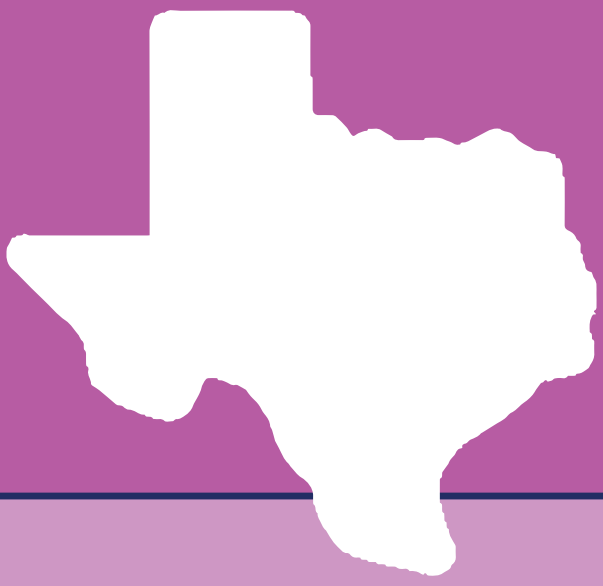
Bluebonnet Learning
K–5 Reading Language Arts

ENGLISH

THE RENAISSANCE: PATRONS, ARTISTS, AND SCHOLARS



GRADE 5 UNIT 2 | READER

EDITION 1

Grade 5 | Unit 2

The Renaissance:
Patrons, Artists, and Scholars

Reader

Acknowledgement:

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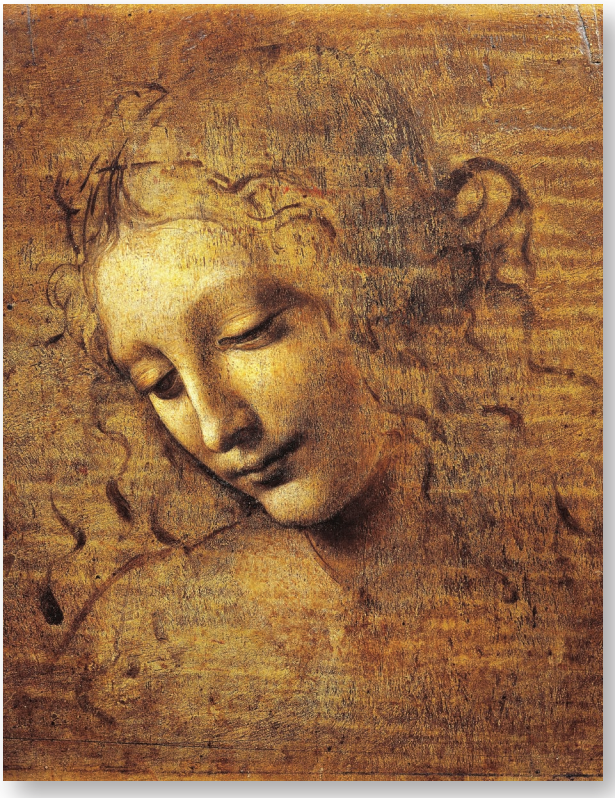


Chapter 1

An Italian Rebirth

THE BIG QUESTION
What factors inspired the Renaissance movement?

Art, literature, and architecture are forms of **expression**. These forms of expression often communicate what is happening during certain periods in time. Have you ever heard the word *Renaissance*? The word *Renaissance* means "rebirth" and comes from both the French and Latin languages. This word *Renaissance* describes a **cultural** movement that began in what is now Italy and then spread throughout most of Europe. This was no ordinary change, but rather a **revolutionary** movement that led to the creation of art, the likes of which the world had never seen before.

The Renaissance movement was **inspired** by a renewed interest in ancient Greek and Roman culture and learning. New ideas were born and old ideas were reborn. The Renaissance was a particular period of change in literature, art, **philosophy**, science, education, and architecture. To understand why the Renaissance was such an extraordinary movement, it helps to recall what was happening in Europe *before* the Renaissance.

What Came Before the Renaissance?

More than 2,000 years ago, ancient Greece gave us tremendous works of art and architecture. Ancient Greek sculptures emphasized balance, proportion, and the "perfect" human form. Ancient Greeks built strong buildings supported by mighty pillars and columns. They gave us the ideas of great philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle. They gave us lasting works of literature, including Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. From ancient Greece we have inherited important ideas about government, including the idea of democracy—rule by the people. Even the word *democracy* comes from the Greeks. The Greek word *demos* means "people."



Later, the ancient Romans built upon the ideas and achievements of the Greeks. Like the Greeks, Romans prized sculpture with mythological themes. The Romans also built great structures, such as the Colosseum, and perfected the use of the arch and dome. They left us powerful literature, such as the *Aeneid* by Virgil. The mighty Roman armies conquered lands and established a vast empire.

Eventually, different warring tribes invaded the Roman Empire, weakening Rome's power. These warring tribes sought land. The resulting instability greatly diminished the influence of ancient Rome. Slowly but surely new cultural groups, no longer bound by ties to Rome, began to define themselves. The great Roman Empire declined and was eventually divided in half.

Moving On

Across western Europe, during the time that is considered to be the start of the Middle Ages, kingdoms and nations began to take shape. Trade, **economy**, laws, and systems of government were established. Cities and towns grew. Architectural styles and designs, among other forms of expression, became unique to the people of a particular land.

While the cultural achievements of the Greeks and Romans were admired, new, home-grown ideas began to thrive. Knowledge of the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans was left in the hands of the few educated elite and in religious houses called monasteries. Some men and women devoted their lives to the Church. Men called monks lived in monasteries. Women called nuns lived in convents. The monks made beautiful copies of writings from ancient Greece and Rome. If you wanted to make another copy of a book, you had to do it by hand. There were no printing presses and, of course, no copy machines or scanners. And so, quietly, and in some ways secretly, the monks helped keep classical learning alive.

Passing the Torch

Monarchs and the Roman Catholic Church (also known as "the Christian Church" or just "the Church") established laws and a sense of order. The Church was a powerful influence throughout western Europe during the Middle Ages. With its rituals and teachings, the Church was a very important



Chartres Cathedral, France

part of the daily lives of medieval people. Everyone from rich noblemen to poor peasants gave money, materials, and sometimes their labor to help build the magnificent churches of the Middle Ages.

During the Middle Ages, impressive castles were constructed across the European landscape. Kings battled each other for land, and nations were born. People thought a lot about the path to heaven. Art was created to honor God, or to communicate stories from the Christian Bible, which was important because few people were able to read during this time. To express religious devotion, medieval artists created stylized religious figures and moved away from the natural human form common in ancient Greek and Roman art.

But, as you know, history does not stand still. Things change and new ideas emerge. So along came the Renaissance movement. Yet how, and why, the Renaissance movement emerged is the question.

Petrarch and Humanism

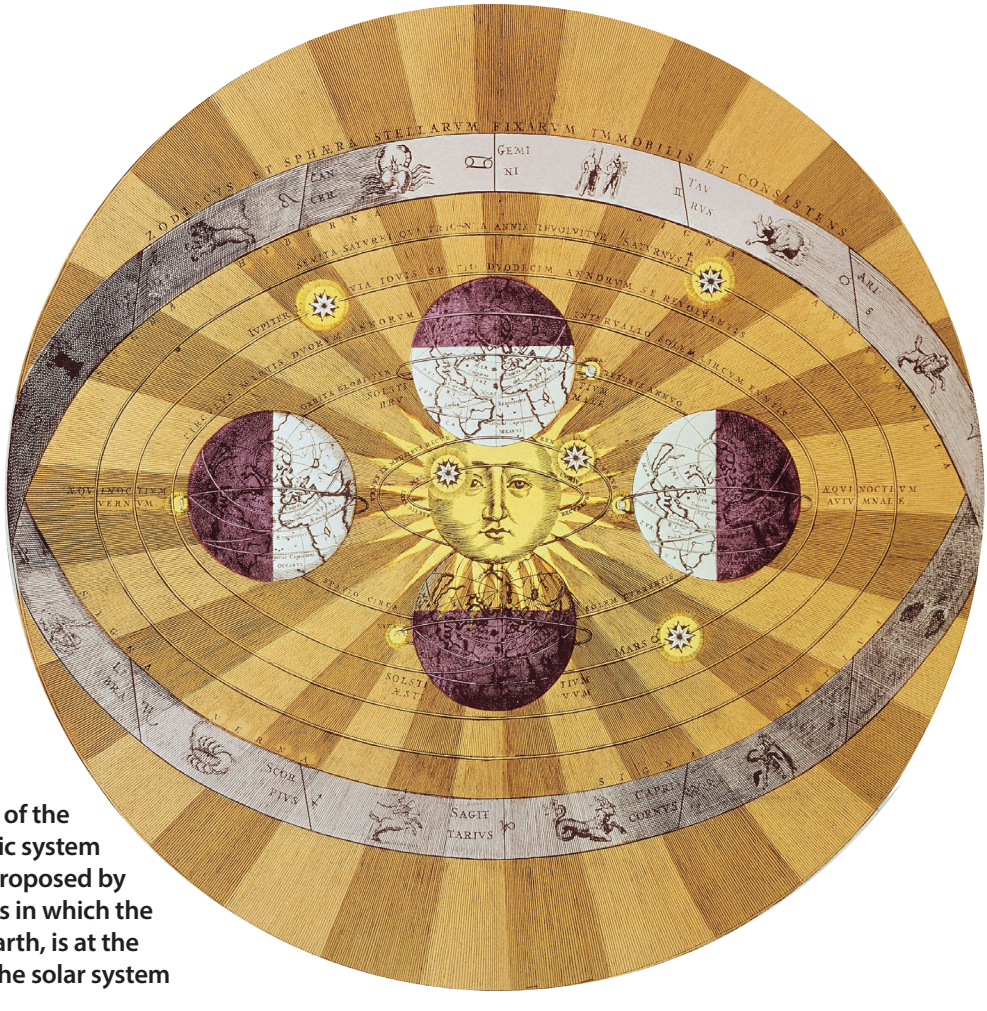
During the 1300s, there was a great Italian poet named Petrarch. He admired the classical **values** and teachings of ancient Greece and Rome. He filled his library with as many ancient books as he could find and invited others to read and study these books as well.

Over the years, more and more people had the opportunity to learn about the literature, art, and government of ancient Greece and Rome. These people who admired ancient Greece and Rome were called humanists. Their intellectual and cultural interest in the art, literature, and government of ancient Greece and Rome was known as humanism.



Petrarch

Under the influence of the humanists, many artists, philosophers, and scientists studied the works produced by the ancient Romans and Greeks. A study of the past prompted many to examine the present, and an increased interest in certain subjects led to a greater understanding of the world at large. For example, some scientists—such as Copernicus and Galileo—looked to the heavens and the stars and made astonishing discoveries. Others looked to nature and the physical earth. The Renaissance movement was born.



A drawing of the heliocentric system that was proposed by Copernicus in which the sun, not Earth, is at the center of the solar system

In particular, breathtakingly beautiful art was produced. Renaissance artists developed techniques that allowed them to paint the human form in a much more realistic way. Humanists promoted the power and unique talents of the individual, both in terms of **intellect** and ability, but also in terms of the human form itself. An Italian architect, Leon Battista Alberti, summed up what you might call a Renaissance motto: "Men can do anything with themselves, if they will." William Shakespeare, the English playwright wrote, "What a piece of work is a man!" The great minds of the Renaissance expanded the themes of their work beyond the biblical to include those of history, science, and literature. As a result, the people of the Renaissance made their mark upon the earth.

The Middle Class

Typically, most people lived and died in the towns and rural areas where they were born. As had been the case for centuries, people belonged to groups, or classes, and social mobility was limited.



Hans Holbein the Younger's *Portrait of the Merchant Georg Gisze*, 1532 AD

However, during the late Middle Ages into the Renaissance period, as the Italians became wealthier and cities grew, there were more and more merchants and craftsmen. There were so many, in fact, that there was an expansion of the middle class, the class between those who worked the land and the nobility. As a result, the wealthy middle class grew in power and status. Bankers and merchants proved you didn't have to be born a nobleman to be rich and powerful: You could work hard and make money and rise in society. With money came political influence.

The rise of the middle class was not restricted to Italy. The financial and political rise of this social group was evident throughout Europe. Without a doubt, the middle class assumed even greater influence during the Renaissance.

Patrons: A Helping Hand

So what do merchants and money have to do with the Renaissance? These wealthy merchants could read and write, although most people could not. As a result, some merchants and businessmen became interested in literature and art. Of course, most of them were so busy running their businesses that they didn't have time to write books or paint, but they had

enough money to pay others to write, study, and create works of art.

Some of the merchants became **patrons** of the writers and artists. For example, a rich banker might ask an artist to paint portraits of his wife and children. The banker would pay for the portraits, and, in addition, he might provide the artist with food, clothing, and a house while he worked. With the support of such rich patrons, many artists were able to explore their ideas and develop their skills. Artists with patrons no longer had to worry about how they were going to eat or where they were going to sleep. Later, you will read more about the Medici family, one of the most influential banking families and art patrons of all time.



Giorgio Vasari's *Portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici*, 1533–1544 AD

What did the patrons get out of all this? What was their reward for paying artists to create paintings, statues, books, and buildings? The patrons became famous. The works of art they commissioned signaled their power, prestige, and importance. They were admired and celebrated for the works they paid to have created. The artists and writers also made their mark in history. Shakespeare, perhaps the greatest writer of all, had royal and noble patrons. Yet it is his name that we remember today.

The world was indeed changing. Exquisite works of art were created by people so extraordinary that it would be wonderful to have a time machine to take us back in history to meet them. But, as we do not, we will just have to turn the pages of this book to learn about them instead!

The Middle Ages

The Middle Ages had its fair share of troubling times, but it was also a time of great achievement in art and learning. Let's examine some key achievements.

Western Europe

Universities were founded in cities such as Bologna, Oxford, Paris, and Cambridge. Hundreds of castles, such as Alcázar de Segovia in Spain and Dover Castle in England, were constructed in Western Europe. The building of great cathedrals, which took hundreds of years to complete, was also undertaken during this age.



Alcázar de Segovia, Spain

Byzantine Civilization

When invading tribes destroyed and took over much of the Western Roman Empire, the Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantine civilization, remained strong. The great city of Constantinople was the center of Byzantine civilization. Constantinople's central location made the city an important link between Europe and Asia. From about 300 to 1453 AD, Byzantine civilization was one of the most advanced in the world.



Hagia Sophia in Turkey was once a cathedral. It became a mosque when Constantinople, now Istanbul, was conquered by the Ottóman Turks.

Islamic Civilization

Islam is a major world religion, and was founded about 610 AD. It originated in the land of what is now called Saudi Arabia from the teachings of a man named Muhammed. Muslims believe that there is one all-powerful God, and Muhammed is his prophet. From the time of its origin in the 600s through the time of the Middle Ages, belief in Islam spread. It became the dominant religion in the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding locations.

During the Middle Ages, many Muslim scholars made significant progress in math, science, and astronomy. Some scholars translated works by ancient Greek philosophers and scientists into Arabic, which helped preserve classical writings. A great thinker and writer named Ibn Sina wrote influential works of philosophy, poetry, and astronomy. He also made important medical discoveries about how to treat diseases.

A large part of Spain was conquered and settled by Muslims. Learning thrived in many Islamic cities, with cities such as Palencia, Valladolid, Salamanca, and Alcalá having libraries, schools, and universities. In the 900s, scholars from Africa, Asia, and Europe traveled to Córdoba to be part of a city rich in learning and the arts.

Beginning in the late 1000s, Christian forces started to drive the Muslims out of Spain. By 1492, the final Muslims were driven out of Spain, during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella– the king and queen who helped finance Columbus's voyage in the same year. They left behind writings about science and philosophy that would contribute to the reawakening of learning in Italy during the Renaissance.



The Alhambra in Spain is a magnificent castle and fortress built by the Muslims.

Chapter 2

The Early Renaissance

THE BIG QUESTION
What are techniques and features of Renaissance art and architecture?

What an exciting time to be alive! Painters, sculptors, architects, and philosophers were buzzing with ideas. With help from wealthy families and the Church, they created splendid projects. Let's meet three important artists from the Early Renaissance.

Brunelleschi Loses

Before Filippo Brunelleschi devoted himself to architecture, he worked as a goldsmith. In 1401 AD, when the city council of Florence invited artists to submit ideas for decorating the huge doors of a religious building called the Baptistery, Brunelleschi created a beautiful design.

His design didn't win. The winning design was submitted by Lorenzo Ghiberti. When Ghiberti found out that he'd won, he bragged, "I have surpassed everyone." The Florence city council offered to allow Brunelleschi to work as Ghiberti's assistant, but Ghiberti flatly refused his help. This started a lifelong **rivalry** between the men.

After losing the contest, Brunelleschi decided to explore his interests in architecture. In the spirit of the Renaissance, he looked back to classical times.

Brunelleschi Wins

As the years passed, Brunelleschi took what he learned from the ancient Romans and began to develop his own ideas about architecture. Brunelleschi, like other Renaissance artists, began to move away from the complex medieval style of architecture in favor of the balance and symmetry of ancient Greek and Roman architecture. He had previously traveled to Rome to study



Cathedral of Florence

Roman ruins and had been inspired by the **dome** of the Pantheon. This inspiration came in handy when, in 1418 AD, the **Guild** of Wool Merchants in Florence announced another competition. They wanted to find someone who could solve a difficult architectural problem: how to put a roof over a huge space.

