What's the Connection?

In Section 1, you learned about the growth of Italian city-states. In this section, you will learn how the wealth of the city-states led to an age of artistic achievements.

Focusing on the Main Ideas

- Humanists studied the Greeks and Romans, and the development of the printing press helped spread their ideas. (page 619)
- Renaissance artists used new techniques to produce paintings that showed people in an emotional and realistic way. (page 623)
- Renaissance ideas and art spread from Italy to northern Europe. (page 625)

Locating Places

Flanders (FLAN•duhrz)

Meeting People

Dante Alighieri (DAHN•tay A•luh•GYEHR•ee)
Johannes Gutenberg (yoh•HAHN•uhGOO•tuhn•BUHRG)
Leonardo da Vinci (LEE•uh•NAHR•doh duh VIHN•chee)
Michelangelo Buonarroti (MY•kuh•LAN•juh•LOH BWAW•nahr•RAW•tee)
William Shakespeare (SHAYK•SPIHR)

Building Your Vocabulary

humanism (HYOO•muh•NIH•zuhm)
vernacular (vuhr•NA•kyuh•luhr)

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information Create a diagram to show features of Renaissance art.

[Diagram of art]

When & Who?

1400

1455
Johannes Gutenberg uses printing press to print the Bible

1494
Leonardo begins painting The Last Supper

1512
Michelangelo finishes painting Sistine Chapel’s ceiling

1600

1601
Shakespeare writes Hamlet
**Renaissance Humanism**

**Main Idea** Humanists studied the Greeks and Romans, and the development of the printing press helped spread their ideas.

**Reading Focus** Have you ever tried to draw a copy of a painting you like? Is it harder to copy what other people have done or to come up with new ideas for your own pictures? Read to learn how Renaissance writers borrowed ideas from the past but tried to be original too.

In the 1300s, a new way of understanding the world developed in medieval Europe. This new approach was called **humanism** (HYOO•muh•NIH•zuhm). It was based on the values of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Humanists believed that the individual and human society were important. Humanists did not turn away from religious faith, but they wanted a balance between faith and reason. Their new ideas encouraged men to be active in their cities and achieve great things.

**Ancient Works Become Popular** In the 1300s, Italians began to study early Roman and Greek works. For most of the Middle Ages, Western Europeans knew little about ancient Greek and Roman writings. When they went on the Crusades, however, they opened trade with the Middle East and began to get information from the Arabs.

Arab scholars knew classic Greek and Roman works very well. In addition, when the Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453, many Byzantine scholars left and moved to Venice or Florence.

One famous scholar of the ancient works was Petrarch (PEH•TRAHRK). Francesco Petrarch was a poet and scholar who lived in the 1300s. He studied Roman writers like Cicero and wrote biographies of famous Romans.

Petrarch encouraged Europeans to search for Latin manuscripts in monasteries all over Europe. In time, his efforts paid off and new libraries were built to keep the manuscripts. The largest was the Vatican Library in Rome.

Italians studied more than ancient books. They studied the old buildings and statues all around them. All over Rome, one could see workers cleaning the dirt and rubble from broken columns and statues. Italian artists eagerly studied the proportions of the ancient works. If they knew how long a statue’s arms were compared to its height, they would be able to understand why it looked so perfect.
Changes in Literature During the Renaissance, educated people wrote in “pure” Latin, the Latin used in ancient Rome. Petrarch thought classical Latin was the best way to write, but when he wanted to write poems to the woman he loved, he wrote in the vernacular (vuhr•NA•kyuh•luhr). The vernacular is the everyday language people speak in a region—Italian, French, or German, for example. When authors began writing in the vernacular, many more people could read their work.

In the early 1300s, Dante Alighieri (DAHN•tay•A•luh•GYEHR•ee), a poet of Florence, wrote one of the world’s greatest poems in the vernacular. It is called The Divine Comedy. As a young man, Dante was active in politics, but when noble families began fighting over power, he had to leave Florence. That was when he wrote his long poem—more than 14,000 lines. The Divine Comedy tells the gripping tale of the main character’s journey from hell to heaven. The horrible punishments for different sins were vividly described.

Another important writer who used the vernacular was Chaucer. Chaucer wrote in English. In his famous book, The Canterbury Tales, he describes 29 pilgrims on their journey to the city of Canterbury. The Canterbury Tales describes the levels of English society, from the nobles at the top to the poor at the bottom. The English Chaucer used in his writing is the ancestor of the English we speak today.

