

## Renaissance

The Renaissance is the rebirth of learning. The learning of ancient Greece and Rome was rediscovered and new discoveries made.

-Writing in the vernacular became popular.

### **Why Italy?**

-Wealth cities provided patrons of the arts.

-Fall of Constantinople.

-Competition between city-states.

-Ruins of Ancient Rome.

-Differences between Medieval and Renaissance art:

-Religion a theme but other themes important also.

-Movement and emotions became important.

-Realism.

-Perspective.

-Sfumato.

-Oils and canvas became popular but egg tempera and frescoes still used.

-Architecture moved from Gothic to Romanesque.

### **Renaissance Writers**

#### ***Shakespeare***

Before the Renaissance, most European writers wrote in Latin but Shakespeare was a leading vernacular writer of the Renaissance. The vernacular language is the common language of the people in a particular country such as English and French.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon in 1564. At 18 years of age, he married Anne Hathaway, daughter of a wealthy landlord.

Shortly afterwards, Shakespeare moved to London to become an actor. Actors were expected to act and write their own plays. By 1595 he became the most famous playwright in England.

He wrote 37 plays including comedies, such as *A Midsummer's Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, and also tragedies, like *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*. Finally, he also wrote playwrights based on English history, for example, *Henry V* and *Richard III*.

Shakespeare opened his own theatre called the Globe. It was a round wooden building with an open-air stage and it could hold up to 2000 people.

Unlike today, a visit to a theatre could be a rowdy affair. If the audience thought the play was boring, rotten apples were thrown at the actors.

Shakespeare was also famous for writing sonnets. His plays and poems made him rich and he retired in 1610 after 20 years of working. In 1616 he died in his hometown and he was buried in the local church. His plays and poems still remain popular today.

#### ***Humanist Writers***

Humanism is showing great interest in human nature rather than religion.

##### ***Tomas Moore***

In 1516 Moore published his most famous book "Utopia", which tells of an imaginary island where life is perfect, no wars, no crimes or conflict and everyone helps each other out. The island has no police force nor prisons.

### *Erasmus*

A Dutch-born writer, a friend of Thomas Moore was an Augustinian priest and spent most of his time criticising corruption within the Catholic Church. He hoped that through his writings he could convince the leadership of the church to live better lives.

### **People in History**

Leonardo da Vinci was born in Vinci, near Florence in Italy in 1452. At the age of fifteen, he was sent to train as an artist's apprentice in Florence. He worked with other apprentices in the studio of the famous painter and craftsman, Andrea del Verrocchio. Here he learned the skills of painting and sculpture. His first painting of note was one of an angel in the corner of a larger work by Verrocchio called the "Baptism of Christ." This angel was apparently painted so well that it caused Verrocchio to never paint again. Leonardo da Vinci was accepted into the Florentine artists' guild at the age of twenty and spent the next ten years working there, sometimes for Lorenzo de Medici. In 1482, he went to Milan to work for Ludovico Sforza, who often used him to organize engineering works and festivals. Around this time also, Leonardo da Vinci was compiling notebooks full of ideas for tanks, submarines, helicopters and parachutes. These notes were written in 'mirror writing' – from right to left. During his seventeen years in Milan, da Vinci painted only six paintings, including "The Virgin of the Rocks" and "The Last Supper," which is a fresco painted onto a wall of a monastery in Santa Maria Delle Grazie. In 1499, Leonardo left Milan and went to Florence where, among other work, he painted "The Mona Lisa," which is now on display in Paris' Louvre Museum. Sfumato is used in this painting which is a Renaissance technique which causes the lady's hair and clothing to blend into the background. Leonardo da Vinci also studied science, dissecting corpses in his study of anatomy and drawing plants, horses and birds in flight in his effort to further the study of biology. He died in France, as a guest of King Francis I, in 1519.

### Printing Press

Johann Gutenberg invented a printing press that was a "moveable type" in 1450. In 1455 an edition of the Bible was created, his first completed book.-contained 12000+ pages in 2 volumes. AT first, the font was thick Gothic letters but it was changed to italic to make the letters smaller and so it would fit more letters, thus making books smaller and cheaper, and the use of ideas spread more quickly.

The invention of the printing press important because

- Books more plentiful and cheaper.
- Literacy and education spread.
- Spread ideas of Renaissance and Reformation.

### ***Important people of the Renaissance:***

#### 1. Patrons of the Arts:

Lorenzo de Medici: family ruled Florence. 'The Magnificent' collected ancient Greek and Roman manuscripts. Michelangelo was a pupil at the Platonic Academy. Spent a fortune on art.

The popes Leo X (Lorenzo's son) and Julius II (Sistine Chapel)

#### 2. Leonardo da Vinci.

- Renaissance man (wide range)
- Apprenticed to Verrocchio. He was the first to use sfumato. Painted the Last Supper (falling apart) and the Mona Lisa (Louvre). Dissected more than 30 bodies. Used mirror writing.
- Designed planes, parachutes, cannon and tanks. Died in France.

### 3. Michelangelo.

- Attended Platonic Academy. Loved sculpture. White marble. The Pieta (optical illusion). David was the biggest statue of the time and showed mastery of anatomy.
- Julius II ordered him to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. It took 4 years.
- He designed the dome of St. Peter's. He was a poet also.

### 4. Galileo.

The Father of Modern Science.

- Invented the pendulum clock and a powerful telescope. Discovered that all solid objects fall at the same speed. He proved Copernicus was right when he said the Earth moved around the sun but had to say he was wrong in front of the Inquisition.

### 5. Shakespeare.

Stratford on Avon. Married Anne Hathaway. Moved to London without the family. Worked in the Globe Theatre (open air, no women actors). Wrote 35 plays (Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet) and many sonnets. His plays are comedies, tragedies and histories.

### 6. Nicholas Copernicus

He questioned Ptolemy's theory (that the sun and other planets revolved the earth) and claimed by saying that the sun is at the centre of the universe and the earth and other planets revolve around it. He kept his theories a secret and only published them on his deathbed in 1543.

#### **Effects of the Renaissance**

- Encouraged to travel more and discover new land.
- Spread of info via printing press and made it more difficult for political and religious leaders to brainwash the public.
- It allowed people to look at the world in a different way by questioning theories