The space was over the middle of the cathedral of Florence. Work had begun on the cathedral eighty years before Brunelleschi was born, but it still wasn't finished. The plans called for a roof to be placed over the middle of the church, an area 136 feet wide.

For years, the architects of Florence had been arguing about how to build this roof. Some people said it was impossible, but Brunelleschi approached the Wool Merchants and announced that he could do it. How? He had an idea to cover the space with a dome.

When the guild members demanded to see his plans, Brunelleschi refused. He claimed they would steal his ideas. To illustrate his point, Brunelleschi brought an egg to a guild meeting. Imagine you are a guild member at this meeting. You hear Brunelleschi ask, "Can any one of you make this egg stand on its head without toppling?"

No one replies. So, Brunelleschi cracks the egg on the table and balances it on its jagged top. One of your fellow guild members sneers, "We could have done that!"

Brunelleschi responds, "That's precisely my point. If I tell you my plans to build the dome, you'll say you knew how to do it all along."

In the end, the guild members chose Brunelleschi to undertake the project. Then they got cold feet and thought he needed someone to help him, so they picked Brunelleschi's old rival, Ghiberti.

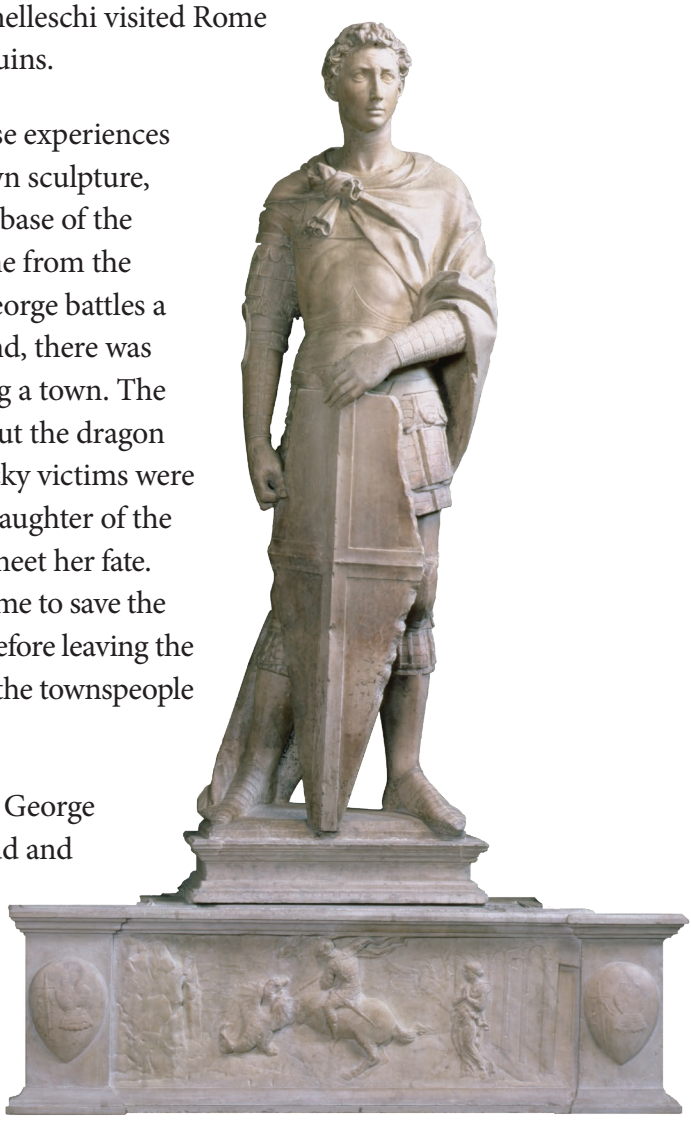
Brunelleschi was angry. He knew Ghiberti had no idea how to build the dome. So Brunelleschi pretended to be sick. While he lay in bed, all work stopped. Finally, the guild members told him that Ghiberti could do nothing without him. From then on, Brunelleschi alone was in charge.

Donatello the Sculptor

The greatest sculptor of the Early Renaissance was known as Donatello. As a young man, Donatello helped Lorenzo Ghiberti decorate the doors of the Baptistery in Florence. Later, he worked with Ghiberti's rival, Brunelleschi. It seems that Donatello and Brunelleschi visited Rome together to study the ancient ruins.

Donatello drew from these experiences when he created his well-known sculpture, *St. George*. On the rectangular base of the statue, Donatello carved a scene from the popular legend in which St. George battles a dragon. According to the legend, there was once a fierce dragon terrorizing a town. The people fed the dragon sheep, but the dragon demanded humans. The unlucky victims were chosen by **lottery**. When the daughter of the king was chosen, she went to meet her fate. But St. George arrived just in time to save the princess and slay the dragon. Before leaving the scene, St. George converted all the townspeople to Christianity.

The standing figure of St. George that Donatello carved is a proud and confident warrior. His strong, muscular form shows through his armor. His watchful eyes and his slightly turned **stance** make him seem ready for whatever challenges may come his way. In this strong, watchful warrior, the people of Florence must have seen the **embodiment** of their own spirit.



Renaissance sculptors such as Donatello captured human emotion in facial expressions and body positions that make their pieces highly realistic.

A Little Barrel

Alessandro di Mariano Filipepi was his real name, but he was called Sandro Botticelli. *Botticelli* means "little barrel" in Italian. It is believed that the nickname was first applied to Botticelli's older brother, and, when young Sandro went to live with him, people started calling him Botticelli, too. While the nickname may not bring graceful images to mind, Botticelli's paintings are known for their grace, elegance, and beauty.

Botticelli was born in Florence in 1455 AD. He was first **apprenticed** to a goldsmith and then later to a famous painter. In 1481 AD he traveled to Rome, where he spent a year painting the walls of the Sistine Chapel. The Sistine Chapel is located in the Vatican, where the pope, the head of the Catholic Church, lives.

Botticelli's most famous painting, *The Birth of Venus*, shows a scene from classical mythology. Botticelli painted Venus in a pose from an ancient Roman statue, then added his own touches, such as the flowing hair and the almost-sad

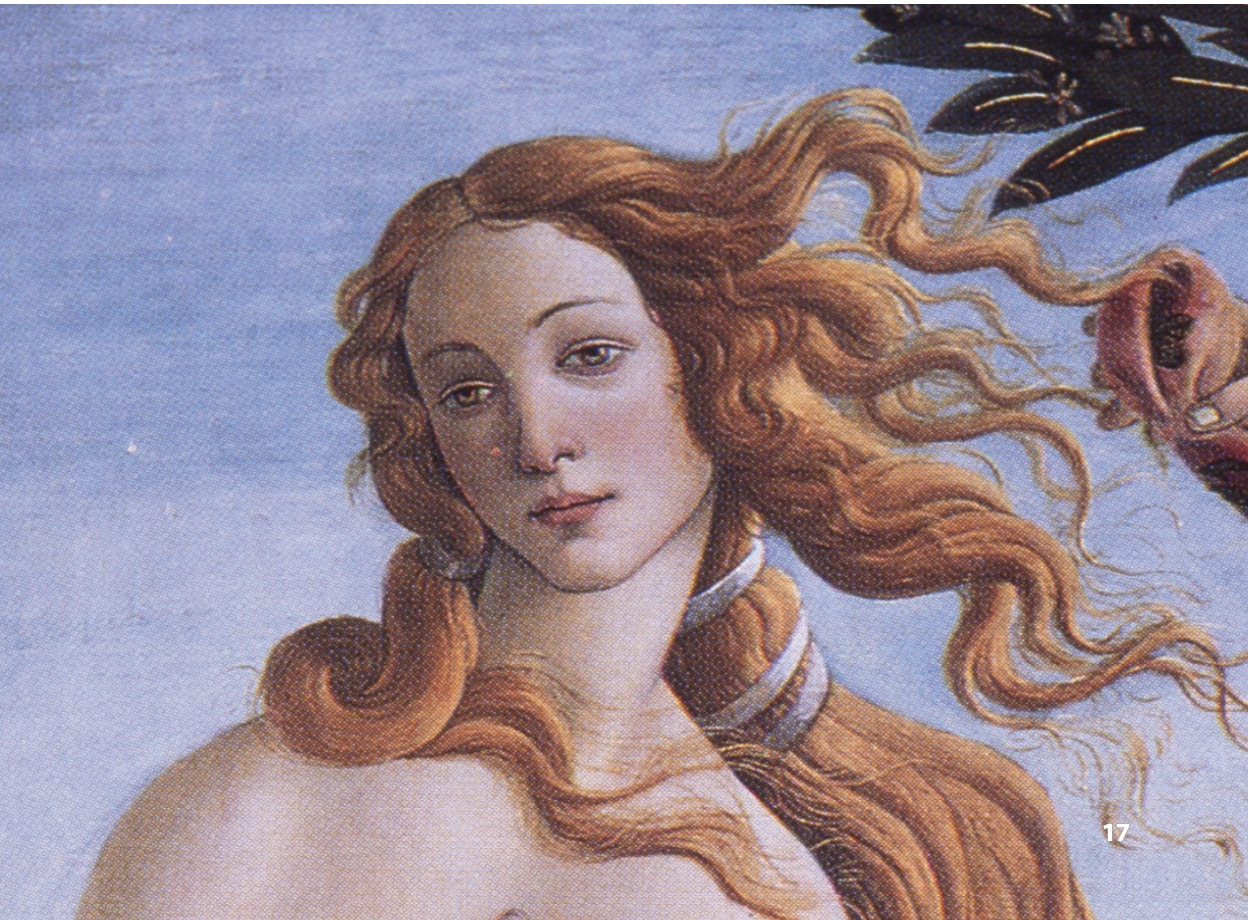


expression. The wind gods blow gentle breezes to move the goddess ashore.

Botticelli was a favorite painter of wealthy patron Lorenzo de' Medici. Lorenzo and his family were one of the most influential banking families and patrons of the arts. They supported artists like Botticelli financially so that they had time to create art. In return, the Medici family was admired for their contributions to the art world. However, Botticelli's association with the Medici family ended when the family left Florence after Lorenzo's death. Botticelli lost much of his financial support, too. The monk Savonarola took charge of the city of Florence and became the most powerful person in the city. Savonarola did not approve of paintings like *The Birth of Venus*.

Savonarola's sermons must have affected Botticelli deeply. He stopped painting scenes from classical mythology and turned his attention to religious **themes**. For example, instead of painting Venus, he painted Mary, the mother of Jesus. But he still painted her with grace and elegance.

Wind gods (left) blowing the goddess Venus (right) ashore in Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus*, 1486 AD



The Power of Perspective

The architect Brunelleschi inspired Renaissance artists when he developed the mathematical rules for perspective, a way of showing depth on a flat surface. Brunelleschi observed that when we look at things, objects that are close look bigger, while those that are far away look smaller. He also observed that if you stand between two parallel lines that stretch into the distance, the lines appear to come closer together until they meet at a point on the horizon. When the lines come together, they seem to vanish, so this point is called the vanishing point.



These mathematical rules, or instructions on how to achieve a sense of perspective, were published. Even today, artists used these rules to create a sense of depth and space in their work.When applied, these rules are a tool for directing the viewer's eye to the most important subjects of a painting. This is in direct contrast to art from earlier times, such as the Middle Ages, when depth and space were not highlighted. The Renaissance painter Raphael, in his painting *The School of Athens*, used the structure of the building and the pattern of the floor to create a sense of perspective.



Raphael's *The School of Athens*, 1510 AD

Chapter 3

The Spirit of the Renaissance

THE BIG QUESTION
How is the spirit of the Renaissance represented in Leonardo da Vinci's ideas and accomplishments?

As the story goes, Leonardo da Vinci once led his servant, Carlo, up a steep hill in Florence, Italy. At the top of the hill he strapped a new invention on the servant's back, hoping it would help the man fly. Leonardo thought that if man could fly it would change the world, and he believed innovation was possible. It would be a nice ending to the story if Carlo suddenly swooped upward and soared like a bird over the rooftops of the city. But, alas, the poor servant fell and broke his leg—or so goes the story that has been handed down to us over the years.

Leonardo believed that man is capable of doing anything he sets his mind to. Anything.

That belief drove Leonardo da Vinci to explore uncharted territory in many fields. He was passionately interested in a number of subjects and highly skilled at most anything he tried.

An Amazing Apprentice

If we had to pick just one person to represent the **spirit** of the Renaissance, it might be Leonardo da Vinci. Painter, inventor, scientist, musician, and more, Leonardo embodies the belief that anything is possible.

Leonardo was born in 1452 AD in Vinci, a town near Florence. As a young boy, he worked as an apprentice to Andrea del Verrocchio, a leading painter and sculptor in Florence. It didn't take long for people to notice Leonardo's artistic **genius**.



Andrea del Verrocchio, *The Baptism of Christ*, 1476 AD

Often, a master artist would paint the main features of a picture but leave it for an apprentice to finish the landscape or other smaller figures in the background. In 1476, Verrocchio was working on a painting called *The Baptism of Christ.* Verrocchio painted one angel and then asked Leonardo to paint another. Legend has it that Leonardo's angel looked so much better than Verrocchio's that the old master never picked up a brush again.

Leonardo in Milan

When Leonardo was about thirty years old, he was invited to work for the Duke of Milan. While he lived in Milan, Leonardo continued to make works of art, but the Duke also employed him as a military engineer. Although Leonardo called war "beastly madness," he designed some very dangerous weapons, including an armored cart that resembled a tank.

When the Duke wanted to impress his fellow noblemen, he asked Leonardo to organize spectacular festivals. Leonardo created fancy stage sets and selected the music. He even designed costumes.

The Painter at Work: *The Last Supper*

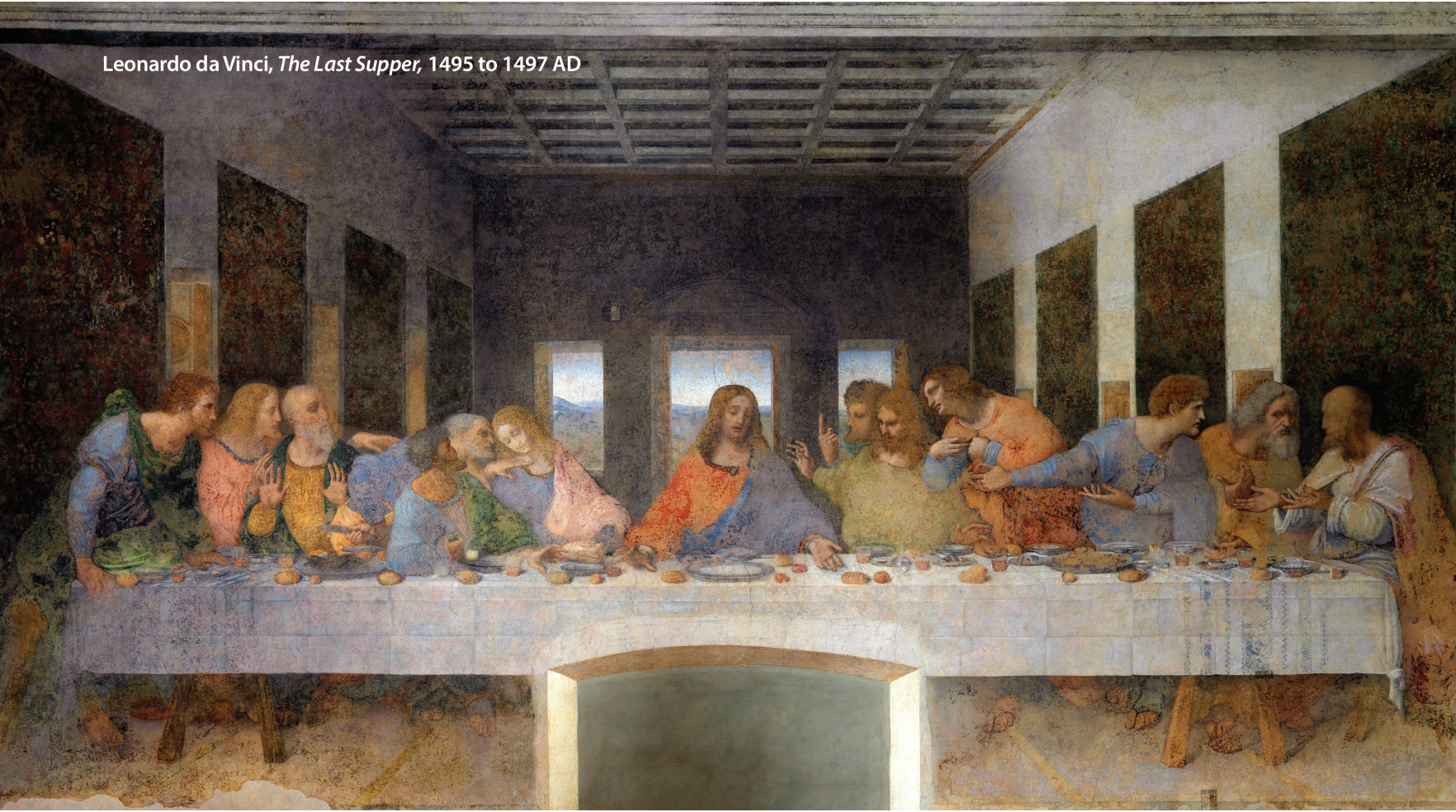
In Milan, Leonardo was kept busy working on all kinds of projects, including designing a whole new plan for the city. Did he ever find time to paint?