The Printing Press Spreads Ideas

The printing press was a key to the spread of humanist ideas throughout Europe. In the early 1450s, Johannes Gutenberg (yoh•HAHN•uh•GOO•tuhn•BUHRC) developed a printing press that used movable metal type. This type of printing press made it possible to print many books much more quickly. With more books available, more people learned to read. Scholars could read one another’s works and debate their ideas in letters.
Ideas grew and spread more quickly than ever before in Europe.

The Chinese had already invented movable type, but it did not work well with their large alphabet of characters. For Europeans, the printing press was a big improvement. It was easy to use with linen paper, another Chinese invention.

Gutenberg’s Bible, printed in the 1450s, was the first European book produced on the new press. Soon books flooded Europe. About 40,000 books were published by 1500. Half of these were religious works like the Bible or prayer books.

**How Did Humanism Affect Society?**

Humanist scholars studied the Greeks and Romans to increase their knowledge of many different topics. They were curious about everything, including plants and animals, human anatomy and medicine, and the stars and planets. Their study of mathematics helped them in many subjects.

One of the best Renaissance scientists was also a great artist, **Leonardo da Vinci** (Lee • uh • NAHR • doh duh VIHN • chee). Leonardo dissected corpses to learn anatomy and studied fossils to understand the world’s history. He was also an inventor and an engineer.

Most of what we know about Leonardo comes from his notebooks. Leonardo filled their pages with sketches of his scientific and artistic ideas. Centuries before the airplane was invented, Leonardo drew sketches of a glider, a helicopter, and a parachute. Other sketches show a version of a military tank and a scuba diving suit.

**Reading Check** Explain What was the benefit of writing in the vernacular?

**Primary Source**

Leonardo da Vinci’s notebooks contained sketches of inventions that would not be produced for hundreds of years.

**Document-Based Question**

Compare Leonardo’s sketches of a helicopter and subway to their modern counterparts. How accurate was Leonardo?
Leonardo da Vinci 1452–1519

Leonardo was born in Vinci, Italy, to a peasant woman named Caterina. Shortly after Leonardo’s birth, she left the boy in the care of his father. By the time Leonardo was 15 years old, his father knew his son had artistic talent. He arranged for Leonardo to become an apprentice to the famous painter Andrea del Verrocchio.

By 1472, Leonardo had become a master in the painters’ guild of Florence. He worked in Florence until 1481, and then he went to the city of Milan. There he kept a large workshop and employed many apprentices. During this time, Leonardo began keeping small pads of paper tucked in his belt for sketching. Later he organized the drawings by theme and assembled the pages into notebooks.

Seventeen years later, Leonardo returned to Florence, where he was welcomed with great honor. During this time, Leonardo painted some of his masterpieces. He also made scientific studies, including dissections, observations of the flight of birds, and research on the movement of water currents.

In 1516 Leonardo accepted an invitation to live in France. The king admired Leonardo and gave him freedom to pursue his interests. During the last three years of his life, Leonardo lived in a small house near the king’s summer palace. He spent most of his time sketching and working on his scientific studies.

“Nothing can be loved or hated unless it is first known.”
—Leonardo da Vinci

Then and Now
Leonardo’s curiosity fueled his creativity and interest in science. What invention created in the last 100 years do you think would impress Leonardo the most? Why?
Artists in Renaissance Italy

Renaissance artists used new techniques to produce paintings that showed people in an emotional and realistic way.

Reading Focus Have you ever had trouble making your drawings look real and three-dimensional? Read to learn how Renaissance artists learned to make their art look natural and real.

During the Renaissance, wealthy Italian families and church leaders paid artists to create paintings, sculptures, and buildings for display throughout their cities. The pope himself funded many works of art to decorate the Vatican. Renaissance artists followed the models of the ancient Romans and Greeks but expressed humanist ideas.

What Was New About Renaissance Art?
If you compare medieval and Renaissance paintings, you will see major differences in their styles. Renaissance art tries to show people as they would appear in real life. It also tries to show people’s emotions. When a medieval artist depicted the birth of Jesus, he wanted to remind Christians about their belief that Jesus was born to save the world. A Renaissance artist painting the same scene might try to show how tender Mary looked with her tiny baby.

