. Demonstrate to students the structure of a sonnet and then have them write either a quatrain or a couplet. Ambitious students can attempt a complete sonnet. Useful resource: [www.folger.edu/education/lesson.cfm?lessonis=125](http://www.folger.edu/education/lesson.cfm?lessonis=125)
- Raphael's *School of Athens* was an important painting in its time because it used the technique of perspective to create the look of three dimensions on a two-dimensional surface. In addition, the subject matter of the painting is significant because it contains many of the ancient Greeks that inspired humanism. Have students view the painting at [www.artchive.com/artchive/R/raphael/school\\_athens.jpg.html](http://www.artchive.com/artchive/R/raphael/school_athens.jpg.html)

After students have viewed the painting, divide them into small groups. Have each group select a person depicted in the painting and research the life and contributions of the person they selected. Use the Web site [un2sg4.unige.ch/athena/raphael/raf\\_ath4.html](http://un2sg4.unige.ch/athena/raphael/raf_ath4.html)

On this Web site students can click a particular person depicted in the *School of Athens* to discover his identity.

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