Yes, indeed he did.

While he lived in Milan, Leonardo created one of his greatest paintings, *The Last Supper.* The painting was **commissioned** by the Duke of Milan. The painting is based on the Christian Bible story about the last meal of Jesus of Nazareth. To understand the painting, we must understand the Christian Bible story. The story of the Last Supper is told in several places throughout the Christian Bible, including the Book of Matthew.

At the Last Supper, Jesus ate with his twelve **disciples**. The disciples (or apostles as they would be later called) had been following Jesus for the last three years. This meal together is special because it was a part of the Jewish Festival of Unleavened Bread on the eve of Passover. The Jewish people celebrated this week-long festival to mark their belief that God delivered them out of slavery in Egypt and started a **covenant**, or special promise, with them. Jesus and his disciples were Jewish, and Passover was important to them. Passover continues to be a very important celebration in the Jewish faith today.

This would be Jesus's last meal. The Christian Bible explains that Jesus knew that after this meal, he would be arrested, put on trial, and killed. He predicted his **betrayal** during the supper:



Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper,* 1495 to 1497 AD

The Christian Bible tells us the story that in the hours before his capture, arrest, and crucifixion, Jesus had supper with his closest friends—his disciples. One of his friends, Judas, betrayed Jesus. This led to the arrest of Jesus. Jesus knew he would be betrayed.

When it was evening, he sat at the table with the twelve disciples; and as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me."

And they were very sorrowful, and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" ...

Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Is it I, Master?"

He said to him, "You have said so."

This scene was chosen by Leonardo because of its importance to the Christian practice of communion. Most Christians of Leonardo's time and today regularly practice communion, breaking bread and drinking of the cup in the same way Jesus led his disciples during the Last Supper. The ceremony is central to Christian belief that the blood of Jesus was shed as the last sacrifice that would be needed to live in connection with God. A painting about the story of the ceremony's origin would be widely recognized by Leonardo's audience.

Given the importance of the events during The Last Supper, Leonardo had to decide what would be the focus of his painting. Some scholars believe that, in particular, Leonardo focused on the betrayal of Jesus Christ and the moment in the story when Jesus made the shocking announcement, "One of you will betray me." Leonardo attempted to capture the very moment when the twelve disciples heard those words. Leonardo decided to place the disciples in groups of three with Jesus seated alone in the middle. Notice how the artist isolates the figure of Judas, the betrayer of Jesus. Judas leans back, away from Jesus.

Painting the Right Faces

The Last Supper is painted on the wall of a dining hall in a monastery. While Leonardo worked on the painting, the head of the monastery, called the prior, became impatient for Leonardo to finish. He complained that

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Note: The Christian Bible is divided into two main divisions, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The first four books of the New Testament are also called the Gospels. The account of Jesus's last supper can be found in all four of the Gospels. This version of the account comes from the book of Matthew. The verses and translations are Matthew 20:26-30, Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, and 1971 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Leonardo was lazy, and that the artist was spending too much time wandering the streets looking for the right face for Judas. Leonardo admitted that it was taking him a long time to find the right face for Judas. But he said to the prior, "If you're in a great hurry, then I could always use your face." It took two years (from 1495–1497) to finish *The Last Supper*. The painting made Leonardo famous throughout Europe. Other artists and engravers made copies of it for hundreds of years.

The painting itself did not last very long. Leonardo experimented with a new fresco technique, using oil and varnish mixed in with his colors. The paint absorbed the moisture from the wall and crumbled over time. Recently, artists and scientists who specialize in restoring old paintings have used advanced techniques to try to make *The Last Supper* look more like Leonardo's original creation.

Putting Things in Perspective

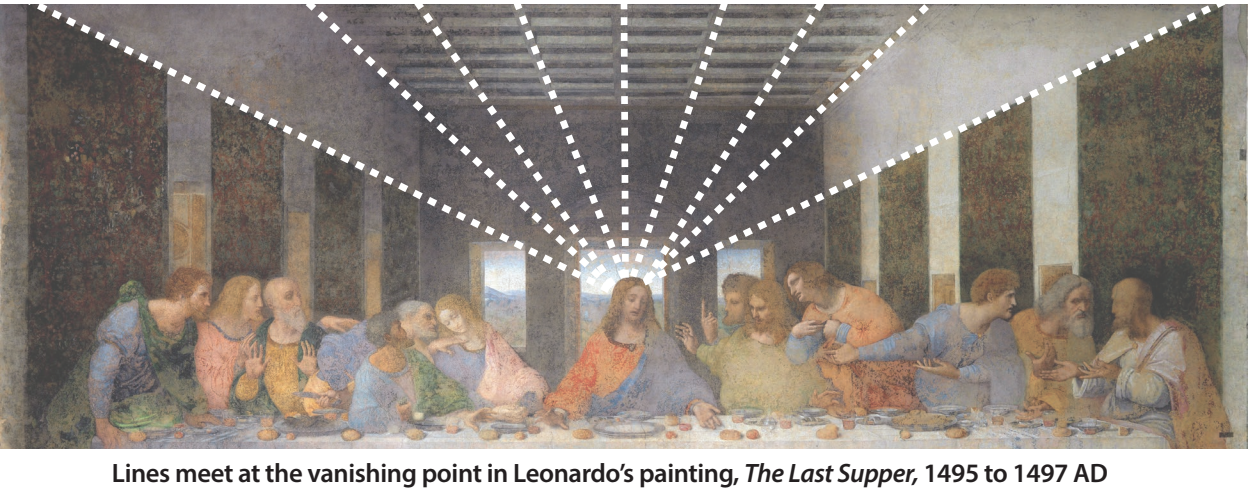
The Last Supper is painted on a 14-by-30-foot wall. The wall, of course, is flat, but the painting seems to have depth. It almost seems as if you could walk through the open windows into the landscape in the background. To create a sense of depth in a painting, Leonardo used **perspective**. You can see how Leonardo directs the viewer's eye toward Jesus.

In *The Last Supper*, Leonardo followed the rules of perspective developed by Italian artist and architect Brunelleschi. If you were to extend the lines of the ceiling to the horizon, they would meet at a vanishing point in the center of the painting, somewhere behind the head of Jesus. This draws your attention to Jesus as the most important figure in the painting.

Leonardo also put an open door and windows behind Jesus. Through them you can see the landscape in the distance. In a book he wrote on painting techniques, Leonardo added some **refinements** to the rules of perspective. He said that when you paint objects at a distance, you should not make them too detailed, and you should make the colors a little weaker.

Leonardo the Scientist

After he left Milan, Leonardo lived in several places, including his beloved city of Florence. For a while he worked as a map maker and military engineer, and he became friends with Niccolò Machiavelli, who worked in the government of Florence for many years.



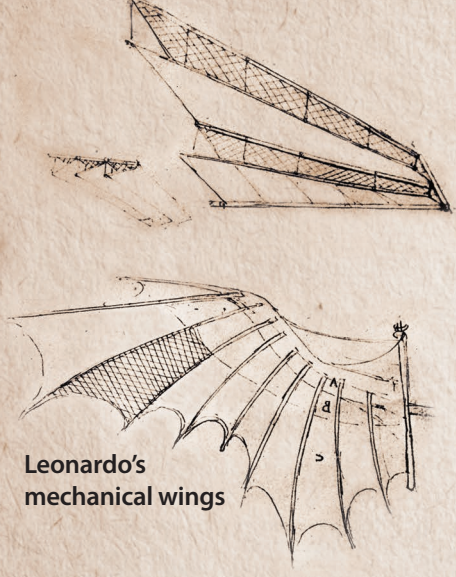
Lines meet at the vanishing point in Leonardo's painting, *The Last Supper,* 1495 to 1497 AD

In 1506 AD, Leonardo returned to Milan. As time went on, he became more interested in science than in art. In fact, at one point he wrote that he "could not bear the sight of a paintbrush."

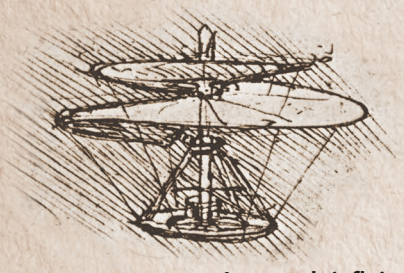
When Leonardo looked at the sky and saw birds soaring gracefully through the air, he wondered, "How can man fly, too?" Being Leonardo, he got to work and designed several devices. He tried to make a model based on the way bats flew. He boarded up the windows of the room he worked in so no one would know if his flying machine failed.

It didn't work. Still, Leonardo's attempts were far from total failures. In the course of his studies, he developed some of the basic ideas for parachutes and helicopters.

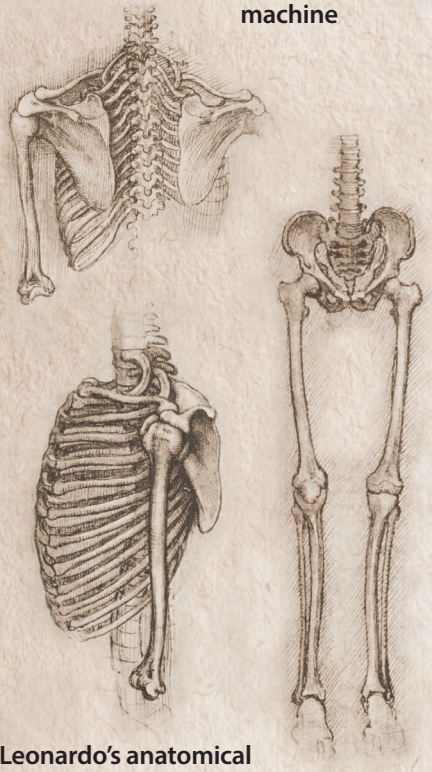
Leonardo explored almost every field of science, including optics, geology, botany, physics, and engineering. He made great advances in the study of anatomy. His notebooks are filled with highly detailed drawings of human bodies—not just the outside, but the inside, too.



Leonardo's mechanical wings



Leonardo's flying machine



Leonardo's anatomical drawings

Are You Smiling at Me?

While Leonardo lived in Milan for the second time, he painted what may be the most famous painting of all time, a **portrait** called *Mona Lisa*. For many years no one knew the identity of the woman in the picture. However, it is now believed to be Lisa Gherardini, wife of a Florentine cloth merchant named Francesco del Giocondo.

For hundreds of years, people have been fascinated by the *Mona Lisa*. Look at the way she smiles. Leonardo added to the mystery of *Mona Lisa* by painting an unusual, misty-looking landscape in the background. If you look closely, you will notice that Leonardo used an interesting technique called sfumato. Sfumato is a way of painting that creates smooth changes between different areas of color and shading in a picture. The end result is a soft, hazy, smoky look—the perfect background for this mysterious woman!

Last Years

Leonardo lived in troubled times. When fighting broke out again in Milan, he moved to Rome and worked for Pope Leo X, but the pope seemed to favor other artists of the day. So, when King Francis I invited him to France, Leonardo left Italy, never to return. He advised the French king on many architectural projects before he died in 1519.

Leonardo da Vinci was a man whose boundless curiosity, multiple talents, and visionary imagination summed up the spirit of the Renaissance.

Mirror Writing

Leonardo da Vinci constantly wrote in notebooks that he carried everywhere he went. In these notebooks he recorded his ideas, questions, and sketches—at least 10,000 pages of words on every imaginable topic. But, if you want to read them, you will need a mirror. Leonardo wrote from right to left, so all the letters are reversed!

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Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, 1506 AD

The *Mona Lisa* has fascinated people for centuries, and in fact, she seems to have fascinated Leonardo as well. He kept the painting in his possession until his death in France, never delivering it to his patron, Francesco del Giocondo. Some have argued that he continued to work on the painting until he died.

Chapter 4

Michelangelo and Raphael

THE BIG QUESTION
How is the spirit of the Renaissance represented in the artistic achievements of Michelangelo and Raphael?

One day, a group of boys were called to the home of the incredibly important Lorenzo de' Medici. What could a man so rich and powerful, a man people called "the Magnificent," want to tell these boys?

Lorenzo looked at the boys and made an announcement. "You see this stone figure?" he said, pointing to an ancient Roman statue of a soldier. "A brilliant sculptor created this piece centuries ago. I want each of you to carve a statue exactly like this one."



Soldier

Some of the boys groaned. Lorenzo paid no attention. "Work quickly and ***accurately,*** *" he said. "The young man who produces the best sculpture wins a place in my art school."*

Some time later, as Lorenzo strolled through his courtyard, he spotted one boy whose work looked far ***superior*** *to the rest. He turned to his assistant and asked, "Who is that child? Look at how he has carved the head of the soldier. It's difficult to tell his work from the real thing!"*

The assistant checked his list. "Let's see. Michelangelo Buonarroti, second son of a former small-town mayor. Family is from minor nobility. Mother died when the boy was six. Hmm . . . not a very good Latin or Greek ***scholar****. Ran away from school a lot."*

"Ran away?"

"Yes, it seems he sneaked away from school to go to the churches, where he spent hours drawing copies of the paintings."

"Ah, a true art lover," said Lorenzo.

"Well, his father isn't. The father is upset that Michelangelo works as an apprentice in Ghirlandaio's studio. He thinks he should pursue a different profession."

Lorenzo walked up to Michelangelo and gazed at the soldier's head the boy had carved. "That's a lovely sculpture," Lorenzo commented. Then he said, "Young man, come live in our home and learn what you can from us."

Lorenzo de' Medici's invitation was a great honor, but Michelangelo's father wasn't thrilled. His father changed his mind, however, when Lorenzo offered him a job and gave Michelangelo a beautiful cloak and a handsome sum of money.

The Medici family was powerful and influential. They were involved in trade and banking. In the Medici household, Michelangelo discussed art and literature with the finest minds of the time. He studied the old masters in sculpture and painting. His stay with the Medici family launched his career in the art world.



Michelangelo's Lorenzo de Medici

Michelangelo Made It—and Don't You Forget It!

On a stormy night in 1492 AD, Lorenzo de' Medici died. The sudden loss shocked the people of Florence. Michelangelo, in particular, lost a friend and a patron, a man who had recognized the young artist's genius and supported him in his efforts. **Reluctantly**, Michelangelo left his beloved city.

After some years of moving here and there, Michelangelo went to Rome. In Rome, a church official who had heard about the young sculptor's work offered him a job. He told Michelangelo to create something spectacular so that people would remember him (the church official) when he was gone.

Twenty-four-year-old Michelangelo got to work immediately. In less than 12 months, he carved the stunningly beautiful *Pietà*. The sculpture shows Mary, the mother of Jesus, holding her son across her lap just after he was removed from the cross.

The *Pietà* was placed in the great church of the Vatican in Rome, St. Peter's Basilica. Once, when Michelangelo went to St. Peter's to look at his creation, a group of visitors stood in front of it trying to guess who carved the amazing work. No one guessed Michelangelo.

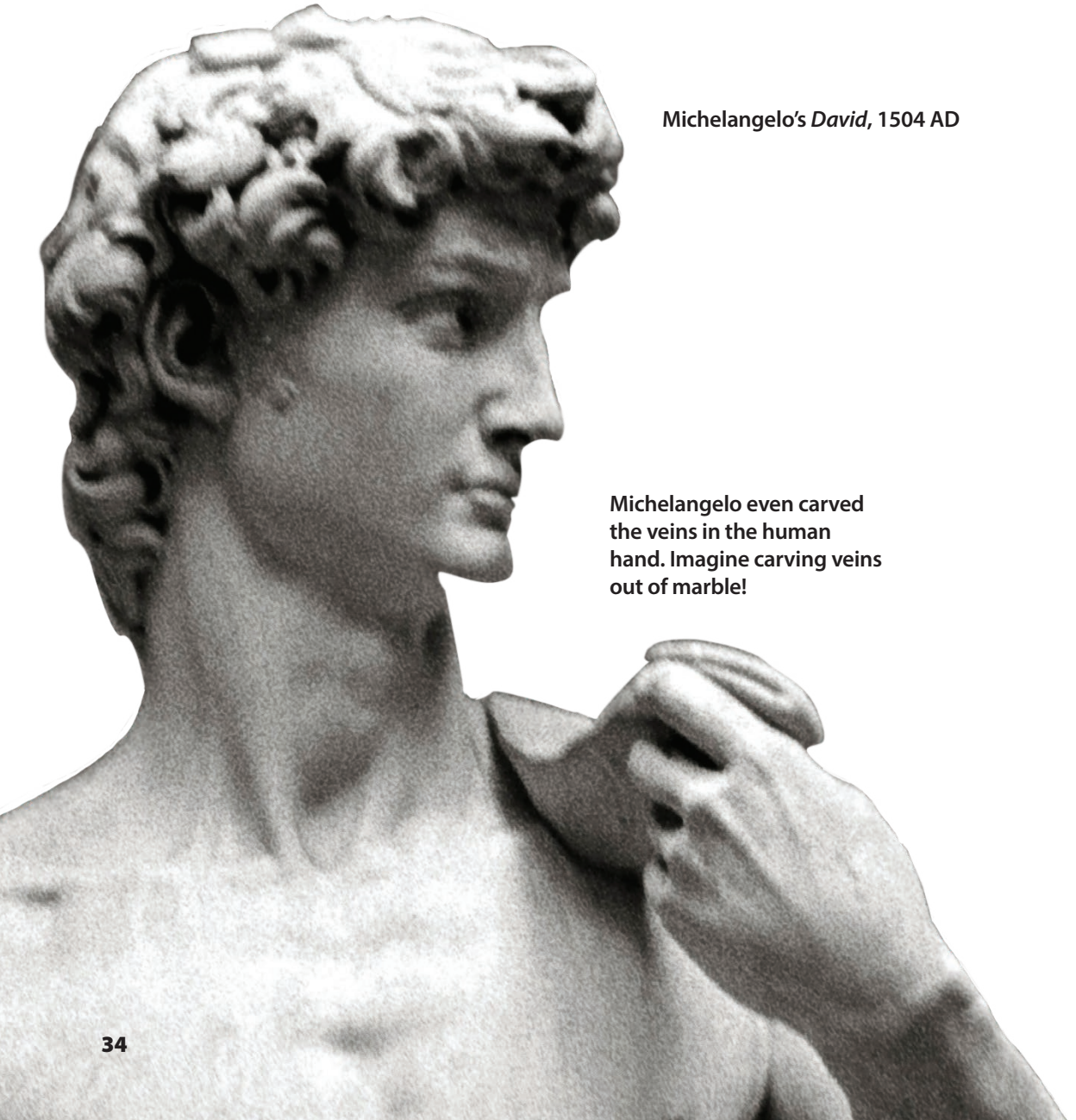
That didn't make Michelangelo happy. Later, in the middle of the night, he returned to the Basilica with hammer and chisel in hand. So there would be no question in the future, he carved his name on the sash that runs diagonally across Mary. As far as anyone knows, this is the only piece of art Michelangelo ever signed.



Michelangelo's *Pietà*, 1499 AD

From the Giant Comes the Giant Slayer

The *Pietà* made Michelangelo the most famous sculptor in Italy. In 1501 AD, he returned to Florence. There, officials of the cathedral showed Michelangelo a huge rectangular block of marble known as "the Giant." They showed him where another artist had begun to work on the huge block but then made a mess of it. The officials challenged Michelangelo: "Can you make something out of this?" they asked. Michelangelo accepted the challenge.



Michelangelo's *David*, 1504 AD

Michelangelo even carved the veins in the human hand. Imagine carving veins out of marble!

From the 20-foot block, he set out to carve a huge statue of David, the biblical hero who had used his slingshot to slay the giant enemy, Goliath.

It took Michelangelo two-and-a-half years to complete his statue of David. The figure stood almost 14 feet high and weighed 11,000 pounds. Like ancient Greek statues, Michelangelo's *David* shows a strong, muscular human form, almost a picture of perfection, a figure full of power and grace.

Church Patronage: Julius II and Michelangelo

Pope Julius II was a man of great ambition, determination, and energy. When his mind was made up, you wouldn't want to be in his way. And he had a terrible temper. In other words, he was a lot like Michelangelo. So when these two powerful personalities came together, sparks were bound to fly.

Julius asked Michelangelo to come to Rome to construct a colossal tomb for him that would be built under the dome of St. Peter's Basilica. Julius was not **modest**—he wanted to be sure people remembered him.

Michelangelo agreed and set to work hauling in tons of stone from the cliffs of Carrara, where he spent his childhood. After great labor and expense, Michelangelo filled St. Peter's square with blocks of marble.

But then Julius gave an order to stop work on this expensive project. He also refused to pay Michelangelo. An angry Michelangelo packed his bags and headed back to Florence. An even angrier Julius sent a messenger to demand that Michelangelo return to Rome. Michelangelo told the messenger he would return when the pope paid what he owed him and stuck to his promises.

Did the pope apologize and pay Michelangelo, and did everyone live happily ever after? Definitely not! Julius sent furious commands to the leaders of Florence: "Send Michelangelo back to Rome," he said, "or I will send my armies to get him." A Florentine leader, who was also a friend of Michelangelo, suggested he return to Rome. After all, he told the angry artist, Florence did not wish to go to war for Michelangelo's sake!

Painting the Sistine Ceiling

It took months, but eventually Michelangelo did go back to Rome. When he arrived, the pope had a job waiting for him. The pope had decided that the tomb could wait. Instead, he wanted Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

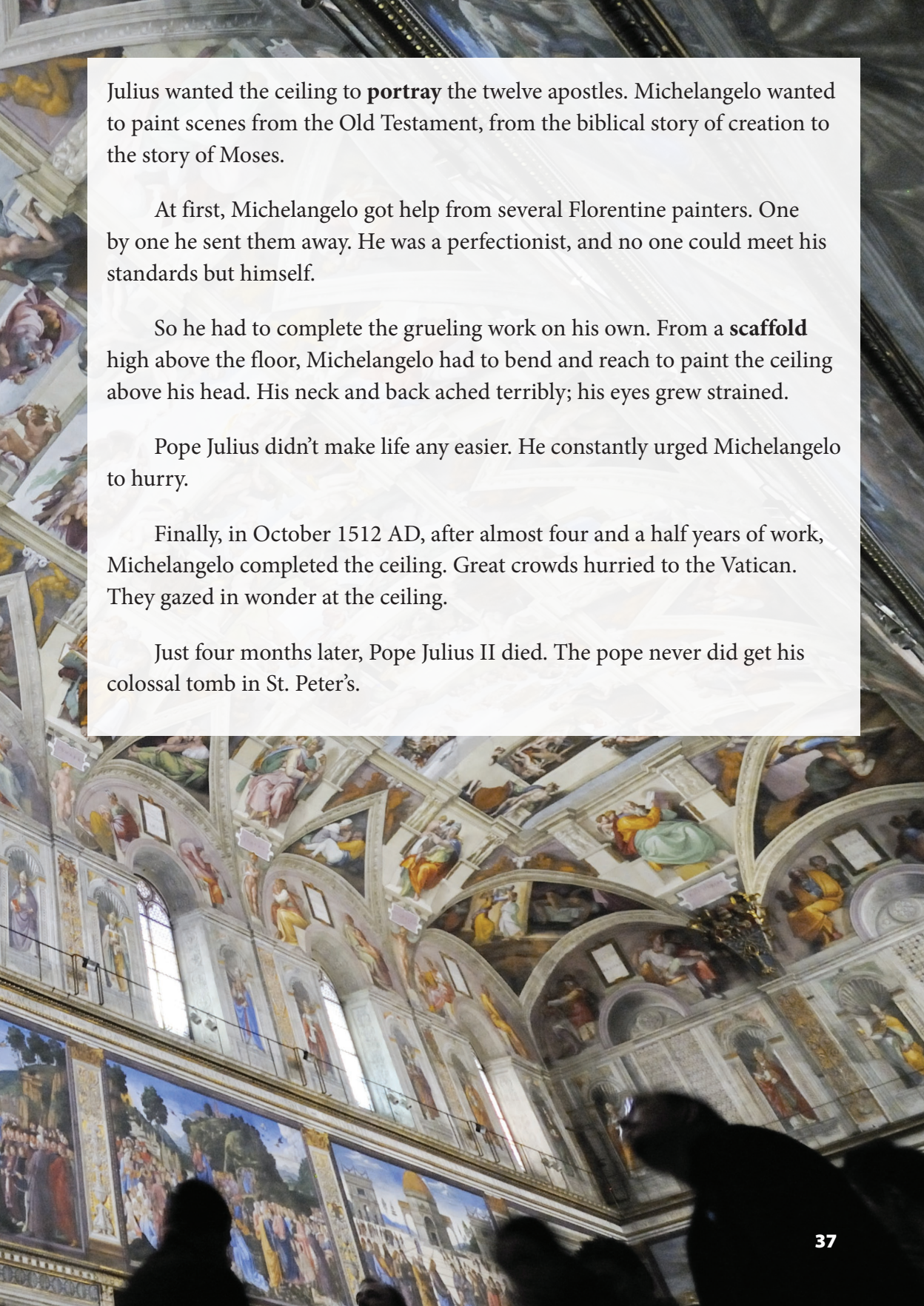
Michelangelo refused: "I am a sculptor, not a painter," he told the pope. And the ceiling itself was immense—a huge, high, curved surface covering more than 5,800 square feet (about twice as big as a tennis court).

Michelangelo urged the pope to give the job to someone else, but the pope insisted. Michelangelo reluctantly agreed.

Years before, when he worked as an apprentice, Michelangelo had learned the technique of fresco painting. In fresco painting, the artist applies a coat of wet plaster to a surface, then paints on the plaster. As the paint and plaster dry together, the painting will become a permanent part of the wall, or in this case, the ceiling.

Michelangelo prepared to start the monumental task of painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. From the beginning, he and the pope disagreed.

In the Sistine Chapel, Botticelli's art is on the walls, and Michelangelo's is on the ceiling.



Julius wanted the ceiling to **portray** the twelve apostles. Michelangelo wanted to paint scenes from the Old Testament, from the biblical story of creation to the story of Moses.

At first, Michelangelo got help from several Florentine painters. One by one he sent them away. He was a perfectionist, and no one could meet his standards but himself.

So he had to complete the grueling work on his own. From a **scaffold** high above the floor, Michelangelo had to bend and reach to paint the ceiling above his head. His neck and back ached terribly; his eyes grew strained.

Pope Julius didn't make life any easier. He constantly urged Michelangelo to hurry.

Finally, in October 1512 AD, after almost four and a half years of work, Michelangelo completed the ceiling. Great crowds hurried to the Vatican. They gazed in wonder at the ceiling.

Just four months later, Pope Julius II died. The pope never did get his colossal tomb in St. Peter's.

The Great Raphael

Raphael was another talented artist of the period. He was born Raffaello Sanzio in 1483 AD. He was younger than both Leonardo and Michelangelo. Raphael lost both of his parents at an early age. By 11, he was on his own, working as an apprentice in a busy art studio.

In 1504 AD, when Raphael was 21, he moved to Florence where Michelangelo and Leonardo were already living. There, he studied the techniques of the older artists and learned to use them in his own paintings.

Remember, in those days artists supported themselves by getting commissions from patrons. The wealthy people of Florence were eager to own beautiful paintings. By the time Raphael arrived, both Leonardo and Michelangelo were not painting as much. As he aged, Leonardo grew more interested in math and science and was reluctant to paint at all. Michelangelo's energies were consumed by big projects assigned to him by the pope. So, young Raphael had many people ready to pay him to paint.

While in Florence, Raphael created at least 17 paintings of the **Madonna**, or mother of Jesus, and the Holy Family for various individuals. If you look at one of Raphael's Madonnas and compare it to a Madonna painted during the Middle Ages, you will see how people's view of the world changed in the Renaissance.

In the medieval image, the Madonna looks a little stiff. But the painting wasn't intended to be lifelike—its main purpose was to express religious devotion.

However, Raphael's painting is different. He presents natural human figures that are so lifelike, it is as if they could step out from the painting.



Cimabue's *Madonna and Child*, 1280 AD



Raphael's *Madonna of the Grand Duke*, 1505 AD



Raphael's *The School of Athens*, 1510 AD



Raphael in Rome

In 1508 AD Raphael was called to Rome by Pope Julius II. While Michelangelo was painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Raphael was put in charge of painting a series of rooms in the Vatican.

In one room he painted a fresco, or mural, that has become very famous. It is called *The School of Athens*. The composition of the painting shows how Raphael was a great master of perspective, while the subject matter shows how much the Renaissance movement admired the ancient Greeks. Raphael painted many scholars and philosophers—some are reading, some are discussing big ideas. In the center of the painting, Raphael placed the great philosophers, Plato and Aristotle.

After Raphael's patron, Pope Julius II, died, Raphael became a special favorite of Pope Leo X. Leo put Raphael in charge of the work on St. Peter's Basilica. In addition, Raphael directed the efforts to dig up and study ancient buildings and statues in Rome.

Raphael led a productive life. The artist died on his thirty-seventh birthday. Part of the **epitaph** on his tomb in Rome reads, "While he lived he made Mother Nature fear to be vanquished by him."

Chapter 5

The Bankers Who Loved Art

THE BIG QUESTION
What motivated Renaissance patrons to commission so much art?

The Medici family of Florence was incredibly wealthy. You have already heard some stories about Lorenzo de' Medici and the artists he supported. Let's first learn more about Lorenzo's grandfather, Cosimo, who really established the family as patrons of great art.



Cosimo de' Medici

By the mid-1400s, Cosimo de' Medici had built a thriving international banking business, taking advantage of the success of Italian merchants trading goods with other countries. Bankers would charge fees to exchange foreign money for local money and to provide loans to customers. He and his family made the city of Florence the banking center of Europe.

Like his ancestors, Cosimo was a **shrewd** businessman. However, something else also captured his interest.

Cosimo had grown up surrounded by the ruins of the Roman Empire. As a child, he had looked at the crumbling buildings and wondered: 'Who were these Romans? What can I learn from them?'

As an adult, Cosimo collected rare books and manuscripts. He hired **scribes** to copy and **translate** them. He made sure his own children read great works by the Roman poet Virgil and the Greek philosopher Plato. He built libraries.



Gallery of the Palazzo Medici

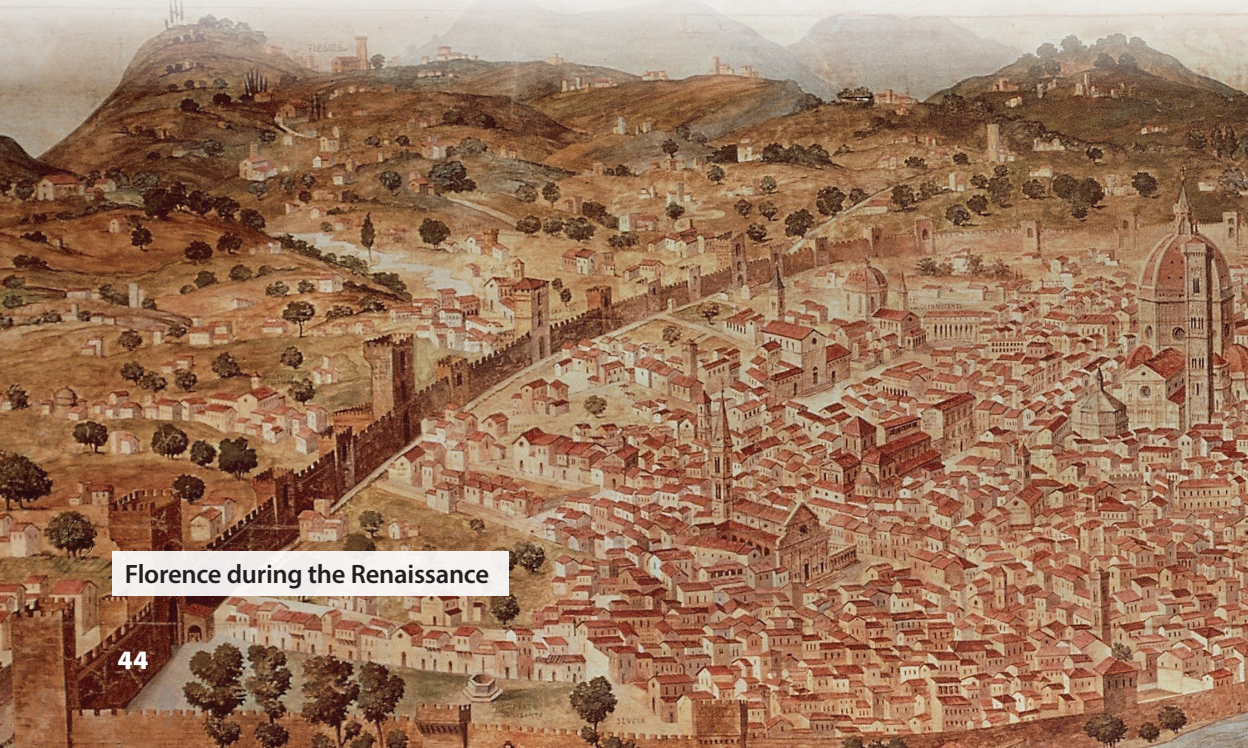
Who's Really in Charge?

Cosimo de' Medici was a great patron of the arts. The Medici family home became a gathering place for thinkers and artists from around the world. Many artists lived with Cosimo as they worked on their statues and paintings.

One idea from the ancient Greeks really appealed to Cosimo de' Medici. This was the idea of democracy—rule by the people. Cosimo liked the idea of creating a new society in Florence modeled on Greek ideas. But for Cosimo, democracy was only an idea. In reality, the city of Florence was not run in a democratic way because Cosimo controlled Florence.

Here is the way democracy was supposed to work in Florence: The craftsmen and merchants of Florence joined together in special groups called *guilds*, such as the wool merchants' guild, the silk weavers' guild, and the doctors' and pharmacists' guild. The guild members elected councilmen, and these councilmen were supposed to govern the city.

That was a step toward democracy. But it was actually Cosimo who told guild members which councilmen to elect. These men were friends of his who followed his suggestions closely. By this method, Cosimo de' Medici indirectly ruled Florence for thirty years.



Florence during the Renaissance

The citizens of Florence liked Cosimo well enough that they did not protest his way of ruling the city. After all, Cosimo successfully protected the city from its enemies. He made generous gifts to charity, and business in Florence was booming.

When Cosimo de' Medici died at the age of 76, the grateful people of Florence gave him the title "Father of Our Country."

Like Father, Not Like Son

After Cosimo's death, his son Piero took charge of Florence. Piero suffered from gout, a painful disease of the joints, and had to be carried from place to place on a stretcher.

Piero did not inherit his father's leadership or banking skills, but he did love art. Frail Piero ruled only a few years before he died. Piero's son, Lorenzo, became ruler of Florence when he was only twenty years old.

Lively, dashing, and popular, Lorenzo was the opposite of his sickly father. He played sports, wrote songs, and loved to discuss poetry and philosophy. Lorenzo enjoyed the good life so much that when his father died, he hesitated to take charge of Florence. He soon realized, however, that in Florence, if you weren't in charge, you wouldn't stay wealthy. His peacemaking skills won the hearts of his countrymen and the respect of other leaders in Europe. People began to call him "Lorenzo the Magnificent."



Patron and Poet

Like his father and grandfather, Lorenzo loved classical literature and art. He wrote poetry. The Platonic Academy, a group of learned scholars, continued to meet at his house. He carried on the family tradition of supporting many painters and sculptors and filling his home with beautiful works of art.

Lorenzo started the school of sculpture where the great Michelangelo trained as a young boy. And as you have discovered, Lorenzo was a patron of and friend to Michelangelo. He also supported such great Renaissance artists as Botticelli and Verrocchio, the master from Leonardo's days as an apprentice.

Severe Savonarola

Lorenzo had ruled Florence for about ten years when the monk named Savonarola came to the city. Little did Lorenzo know the trouble this man would bring. You have already heard about how Savonarola's harsh sermons prompted Botticelli to change his style of painting. As soon as Savonarola arrived in town, he began preaching against the Medici family. He said they cared too much about their fancy belongings. He made the same charges against the people of Florence.

Lorenzo tried to make peace with Savonarola by giving a donation to the monastery where the monk lived. Savonarola returned the money with an insult. He said a good monk is "like a good watchdog—when a thief comes along and throws him a bone, he puts it to one side and goes on barking."



Renaissance feast

The End of the Medici Family

In 1492 AD, Lorenzo died at the age of forty three, leaving his twenty one-year-old son Piero in charge. This Piero was known as "Piero the Unfortunate" because of his poor judgment and complete lack of political knowledge.

Two years later, the French invaded Florence, and Piero was forced to leave the city. Angry mobs broke into the Medici family home and tore it to pieces, destroying or selling off many valuable items.

After Piero's departure, Savonarola took charge of the city for a while. He had a grand plan to turn Florence into a model city of Christian **virtue**. But his expectations were too high, and his rules were too strict. For example, he sent out bands of men who patrolled the streets and carried sticks to beat anyone whose clothing they thought was too fancy.



Savonarola

Although Savonarola's message was harsh, many people listened to him. Once he urged his followers to build a huge bonfire in the town square. He told the people of Florence to throw in their "vanities," the things he considered fancy and unnecessary. Men and women tossed jewelry and expensive clothing, even paintings and books, into the roaring blaze, which is remembered as the "bonfire of the vanities."

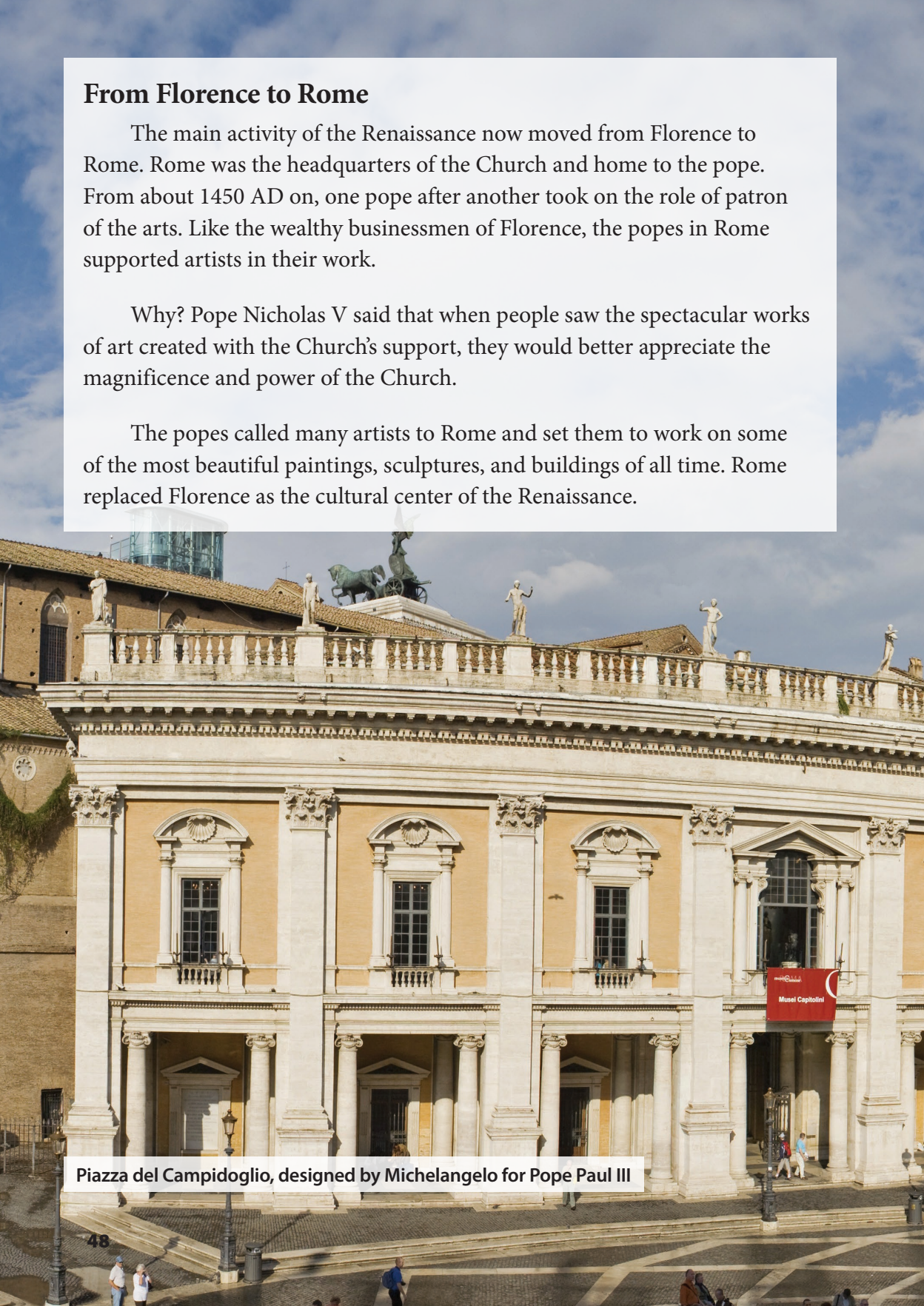
Although Savonarola was a monk, he openly **insulted** the powerful leader of the Church, the pope. He said that Pope Alexander VI was **corrupt**. At first, the pope ordered Savonarola to stop giving sermons. This didn't quiet the angry monk. Later, the pope excommunicated Savonarola, which means he took away his membership of the Church. Then Savonarola was accused of the crime of heresy—of holding beliefs that disagreed with the Church. Back then, the Church was very powerful and demanded that people follow its rules. It was a serious crime to be a heretic. Eventually, Savonarola angered the Church so much that he was arrested, convicted, and executed.

From Florence to Rome

The main activity of the Renaissance now moved from Florence to Rome. Rome was the headquarters of the Church and home to the pope. From about 1450 AD on, one pope after another took on the role of patron of the arts. Like the wealthy businessmen of Florence, the popes in Rome supported artists in their work.

Why? Pope Nicholas V said that when people saw the spectacular works of art created with the Church's support, they would better appreciate the magnificence and power of the Church.

The popes called many artists to Rome and set them to work on some of the most beautiful paintings, sculptures, and buildings of all time. Rome replaced Florence as the cultural center of the Renaissance.



Piazza del Campidoglio, designed by Michelangelo for Pope Paul III

The Vatican and St. Peter's Today

The pope lives in the Vatican, a short name used for the Palace of the Vatican. This huge building contains the official home of the pope as well as many museums, chapels, Church offices, and a library. It is located in what is now called Vatican City. Vatican City used to be part of Rome, but now it's a separate country. (That's right, Vatican City is a country; in fact, it's the smallest independent country in the world.)

One of the most important buildings in Vatican City is St. Peter's Basilica, which was designed and built mostly during the Renaissance.



St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City

Venice: The Floating City

The Republic of Venice, a great trading center of the Renaissance, was a city-state north of Florence and Rome. Venice is perched on the Adriatic Sea, between Europe and Asia. In the Middle Ages, the merchants of Venice were trading in Constantinople and as far away as China. The Venetians loaded their ships with silver and woolen cloth from Europe, as well as fine glassware produced in Venice, to trade with merchants to the east. They returned with silk and porcelain from China or spices from the East Indies. By the 1400s, Venice was known for more than just trading. It had built a fleet of ships and won battles to take over neighboring city-states. Venice became very wealthy and powerful.

During the Renaissance, wealthy Venetians not only supported many artists, they also built a city that is a work of art. Venice is a city on the water—not just near but *on* the water. The city rests on more than 100 small islands. To connect many of the islands, the Venetians built bridges as well as a maze of narrow waterways. These waterways, called canals, crisscrossed the city and made it possible to get from one little island to another. The most famous of the canals, the Grand Canal, winds through the city for about two miles. Even today, people travel on the canals in long, sleek, flat-bottomed boats called gondolas.

At the heart of the city's life was the huge open area called St. Mark's Square, where thousands of pigeons flock before the doors of the magnificent church called St. Mark's Basilica.

The Master of Color

Titian was considered to be the greatest Venetian artist of the 1500s. He is perhaps best known for his use of vibrant color. Titian's portraits reveal his ability to capture his subjects' personalities. As well as people, his paintings often contain mythological and religious themes.



Titian's *Charles V at Mühlberg*, 1548 AD



Map of Venice from the early 1600s

Chapter 6

Morals, Modesty, and Manners

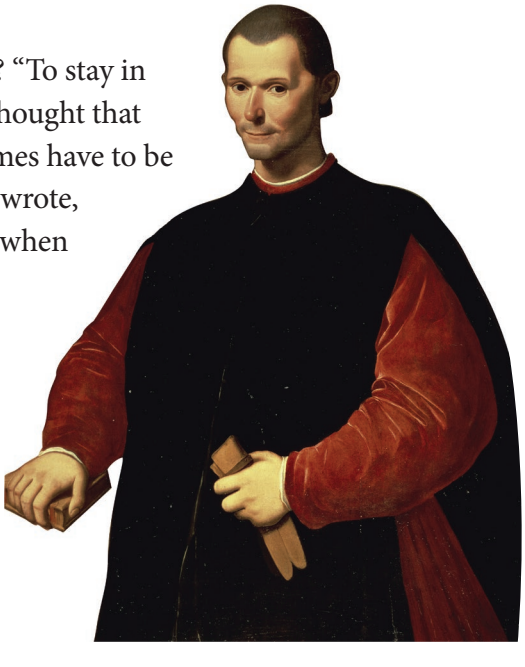
THE BIG QUESTION
What were the Renaissance ideals of how a prince or a courtier should act?

Niccolò Machiavelli worked for the government of Florence in the late 1400s. He witnessed the Medici family fall from power, and he witnessed the bitter struggles between the city-states in Italy, between city-states and foreign countries, and between the pope and other rulers.

All this fighting among rulers made him think. He thought about how a prince should rule his people. Because of all the fighting, he especially thought about how a prince should defend himself against enemies and remain in power. He wrote his ideas in a famous book called *The Prince.* This book was a study of the art of politics, and its publication caused much discussion among the rulers of the time.

What is the chief goal of a prince? "To stay in power," said Machiavelli. Machiavelli thought that to keep his power, a prince might at times have to be dishonest. "A wise leader," Machiavelli wrote, "cannot and should not keep his word when keeping it is not to his advantage."

Machiavelli asked, "Is it better [for a prince] to be loved than to be feared, or the reverse?" Machiavelli said that a prince should wish to be both loved and feared. But he also said that if a ruler had to choose one or the other, then it would be better for people to fear him.



Niccolò Machiavelli

IL PRINCIPE.

DI NICOLO MACHIAVELLI

SEGRETARIO ET CITTADINO FIORENTINO.

Quante siano le specie de i Principati; & con quali modi si acquistino. CAP. I.

TVTTI li Stati, tutti i Dominj che hanno hauuto & hanno Imperio sopra gli huomini, sono stati & sono o Republiche ò Principati. I Principati sono ò hereditarij, de' quali il sangue del loro Signore ne sia stato lungo tempo Principe; ò e' sono nuoui. I nuoui, ò sono nuoui tutti; come fu Milano à Francesco Sforza; ò sono come membra aggiunti à lo Stato hereditario del Principe che li acquista; come è il Regno di Napoli al Re di Spagna: Sono questi dominj così acquistati, ò consueti à viuere sotto vn Principe, ò vsi ad essere liberi; & acquistansi ò con l'armi d'altri, ò con proprie; ò per fortuna, ò per virtu.

De i Principati hereditarij CAP II.

IO lascerò indietro il ragionare delle Republiche, perche altra volta ne ragionai à lungo. Volterommi solo al Principato; & anderò nel ritessere queste orditure di sopra, disputando come questi Principati si possono gouernare & mantenere. Dico adunque che nelli Stati hereditarij & assuefatti al sangue del loro Principe, sono assai minori difficultà à mantenerli che ne' nuoi: perche basta solo, non trapassare l'ordine de' suoi antenati, & dipoi, temporeggiare con li accidenti. In modo che si tal Principe è di ordinaria industria, sempre si manterrà nel suo Stato, se non è vna straordinaria & eccessiua forza che ne lo priua; & priuato che ne sia, quantunque di sinistro habbia lo occupatore, lo racquista. Noi habbiamo in Italia per essempio il Duca di Ferrara, il quale non hà retto à gli assalti de' Venitiani nel LXXXIIII. *ne à quegli di Papa Iulio nel* X. *per al-*

The first page of *The Prince* by Machiavelli

These ideas and others were misinterpreted and have given Machiavelli a bad **reputation** over the years. Even today, if you describe someone as "Machiavellian," you mean that person is crafty, sneaky, power-hungry, and willing to use any means to achieve their ends.

Get Real!

Some historians think Machiavelli doesn't deserve his bad reputation. They say he was a wise man who preferred a government in which the people had a say, as it had been back in the Roman Republic. They say that in *The Prince,* Machiavelli was just being realistic. He was simply writing about what men do, rather than what they should do, and the challenges of governing a large population.

Others disagree. They think that Machiavelli had a too dark and **pessimistic** view of human nature. They think that people aren't as bad as Machiavelli thought.

The Bad Borgias

When Machiavelli wrote about princes who didn't keep their promises, he often had the Borgia family in mind.

Many historians agree that the Borgias were often cruel, dangerous, and violent people. Rodrigo Borgia, who became Pope Alexander VI, holds the unpleasant reputation of being one of the most corrupt popes of all times. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli wrote this about Alexander VI: "There never was a man more effective in swearing that things were true, and the greater the oaths with which he made a promise, the less he observed it."

Rodrigo's second son, Cesare Borgia, was considered to be a **brute**. Unfortunately, he was put in charge of an army. Machiavelli traveled with Cesare at times and was impressed by his military skills. Cesare knew how to get power and keep it. He ruthlessly tried to conquer everything that lay in his path.

When Cesare decided he wanted to take possession of the city of Camerino, he visited his friend, the Duke of Urbino. Cesare asked to borrow all of Urbino's cannons so he could use them to attack Camerino.

The Duke, a trusting man, agreed to Cesare's request. But that night, Cesare marched back into his friend's city and conquered Urbino with its own cannons!

Later, Cesare went on to capture Camerino by deception, too. He negotiated with the rulers of the city. If they would surrender, then Cesare promised to let them off easily. They agreed to surrender. Then Cesare betrayed them. As soon as Cesare and his army entered the city, he gave orders for the rulers to be killed.



Cesare Borgia

Fortunately, the Borgias did not stay in power long. Rodrigo Borgia, also known as Pope Alexander VI, died in 1503 AD. Cesare was chased out of Italy. He died in battle in Spain at the age of 31.



Urbino, Italy

From *The Prince*

Machiavelli also greatly admired ancient Greece and ancient Rome. In a letter he wrote to a friend, Machiavelli said that he wrote *The Prince* after reading many works of history by "the ancients," the classical writers of Greece and Rome. "I give myself completely over to the ancients," Machiavelli said. Here are some excerpts from *The Prince*.

"Anyone who determines to act in all circumstances the part of a good man must come to ruin among so many who are not good. Hence, if a prince wishes to maintain himself, he must learn how not to be good, and to use that ability or not as is required."

"The experience of our times shows that the princes who have done great things are the ones who have taken little account of their promises and who have known how to addle the brains of men with their craft."

"If men were all good, this advice would not be good, but since men are wicked and do not keep their promises to you, you likewise do not have to keep your promises to them."

"So far as he is able, a prince should stick to the path of good but, if the necessity arises, he should know how to follow evil."

Castiglione and *The Courtier*

In the early 1500s, Baldassar Castiglione wrote *The Book of the Courtier*. It's commonly known as *The Courtier* for short. In great detail, the book describes how the ideal courtier should behave.

What's a Courtier?

The word *court* is in *courtier*. There is the kind of court where trials take place with a judge and sometimes a jury. But this is a different kind of court—the court of a king or prince. A prince's court might mean the palace or mansion where the prince lives. The court also includes the royal family, servants, officers, and advisers of the prince.

A *courtier* is a person who spends a lot of time at the court of the prince. Sometimes, when people refer to a courtier, they mean a person who hangs around the prince and flatters him and tries to gain his favor, but this doesn't apply to all courtiers.


IL CORTEGIANO
DEL CONTE
BALDASSARE
CASTIGLIONE.
Riueduttо, & corretto da ANTONIO
CICCARELLI da Fuligni, Dottore
in Theologia.
Al Sereniſſimo Signor Duca d'Vrbino:

Part of the title page of *The Book of the Courtier*

The Book of the Courtier describes the right ways to behave at court among royals and nobles. It describes the ideals of courtly life.



Baldassar Castiglione

Castiglione said that a lady should be "**witty**, elegant, and cultured." He said a gentleman should be "loyal to his prince and courteous to women." The courtier should be "athletic, sensitive, artistic, and well-educated."

A perfect courtier should be able to do everything well: he should be a skilled horseman, a bold soldier in battle, a graceful dancer, and more. He should be "well built and shapely of limb," not too short or too tall. And he should be a remarkable athlete: he should excel in jousting, wrestling, tennis, and spear-throwing! But, said Castiglione, the courtier should avoid some activities, "such as turning somersaults, rope-walking, and the like, which ... little befit a gentleman."

You might think that a courtier who can do everything well would be rather conceited, but it's important, Castiglione said, to be "gentle, modest, and reserved." In other words, don't be a show-off.

Most important of all, the courtier "must accompany his actions, gestures, habits, in short his every movement, with grace." Even when the courtier is doing something very difficult, he should do it so gracefully that it looks easy. The Italian word for this quality is *sprezzatura*. It means the ability to make things look easy, as though you hardly have to try or think about what you're doing.

Della Casa's Guide to Manners of the Renaissance

During the Renaissance, what people considered "good manners" changed quite a bit. In the 1500s, Giovanni della Casa wrote a book about etiquette, or the **customs** for polite behavior. Della Casa was a poet and diplomat from Florence. The book, known in Italian as *Il Galateo,* is largely addressed to his nephew, and therefore takes on a familiar tone, though he intended to reach a wide range of people.

Della Casa detailed proper ways to sit and stand in the company of others. He explained how best to blow your nose, to cut your nails, and to chew your food. He even discussed situations where it might be okay —or not—to express your feelings. The excerpts below reveal just how important good manners and polite behavior were to della Casa.

"It is moreover extremely indecent to spit, cough, and expectorate (as it were) in company, as some hearty fellows are apt to do: and more so, when you have blown your nose, to draw aside and examine the contents of your handkerchief; as if you expected pearls or rubies to distill from your brain. These kinds of habits, in good company, are so very nauseous and disgusting, that if we **indulge** ourselves in them, no one can be very fond of our acquaintance."

"It is also an inelegant custom, for any one to apply his nose, by way of smelling to a glass of beverage, which another person is to drink; or to a plate of meat, which another is to eat. Nay, I would not advise anyone to smell to anything, which he himself intends to eat or drink: since there is a possibility, at least, that his nose may drop upon it; or the very idea may offend the company, though by good luck that accident may not then befall them."

"What now can we suppose…to say to those people, whom we sometimes see thrusting, like hogs, their very *snouts* into their soup, so as not once to lift up their eyes from their hands, from what is set before them? Who, with their cheeks inflated as if they were sounding a trumpet, or puffing up the fire, do not so properly eat, as devour their food?"

Chapter 7

Women in the Renaissance

THE BIG QUESTION
What opportunities did the Renaissance movement afford to some wealthy women of the time?

Although many Renaissance women ran a household as expected by the cultural **norms** of the day, some women became powerful and influential despite all that stood in their way. One such woman was Isabella d'Este.



Isabella d'Este

Isabella was born in the Italian city-state of Ferrara in 1474 AD. **Fortunately**, her father, the Duke of Ferrara, believed in the importance of educating both his sons *and* his daughters.

Isabella blossomed into a brilliant student. When she was only six years old, she knew Latin and Greek and played the lute, a popular instrument during the Renaissance, similar to a guitar. She was a feisty little girl who could and would debate anyone on any topic. Other children called her "La Prima Donna" or "The First Lady."

Engaged and Married

As was the custom long ago, the Duke of Ferrara arranged marriages for his children. Arranged marriages allowed powerful families to form political ties and **alliances** with other powerful families. So, Isabella became engaged to Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua.

The wedding took place when Isabella turned 16, a normal age in those times for a girl to get married. Through this marriage Isabella became related to many ruling families in Italy.

After Isabella moved to Mantua, a beautiful city in northern Italy, she wasted no time getting involved in the politics of the city. Francesco was often away, fighting one battle after another with various city-states and countries. When Francesco was out of town, Isabella skillfully governed the people.

In 1509 AD, while Francesco was leading troops against the city of Venice, he was captured and put in jail for several years. With Francesco gone, it might have seemed like a good opportunity for the princes of unfriendly city-states to try to take over Mantua. But Isabella made it clear to potential enemies that she was very much in charge and they had better not try anything. While Francesco was in prison, she managed to fight off enemies and form strong alliances with other rulers.

Once released from jail, Isabella's husband left to fight more battles. He fought against the French for a few years and died in 1519 AD.

After that, Isabella led Mantua on her own. She kept her enemies out and made certain that both Mantua and her home city of Ferrara stayed independent and unharmed.



Ducal palace in Mantua where Isabella lived

A Passion for the Arts

Not only was Isabella an outstanding ruler, she was also a great patron of the arts. She collected antiques, rare books, and all types of artwork.

Tucked away in the Castle of St. George in Mantua, Isabella built a special room. She called it her *grotta*, which means "cave." This treasure chamber contained the works of many of the great artists of the day. Gorgeous paintings hung on the walls of the grotta. In beautifully carved wooden cabinets she kept ancient coins and medals, precious jewels, and gemstones.

Sculptors, writers, and painters visited Isabella's home often. She employed many of them. In fact, for many years she tried to persuade the great Leonardo da Vinci to paint her portrait. All she could get him to do was a drawing. At one point, he made the excuse that he was too busy working out geometry problems to stop and paint.

Finally, Isabella paid another great Renaissance artist, Titian, to capture her likeness on canvas. Titian did *too* precise a job. His portrait accurately portrayed Isabella, who was sixty years old at the time. When she looked at the picture, Isabella became furious and demanded that he repaint it. On his second try, Titian wisely made Isabella look a good twenty years younger!

Isabella didn't forget her fellow women, either. She started a school where young girls could learn Greek, Latin, the arts, philosophy, and literature.

Isabella was an unusual woman for her time. She is justly remembered as the "First Lady of the Renaissance."

Noble Women

Renaissance women inspired writers to create poetry, sculptors to **fashion** statues, and artists to paint beautiful portraits. However, the sculptor's chisel and the painter's brush were mostly kept out of the hands of women.

Although Renaissance men believed they could do almost anything, they didn't think the same of women. Men of the Renaissance believed that a young woman born into a noble, wealthy family had three duties: (1) she should marry a rich man from an important family; (2) she should be loyal to that husband; and (3) she should give him sons.



Titian's second portrait of Isabella d'Este, 1536 AD

Overcoming Obstacles

Some women overcame the **obstacles** of their time and became respected artists in their own right. Well-known for her portrait work, Sofonisba Anguissola (1530–1625 AD) is one of the earliest known female artists. Most female artists of the time were the daughters of painters. However, Sofonisba's father was not a painter but a wealthy nobleman.

The oldest of seven children, Sofonisba had five younger sisters and a brother. Her father, Amilcare Anguissola, read and lived by the famous words of Castiglione's *The Courtier*, including the importance of educating young women. Both Sofonisba and her sister Elena lived and trained with **prominent** local artists. Under her father's encouragement, Sofonisba received early inspiration from notable artists including Michelangelo. As a young artist, Sofonisba trained three of her younger sisters to be painters.

Her most well-known works include many self-portraits and the famous family portrait *Lucia, Minerva, and Europa Anguissola Playing Chess*. Lucia, Minerva, and Europa are three of her younger sisters. The painting captures a glimpse of noble family life during this time.

One of the first-known women to paint large figure paintings was the daughter of Italian painter Prospero Fontana. Lavinia Fontana (1552–1614 AD) received patronage from the family of Pope Gregory XIII and painted portraits of many well-known individuals. Recognized for her attention to detail and the use of vibrant colors, her self-portraits and family paintings were **reminiscent** of Sofonisba Anguissola. Lavinia married lesser-known artist Gian Paolo Zappi, who ultimately worked as her agent.



Lavinia Fontana's *Self Portrait at the Spinet*, 1578 AD



Detail from Sofonisba Anguissola's, *Self-Portrait*, 1556 AD

Renaissance Style

During the European Renaissance, there was more freedom in the style of dress, and headdresses allowed more hair to show than had previously been considered acceptable. The high collars and starched ruffs, or pleated collars, of this period led to upswept hairstyles that were sometimes formed over a wire frame in a heart shape. In England a variety of beards, mustaches, and hairstyles for men became popular during the reign of Henry VIII. The popularity of Queen Elizabeth I inspired her subjects to wear red wigs or dye their hair red and shave their hairlines to give the appearance of a high forehead like hers.

Toward the end of the 1500s, a red-blonde hair color was popularized in paintings by Italian artist Titian. To achieve the color, Venetian women applied mixtures of alum, sulfur, soda, and rhubarb to their hair and sat in the sun to let it dry. A new custom in Renaissance France was to grind flowers into a powder and apply the mixture to hair. Blonde hair was considered especially stylish for women. Women often bleached their hair to make it blonde. Wigs or fake locks of hair made from yellow or white silk were also common.

Clothing was an important **status symbol** during the Renaissance. The wealthy dressed in fancy clothing. A wealthy person would have a variety of clothes made from fine materials, furs, and silks. Peasants, on the other hand, typically had only one or two sets of clothing. Wealthy men wore colorful tights or stockings with a shirt and tight-fitting coat called a doublet.



Renaissance fashion

They also often wore hats. Wealthy women wore long dresses with high waists and puffy sleeves and shoulders. Sometimes their dresses were embellished with embroidery stitched with gold and silver thread. Women had elaborate gold jewelry decorated with expensive jewels like pearls and sapphires. In some areas, laws that had been in effect since the early 1300s prevented the lower classes from wearing nice clothes. In England there were many laws that specified who could wear what types of clothes. Only certain social classes could wear clothes of specific colors and materials. In some areas only nobles were allowed to wear fur.

Marriages to Keep the Peace

During the Renaissance, in upper-class families most marriages were arranged by parents, usually while the children were still young. Therefore, men and women did not usually date each other, fall in love, and then get married.

Fathers preferred that their daughters marry rich and powerful men from other city-states or countries. There was a good reason for this. When the daughter of a prince in one city-state married the son of a ruler in another city-state, the two families would be much less likely to go to war. With a son, daughter, and grandchildren between them, the two rulers would have too much in common to fight each other.

This practice of arranged political marriages became common all across Europe. After a while, many of the ruling families were related to each other.



The wedding of Catherine de' Medici to Prince Henry of France

Chapter 8

The Northern Renaissance

THE BIG QUESTION
How did the Renaissance movement in Italy impact the artists of northern Europe?

Until now, we have only read about the Renaissance movement in Italy. The Renaissance reached other parts of Europe as well.

Scholars and artists in other countries were also enjoying a rebirth of learning. Sometimes these scholars and artists visited the city-states of Italy, especially Florence, and brought ideas and artwork back to their home countries. These countries included Germany and the region that used to be called Flanders, which is now part of the Netherlands and Belgium.

We are going to read about four painters: two were German, and two were Flemish, which means they were from Flanders. Because they lived in countries north of Italy, people often say that they are part of "The Northern Renaissance."

The Master of Detail

Jan van Eyck was born in about 1390 AD. He lived in Flanders. Van Eyck's countrymen called him the "King of the Painters." He is one of the early figures involved in the Northern Renaissance. Van Eyck painted at about the same time that Brunelleschi was working as an architect in Italy.

Van Eyck developed new kinds of oil paint that gave his pictures a sharp and brilliant look. He discovered new ways to show light and texture in his paintings. He could realistically portray the tiniest details in a painting. In a painting of Giovanni Arnolfini, a portrait that van Eyck painted for an Italian businessman living in Flanders, van Eyck emphasized the texture of the subjects' clothing as well as the light pouring through the open window.



Jan van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434 AD

Dürer: Self-Portrait of the Artist

Albrecht Dürer was born in 1471 AD to Hungarian parents living in Germany. (He was just a little older than Michelangelo, who was born in 1475 AD.) Dürer was fascinated by the artistic developments happening in Italy at the time. He made two trips to Italy in order to learn as much as he could from the great masters.

Dürer was a proud supporter of the Renaissance movement. The very fact that he painted so many portraits and self-portraits demonstrates his desire to understand the humanity of his subjects. It shows his belief in the importance of the individual, especially one particular individual—himself!

Dürer began sketching himself when he was only 13 and would continue to capture his likeness in self-portraits throughout his career. In the *Self-Portrait* he painted in 1498 AD, Dürer showed himself as a handsome young man with a taste for fine clothes. It is a painting that reveals how much he was influenced by his Italian masters. In the famous *Self-Portrait* painted in 1500 AD, Dürer looks directly at us with bold, confident eyes. Many portraits at the time showed the person from the side, or a three-quarters angle, rather than head on. Dürer perfected the art of portraiture. His **keen** artist's eye captured not only a range of human expressions and emotions, but also that of skin tone and texture.



Dürer's *Self-Portrait*, 1498 AD

Dürer was not only a great painter; he was also a master of the art of making prints with woodcuts or engravings. As a young apprentice he learned how to make woodcuts by carving pictures in blocks of wood, as well as engravings, by using a sharp tool to cut an image into a metal plate. He would spread ink on the carved wood or the metal plate then print the image on paper. Dürer's woodcuts and engravings made him famous, partly because they could be quickly and easily reproduced, so many people could see them.



Dürer's *Self-Portrait*, 1500 AD

Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Pieter Bruegel the Elder was born in the city of Antwerp, which is in the country we now call Belgium. (He is called the Elder because his son, Pieter the Younger, was a painter, too.) Like Venice and Florence in Italy, Antwerp was a busy trading city with many banks and businesses—which meant there were many wealthy people ready to buy works of art. Most of these people wanted paintings in the style of the great Italian masters such as Michelangelo and Raphael. So Bruegel traveled to Italy to see what he could learn.

When it came to painting, however, Bruegel went his own way. You won't find heroic-looking, muscular figures such as the ones Michelangelo painted on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. You won't find many scenes from classical mythology in Bruegel's work. His paintings are very different from anything like Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*.

One of the few paintings in which Bruegel did choose to use a classical myth as the theme is *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*. It's as though Bruegel were saying, "What's all the fuss about these myths? I'll give you a painting about a myth, but in my own way."



Bruegel's *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, 1558 AD

Bruegel's way was to make the myth only a small part of the painting. He chose the Greek myth of Daedalus, the master inventor, and his son Icarus. For King Minos, Daedalus designed a giant maze called the Labyrinth, from which no one could escape. Later, when the king grew angry with Daedalus, he locked him in the Labyrinth along with Icarus. But Daedalus soon came up with a plan to escape. Little by little, he gathered many feathers, then fastened them together with wax to make wings like those of a bird. He and his son used the wings to fly out of the Labyrinth. But in his excitement Icarus ignored his father's warnings not to fly too high. Up and up he flew until the sun began to melt the wax. The feathers fell from his wings, and down **plunged** Icarus into the sea.

Bruegel's painting shows the fall of Icarus, though at first glance you might not even notice it. Look at the bottom right corner of the painting. Do you see two legs sticking out of the water near the ship? That's Icarus falling into the water—and that's all of the myth Bruegel chose to show. Bruegel draws our attention away from the myth and makes us look at everyday life, at the farmer plowing and the shepherd with his flock.



Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding*, 1567 AD

Bruegel is best known for his pictures of everyday people. For example, he painted *Peasant Wedding* (also known as *The Wedding Feast*) in the late 1560s. Bruegel shows the peasants as he saw them. He doesn't try to "prettify" the scene. This is not a fancy feast. The simple food is being carried on rough boards. In the **foreground**, you can see a child licking her fingers, making sure she gets every last bit out of the bowl. In the middle left, the piper is looking hungrily at the food passing by. He's probably hoping there will be some food left for him after he finishes playing!

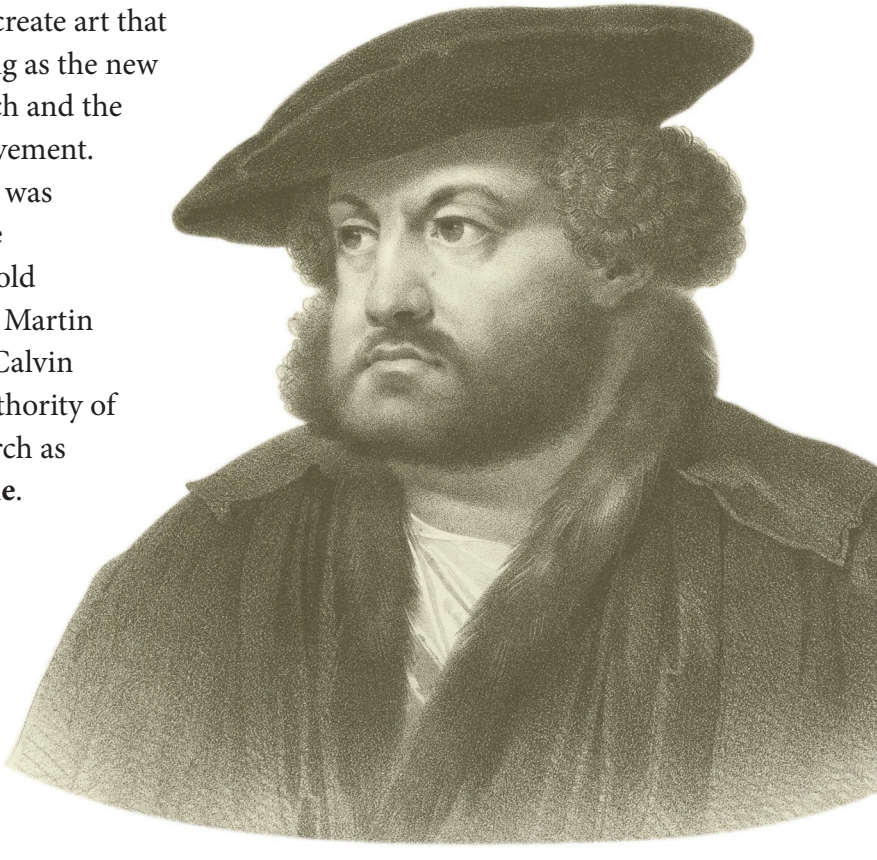
Bruegel's sons, grandsons, and even great-grandsons became artists. But none equaled or surpassed his great works.



Holbein's *Portrait of Sir Thomas More*, 1527 AD

Hans Holbein the Younger

German painter, draftsman, and designer Hans Holbein the Younger (1497–1543 AD) came from a family of notable artists. His father, Hans Holbein the Elder, was a **renowned** artist. His uncle and brother were acclaimed artists, too. Following the tradition of Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein the Younger was a master portrait artist. He knew many famous humanist scholars of the time and painted many of their portraits. For example, he created portraits of the great Renaissance scholar Erasmus and the English humanist Sir Thomas More. Hans Holbein the Younger was painting in Europe when religious division created a movement called the Reformation. He worked and painted at the court of King Henry VIII during this time of religious upheaval when the English Church split apart from the Catholic Church and the pope. He painted government ministers, Church leaders, kings, queens and at the time, **controversial** religious leaders. The leaders of the English Reformation asked Hans Holbein to create art that **promoted** the king as the new head of the Church and the new religious movement. Art in every form was used to **denounce** the pope and the old Church. Men like Martin Luther and John Calvin challenged the authority of the Catholic Church as well as its **doctrine**. Hans Holbein the Younger created a body of work that allows us to know the faces of the people who helped transform Western Europe.



Holbein

Chapter 9

Popular Prose on Page and Stage

THE BIG QUESTION
How did writers such as Cervantes and Shakespeare embody the ideals of the Renaissance movement?

Painting and architecture were features of the Renaissance, but so too was literature. Talented and highly original writers appeared, and their work transformed the literary landscape. Miguel de Cervantes was one of these writers.

When Miguel de Cervantes published the first part of *Don Quixote* in 1605 AD, the novel was read widely by **literate** members of society. It became a popular novel in later centuries. It has been translated from Spanish into more than a hundred languages. Only the Bible has been translated into more languages than *Don Quixote*.

Bad Luck Trails a Good Man

Miguel de Cervantes was born in Spain in 1547 AD. As a young man, Cervantes published some poems, but he did not set out to be a writer. Instead he became a soldier. He joined a Spanish regiment stationed in Naples.

After six years as a soldier, Cervantes headed back to Spain. With him, he carried letters that gloriously described his military service. He thought these papers might help him find a good job when he got back home. Instead, the letters became quite a problem.

This is what happened: just off the coast of France, Cervantes's ship was attacked by pirates. When the pirates read the letters, they assumed they had captured an important and wealthy gentleman. They took Cervantes to Algeria, where they put him in prison and held him for a high **ransom**. He tried to escape many times, but never made it. Finally, after five years, Cervantes's family was able to scrape together the money to set him free.

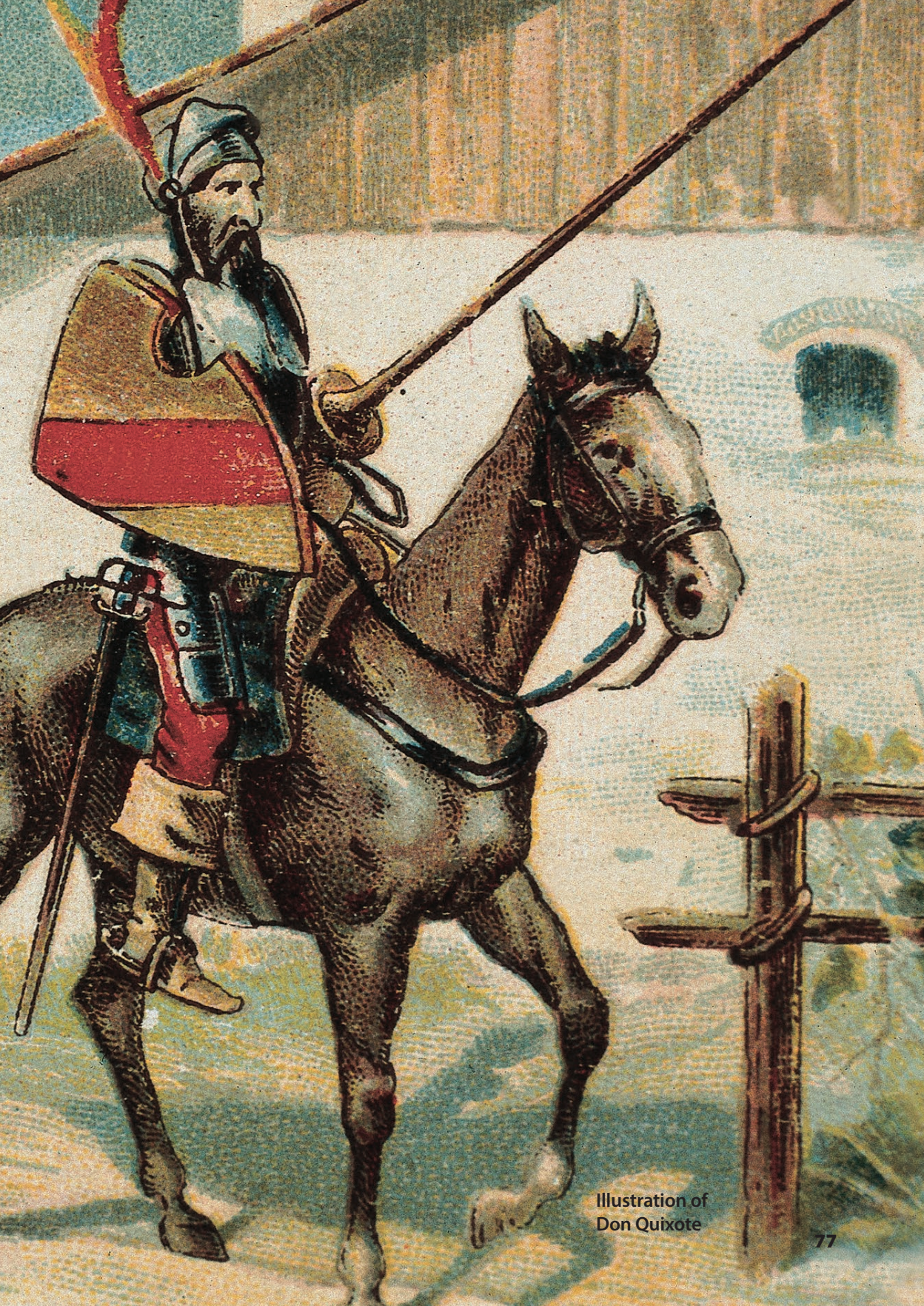


Illustration of
Don Quixote

Back in Jail

When a soldier with a distinguished war record returned from battle, he could usually get a good job with a nobleman. But Cervantes received no such reward. So there he was, thirty three years old and out of work. What to do? Why not try writing again?

And boy, did he write! Cervantes churned out dozens and dozens of poems and plays. Although people liked his work, he still didn't make much money. To put bread on the table, he took a job with the government.

In one of his government jobs, Cervantes got into trouble again. He was working as a tax collector—a job that's not likely to help anyone win a popularity contest. Once, when he had collected a lot of tax money, Cervantes felt **anxious** about carrying it as he traveled along the roads. He left the money with an innkeeper he thought he could trust. When he returned to get the money, the innkeeper had run off with it! The government held Cervantes responsible for the stolen money. Since he couldn't repay it all, he was thrown in jail.

Some people believe that while Cervantes was in jail, he came up with the idea for *Don Quixote* and perhaps even wrote some of the book behind bars. When Cervantes published *The History of Don Quixote de la Mancha* in 1605 AD, it was well received. It made Cervantes famous, but not rich.

Near the end of his life, Cervantes did find a patron whose support allowed him to concentrate on his writing. He wrote a second part to *Don Quixote* and more short stories. He completed a novel just four days before he died in Madrid in 1616 AD.

What's So Great About *Don Quixote*?

Don Quixote was written about 400 years ago. Why has it remained so popular?

For one thing, much of the book is very funny. There's a story that once the king of Spain was looking out a window when he saw a man who, while reading a book, kept slapping his leg and roaring with laughter. "I'll bet," said the king, "that he's reading *Don Quixote*."

Cervantes wrote *Don Quixote* to make fun of books about romance and chivalry. These books, which were very popular in Cervantes's time, told stories of brave knights in shining armor who set out to rescue damsels in distress. They were full of fantastic adventures, powerful magicians, fierce dragons, and brave deeds.

And so Cervantes created Don Quixote. (Don is a title of respect, like Sir in English.) The Don is an elderly gentleman who loves to read romances about the knights of the Middle Ages. In fact, he reads so many romances that he loses touch with reality. He begins to believe the romances are true—that all the enchantments and battles and rescues really happened. Soon, he doesn't just want to read about knights anymore—instead, he decides to become one. His goal is to wander the world in search of adventures and to gain fame and honor by his daring deeds.

A man who attacks windmills may seem foolish, and Don Quixote does many foolish things. But the more you get to know Don Quixote, the more you begin to see that he is, at heart, noble and generous—sometimes a lot more noble and generous than the world around him.



In Cervantes's novel, Don Quixote mistakes windmills for giants.



The Young Bard of Avon

William Shakespeare was an English playwright, poet, and actor during the Renaissance. Many people believe Shakespeare was the greatest playwright of all time. Shakespeare is sometimes called the "Bard of Avon." *Bard* is another word for poet. This well-known poet was born in England, in Stratford-upon-Avon, in 1564 AD.

He was the third of eight children. His father worked as a leather merchant and glove maker. During Shakespeare's early years, his father served as bailiff (something like an officer of the law) of their town and the family seemed pretty well-off.

In Shakespeare's time, well-off boys attended school, while girls stayed home. Young Will probably spent long hours learning Latin, Greek, the Christian Bible, and English history. It seems he didn't enjoy school much: in one of his plays, he described "the whining schoolboy, with his satchel . . . creeping like a snail unwillingly to school."



Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. It's believed that Shakespeare met his wife near her family home. Today, many people visit this home now known as Anne Hathaway's Cottage.

By the time Shakespeare reached college age, his father had become so poor that he owed money, couldn't pay taxes, and didn't show his face in public for fear of being thrown in jail. It's likely that the Shakespeare family didn't have enough money to pay for a college education for William.

What did William do when he finished his schooling? No one knows for sure.

The Lost Years

There's a lot about Shakespeare's life we don't know. No one even knows for sure the exact date of Shakespeare's birthday.

Most of the information we have about Shakespeare comes from the town's official records of baptisms, marriages, and deaths. We also know a little from what his friends wrote about him. Over the years, scholars have closely examined the available documents, as well as Shakespeare's own writings, to put together a picture of the playwright's life. Sometimes parts of the picture are missing, and then scholars have to use whatever evidence they have to make an informed guess.

We *do* know that eighteen-year-old William married twenty-six-year-old Anne Hathaway in 1582 AD. Over the next few years, Anne gave birth to their daughter Susanna, followed by twins, a daughter named Judith and a son named Hamnet.

After the twins were born, Shakespeare did not **linger** very long in Stratford-upon-Avon. We're not certain why he left. Nor does anyone know what Shakespeare did during what are called "The Lost Years" from 1582 to 1592 AD.

We do know that by 1592 AD, Shakespeare had arrived in London and was establishing a reputation as a playwright, actor, and poet. Though some of his more highly educated competitors said his plays were "**vulgar**," the people loved his work, and the royalty also enjoyed them. His acting company frequently performed in the court of Queen Elizabeth and later for King James.



Elizabeth I, Queen of England



Did you know that in Shakespeare's time, only men acted on stage? No women were allowed to be actors! The women's parts were played by young boys who still had high voices and no beards.

The Globe Theater

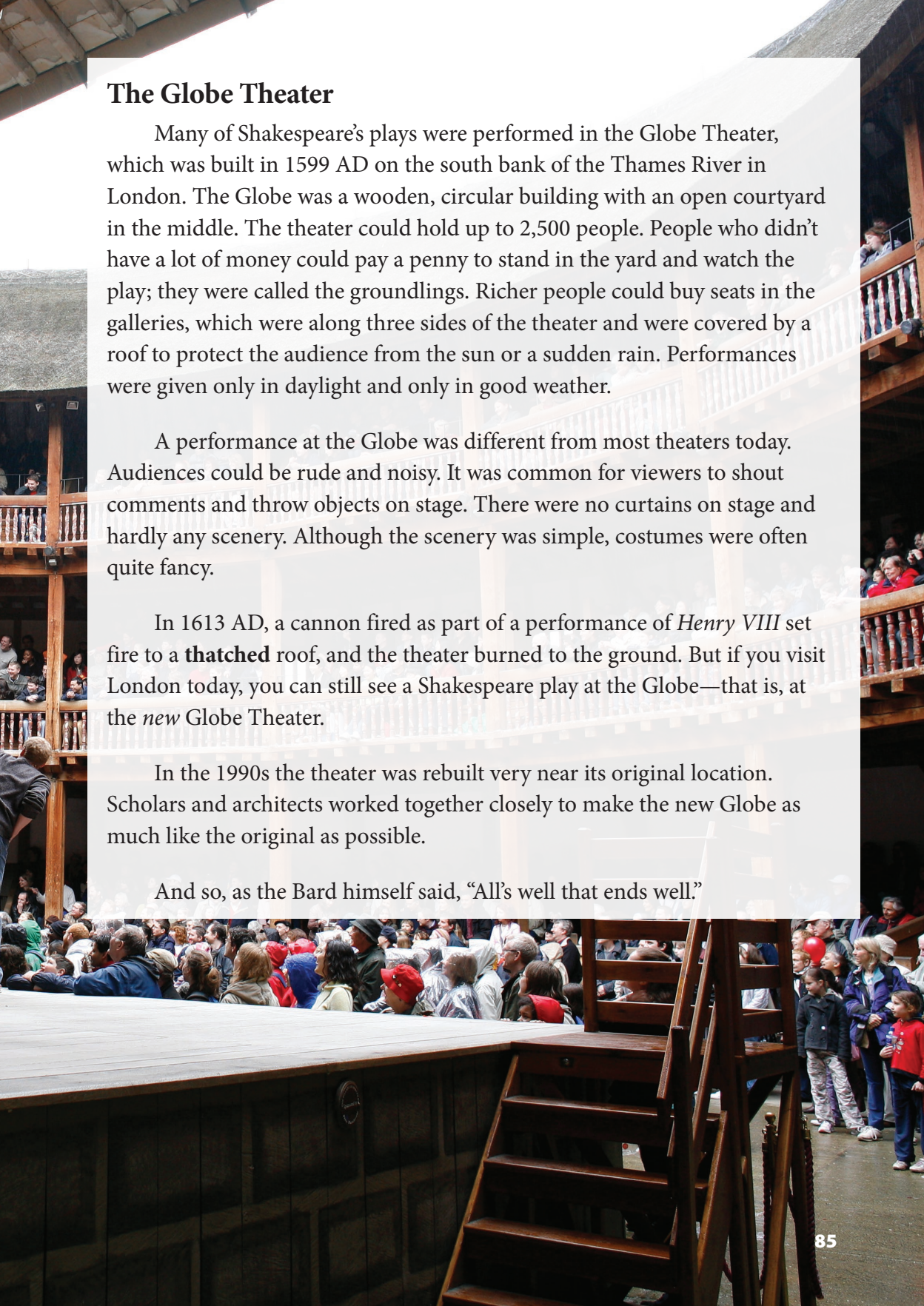
Many of Shakespeare's plays were performed in the Globe Theater, which was built in 1599 AD on the south bank of the Thames River in London. The Globe was a wooden, circular building with an open courtyard in the middle. The theater could hold up to 2,500 people. People who didn't have a lot of money could pay a penny to stand in the yard and watch the play; they were called the groundlings. Richer people could buy seats in the galleries, which were along three sides of the theater and were covered by a roof to protect the audience from the sun or a sudden rain. Performances were given only in daylight and only in good weather.

A performance at the Globe was different from most theaters today. Audiences could be rude and noisy. It was common for viewers to shout comments and throw objects on stage. There were no curtains on stage and hardly any scenery. Although the scenery was simple, costumes were often quite fancy.

In 1613 AD, a cannon fired as part of a performance of *Henry VIII* set fire to a **thatched** roof, and the theater burned to the ground. But if you visit London today, you can still see a Shakespeare play at the Globe—that is, at the *new* Globe Theater.

In the 1990s the theater was rebuilt very near its original location. Scholars and architects worked together closely to make the new Globe as much like the original as possible.

And so, as the Bard himself said, "All's well that ends well."



Shakespeare's Words

These phrases and lines come from the pen of the man most people consider the greatest playwright of all time, William Shakespeare. After the Bible, the works of Shakespeare have had the greatest influence on English language and literature.

Have you ever heard any of these expressions?



Have you ever come across any of these famous lines?

All's well that ends well.

A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!

If music be the food of love, play on.

Sweets to the sweet.

Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

To be, or not to be: that is the question.

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.

All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players.

Shakespeare wrote many poems, but he is best known for writing plays. When Shakespeare wrote his plays, England was ruled by Queen Elizabeth I and later King James I. Elizabeth was a powerful and intelligent leader, and very popular with the English people. The arts thrived during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. She filled her court with poets, playwrights, and musicians.

If you haven't read one of Shakespeare's plays yet, you probably will soon!

Enrichment

Masses, Dances, and Love Songs:
Music in the Renaissance

The Renaissance was a time of discovery, exploration, and invention—in other words, a time of great change. You've seen how the arts of painting and sculpture changed during the Renaissance. What about music?

Music changed, too. During the Middle Ages, music was especially important in churches and monasteries, where priests, monks, and nuns sang praises to God. Generally they sang religious words in Latin, and they all sang the same **melody**. To our modern-day ears, this kind of singing, known as plainsong or plainchant (or "chant" for short) can sound mysterious but also **soothing**.

During the Renaissance, as more and more people became interested in science, philosophy, paintings, and sculpture, they also became more interested in music. These people were not just monks or scholars. They were the merchants and their families in the cities, as well as the nobility, the people of the upper classes, in courts throughout Europe. More people wanted to enjoy music in their homes. The middle class joined the nobility in thinking that for a person to be well-rounded and well-educated, it was important to know how to read music and be able to sing. The invention of the printing press made it possible to distribute **sheet music** to those who wanted to learn how to play traditional as well as **contemporary compositions**. Music was becoming more and more a matter of personal expression.

Some of these people began to experiment with and further develop different ways of singing. For example, when different singers sing different notes at the same time, and the notes come together to produce a pleasing



This painting, *Female Musicians*, was probably created between 1530 and 1540 AD. The name of the artist is unknown.

sound, the singers are said to be singing in harmony. This combining of voices singing different melodies in harmony is called polyphony, a word which comes from Greek words meaning "many voices." This style of harmonizing was very popular during the Renaissance.

Also during the Renaissance, many musicians started writing their own music. Some became famous **composers** who traveled from court to court and city to city. This was something new. Back in the Middle Ages, composers often remained unknown. We know of only a few medieval composers, but there are many famous Renaissance composers. Most of them wrote both **sacred** music, or music for the Church, and **secular** music, music for everyday life.

Sacred Music

One of the most important forms of sacred music existed within the Mass—the Catholic Church service that celebrates Jesus's Last Supper and death on the cross. When the words to the Mass, which were in Latin, were sung by a small group or large choir, they could sound very beautiful.

Composers sometimes wrote musical compositions for Masses in a style called a cappella, which means "in the style of the chapel." A cappella works were written to be sung by voices alone, without instruments, so the words could be clearly heard and understood. Today we still use the term a cappella to describe any kind of choral music sung without instruments playing along.

Josquin Desprez, who was born around 1450 AD, wrote nearly 20 sacred compositions for Masses. He was widely admired as one of the greatest composers of the Renaissance. He came from what is now the Netherlands but mostly worked as a singer and composer for princes and the pope in Italy.

Secular Music: Songs and Dances

Josquin Desprez didn't just write sacred music; he also wrote secular music, music that people would enjoy outside of church. Secular music during the Renaissance included songs that had to do with love or told amusing stories. One song Desprez wrote is called "Faulte d'argent," which, if you loosely translate the French title, means, "I need money!"

Many popular Renaissance songs were written for four or five voices and sung in polyphony. These songs were called madrigals. Like popular songs today, many madrigals were about—what would you guess?—yes, love, of course. The Italian composer known as Palestrina wrote four books of madrigals. But Palestrina was mainly a composer of sacred music. He wrote more than 90 Masses! He once said, "I blush and grieve" about writing the madrigals.

Aside from singing, people also liked to dance. At the courts of princes and kings, dances were a favorite occasion. Renaissance composers wrote a lot of dance music. Dance music was written for instruments, not voices. Often, dances were played in pairs, one slow and one fast. For example, first the musicians might play a pavane, a slow and formal dance that included many bows and curtsies. Then they would play a galliard, a lively dance in which the men would jump into the air!

Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Wedding Dance*, 1564 AD



New Instruments and Lute Songs

One of the most popular instruments during the Renaissance was the lute, which was something like a modern-day guitar. The lute was not a new instrument: it was inspired by an Arab instrument called the *'ud*. The lute sounds sweet and gentle, perfect for love songs.



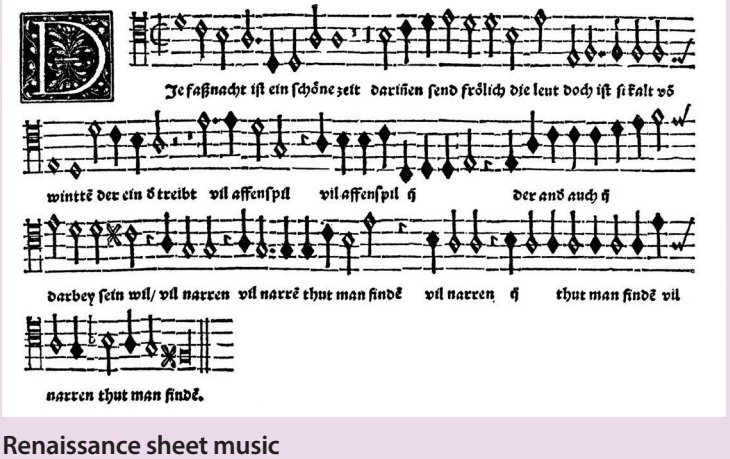
lute

The greatest composer of lute music was probably John Dowland, who was born in England in 1563 AD. One of his lute tunes, called "Lachrimae," became the most popular tune of his time, all over Europe.

Dowland also wrote many short songs for one singer accompanied by a lute. Many of these lute songs were sad and melancholy with titles like "Sorrow Stay" and "In Darkness Let Me Dwell." Even Dowland's number-one hit, "Lachrimae," was a sad-sounding melody—which makes sense, because the word *lachrimae* is Latin for tears.

Sheet Music

In the monasteries, monks developed the first system for writing music. Most of the music that was sung and played outside the churches was not written.



Renaissance sheet music

Renaissance Portrait Gallery



Lorenzo Ghiberti



Filippo Brunelleschi



Donatello



Sandro Botticelli



Leonardo da Vinci



Michelangelo Buonarroti



Raphael



Jan van Eyck



Albrecht Dürer



Hans Holbein



Miguel de Cervantes



William Shakespeare



Sofonisba Anguissola



Pieter Brueghel the Elder



Titian



Baldassar Castiglione

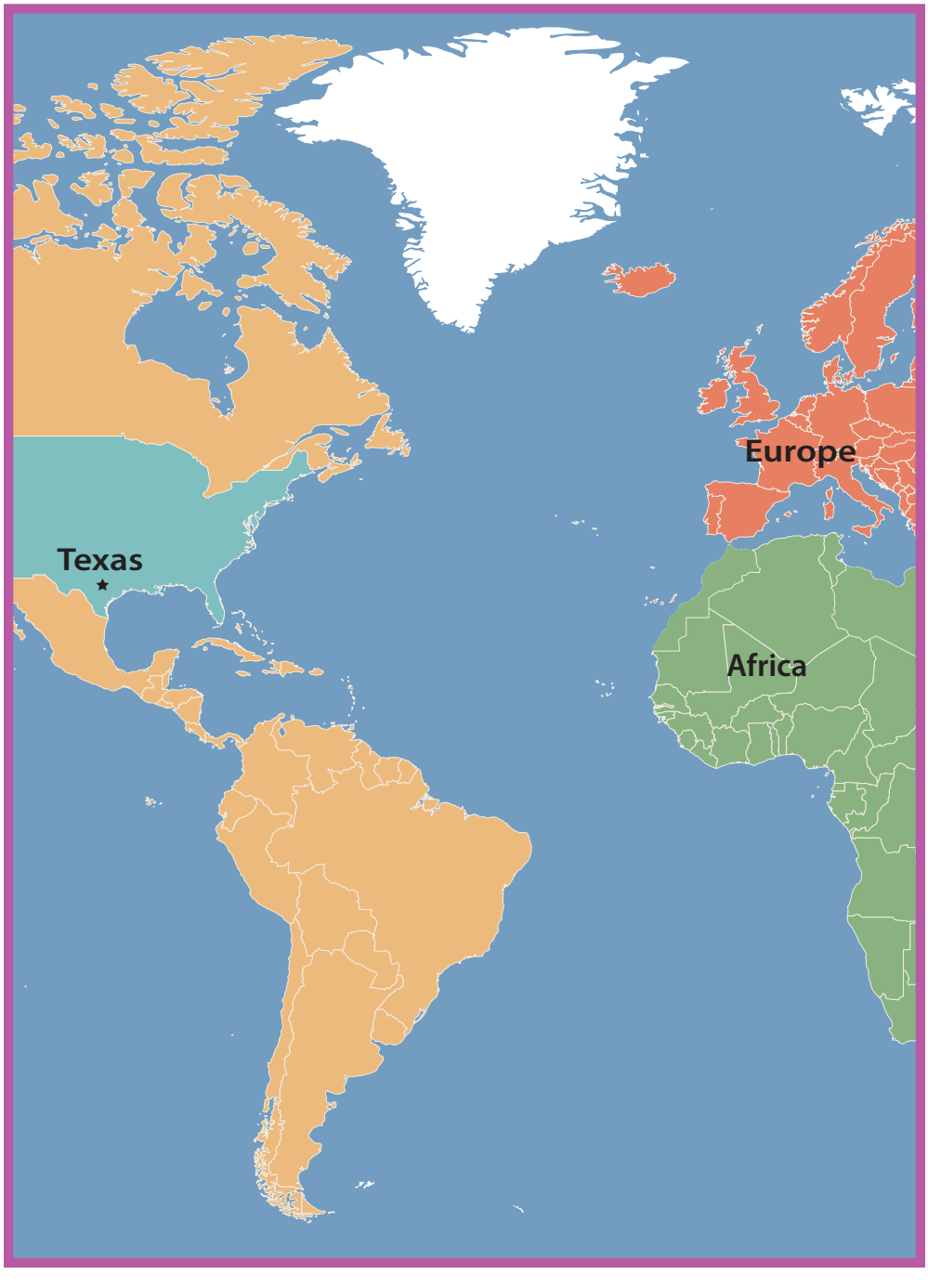


Niccolò Machiavelli



Petrarch

Western Europe during the Renaissance



Renaissance Italy



Glossary

A

accurately, ***adv.*** correctly; doing something without mistakes or errors

alliance, ***n.*** a formal agreement to work together (**alliances**)

anxious, ***adj.*** nervous; worried

apprentice, ***v.*** to learn a skill or trade by working with a skilled craftsman for a period of time (**apprenticed, *n.* apprentice**)

B

betrayal, ***n.*** the act of being disloyal to and dishonest with someone who trusts you

brute, ***n.*** someone who is mean, tough, and/or a bully

C

commission, ***v.*** to hire an artist to produce a work of art (**commissioned**)

composer, ***n.*** someone who writes music (**composers**)

composition, ***n.*** a song or piece of music that has been written (**compositions**)

contemporary, ***adj.*** modern; current

controversial, ***adj.*** related to or causing much discussion, disagreement, or argument

corrupt, ***adj.*** dishonest

covenant, ***n.*** a promise that cannot be broken

cultural, ***adj.*** **1.** of or relating to the fine arts (painting, music, etc.); **2.** of or relating to a particular group of people and their habits, traditions, and beliefs

custom, ***n.*** a tradition practiced by a culture or group of people (**customs**)

D

denounce, ***v.*** to publicly state that something or someone is bad or wrong

disciples, ***n.*** people who follow and believe in a teacher

doctrine, ***n.*** a set of ideas or beliefs that are taught or believed to be true

dome, ***n.*** a large rounded roof or ceiling

E

economy, ***n.*** the system by which goods and services are made, bought, and sold

embodiment, ***n.*** someone or something that is a visible representation or example of an idea, concept, etc.

epitaph, ***n.*** something written or said in memory of a person who has died

expression, ***n.*** the act of telling or showing thoughts or feelings; communication

F

fashion, **1.** ***v.*** to make, shape, or form; **2.** ***n.*** a popular way of dressing during a particular time or among a particular group of people

foreground, ***n.*** the part of a picture that appears closest to the viewer

fortunately, ***adv.*** luckily; by good fortune

fresco, ***n.*** a style of painting in which the artist first applies a layer of plaster onto a wall and then paints directly on the wet plaster; once dry, the paint and plaster become a part of the wall

G

genius, ***n.*** remarkable talent and creativity

guild, ***n.*** an organized group of people who make or sell specific goods and services

I

indulge, ***v.*** to treat oneself or take much more than needed

inspire, ***v.*** to influence or provide an idea about what to do or create (**inspired**)

insult, ***n.*** a rude or offensive act or statement (***v.*** **insulted**)

intellect, ***n.*** intelligence; the ability to think in a logical way (***adj.*** **intellectual**)

K

keen, ***adj.*** strong and observant

L

linger, ***v.*** to wait around or stay longer

literate, ***adj.*** able to read and write fluently

lottery, ***n.*** a system used to decide who will get something based on choosing names or numbers by chance

M

Madonna, ***n.*** another way to identify Mary, the mother of Jesus

melody, ***n.*** main theme or tune in a song

modest, ***adj.*** shy and quiet; does not brag about oneself

morals, ***n.*** ideas and beliefs about what is right and wrong

N

norms, ***n.*** customs; standards of acceptable behavior

O

obstacle, ***n.*** a challenge; something that blocks the way or makes it more difficult to do something else (**obstacles**)

P

patron, ***n.*** a person who gives money and support to an artist in exchange for works of art (**patrons**)

perspective, ***n.*** in the context of art, this is a technique used to show three-dimensional positioning in a painting or drawing

pessimistic, ***adj.*** having a negative or gloomy attitude; expecting that the worst will always happen

philosophy, ***n.*** the study of knowledge and truth (**philosophers**)

plunge, ***v.*** to fall or jump suddenly from a high place (**plunged**)

portrait, ***n.*** a painting, drawing, or photograph of a person that usually only includes the person's head and shoulders

portray, ***v.*** to show someone or something in a painting, book, etc.

prominent, ***adj.*** important; well-known; easily seen

promote, ***v.*** to publicize and support (**promoted**)

R

ransom, ***n.*** money that is paid to free someone who was captured

refinement, ***n.*** a small change that improves something (**refinements**)

reluctantly, ***adv.*** unwillingly or unenthusiastically

reminiscent, ***adj.*** similar to something else

renowned, ***adj.*** famous; known and admired by many people

reputation, ***n.*** the opinion or perception that other people have about someone or something

restore, ***v.*** to return something to an earlier or original condition by cleaning or repairing it (**restoring**)

revolutionary, ***adj.*** causing or relating to a great change

rivalry, ***n.*** competition; a situation in which people or groups are competing with each other

S

sacred, ***adj.*** holy; deserving of special respect

scaffold, ***n.*** a temporary platform on which a person stands or sits while working high above the ground

scholar, ***n.*** **1.** a student; **2.** a person who has studied a subject for a long time and knows a lot about it

scribe, ***n.*** long ago, a person who copied manuscripts and books (**scribes**)

secular, ***adj.*** not connected to religion

sheet music, ***n.*** music printed on individual pieces of paper rather than in a book

shrewd, ***adj.*** clever; able to understand things and make good judgments

soothing, ***adj.*** calming; comforting; relaxing

spirit, ***n.*** qualities that make up the definitive part of a particular period

stance, ***n.*** a way of standing

status symbol, ***n.*** something someone owns that shows he or she is wealthy or important

superior, ***adj.*** of the highest quality

T

thatched, ***adj.*** made from straw

theme, ***n.*** the main subject being discussed in a piece of writing or depicted in a piece of art (**themes**)

translate, ***v.*** to change words from one language into another language

U

uncharted, ***adj.*** unknown; not previously explored or experienced

V

values, ***n.*** strongly held beliefs about what is important

virtue, ***n.*** morally good behavior or character

visionary, ***adj.*** having a powerful or far-reaching imagination

vulgar, ***adj.*** impolite; crude; inappropriate

W

witty, ***adj.*** clever; funny

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