Renaissance painters also used new techniques. The most important was perspective, a method that makes a drawing or painting look three-dimensional. Artists had tried to use perspective before, but Renaissance artists perfected it. Using perspective, objects in a scene appear to be at different distances from the viewer. The result is a more realistic image.

To make their paintings more realistic, Renaissance artists also used a technique called chiaroscuro.

Chiaroscuro softened edges by using light and shadows instead of stiff outlines to separate objects. In Italian, chiaro means “clear or light,” and oscuro means “dark.” Chiaroscuro created more drama and emotion in a painting.

The Peak of the Renaissance The artistic Renaissance lasted from about 1350 to 1550, but it hit its peak between 1490 and 1520. At that time, great artists were producing masterpieces. Three of the most famous artists were Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael Sanzio, and Michelangelo Buonarroti.

Although Leonardo also became a great scientist and inventor, he trained as an artist. Born in 1452, he began his training in Florence at a young age. Training in workshops was an old tradition, but during the Renaissance, individual artists began to do something no medieval artist had done—they signed their own work.

One of Leonardo’s most famous works is The Last Supper, which he began painting in 1494 on a wall behind a church altar. He painted on wet plaster with watercolor paint. A painting done this way is called a
fresco (FREH•koh), which in Italian means “fresh.” Frescoes were painted in churches all over Italy.

One of Leonardo’s great artistic skills is visible in The Last Supper. In this painting of Jesus and his disciples, Leonardo was able to show human emotions through small differences in how each apostle held his head or the apostle’s position in relation to Jesus. Leonardo showed this skill again in the Mona Lisa. People still argue about what the woman in the portrait is thinking—what is the mystery behind her smile?

Although Raphael worked at the same time as Leonardo, he was much younger. Even as a young man, Raphael worked with ease and grace and became known as one of Italy’s best painters. Italians especially loved the gentle Madonnas he painted. He also painted many frescoes in the Vatican Palace. Perhaps his best-known painting is the School of Athens, which depicts a number of Greek philosophers.

Another great Renaissance artist was Michelangelo. Like many other artists of the time, Michelangelo painted, sculpted, and designed buildings. He painted one of the best-known Renaissance works—the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome.

Although he painted many outstanding works, Michelangelo was a sculptor at heart. He believed his talents were inspired by God. He carved his statues to show perfect versions of human beings as a symbol of God’s beauty and perfection. Michelangelo’s best-known sculpture is the 13-foot-tall statue David. The sculptor made David seem calm, yet ready for action. Also impressive is Michelangelo’s statue of the biblical Moses. The huge figure appears both wise and powerful.

**Compare and Contrast**

What were some of the differences between medieval and Renaissance artists?

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**Focus on Everyday Life**

**The Life of a Renaissance Artist** If a young boy in Renaissance Italy wanted to be an artist, he would become an apprentice at a workshop run by an established artist. The main job of apprentices was preparing materials for the master artist and his assistants. Apprentices used minerals, spices, egg yolk, and other everyday materials to mix paints. They readied wax and clay for sculpture modeling. Eventually, apprentices became assistants. Talented assistants could become masters of their own workshops.

Master artists could afford to have workshops because of the patronage system in Italy. Patrons—people who pay to support someone else’s work—would commission, or hire, an artist to complete a project. That artist was usually helped by his assistants and apprentices.

Patrons were usually political and church leaders, organizations, and wealthy bankers and merchants.

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**Connecting to the Past**

1. What was the main job of apprentices?
2. Does the patronage system or the apprentice system exist today? If so, in what fields?
The Renaissance Spreads

**Main Idea** Renaissance ideas and art spread from Italy to northern Europe.

**Reading Focus** If you were a Canadian artist, would your painting look different than if you lived in Arizona? Read to learn how the Renaissance changed as it moved into northern Europe.

In the late 1400s, the Renaissance spread to northern Europe and later to England. The printing press helped humanist ideas to spread, as did people who traveled.

**What Is the Northern Renaissance?** The Northern Renaissance refers to the culture in places we know today as Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, and the Netherlands. Like Italian artists, northern artists wanted their works to have greater realism, but they used different methods. One important method they developed was oil painting. First developed in Flanders (FLAN•duhrz)—a region that is in northern Belgium today—oils let artists paint intricate details and surface textures, like the gold braid on a gown.

Jan van Eyck was a master of oil painting. In one of his best-known paintings, a newly married couple stands side by side in a formal bedroom. Van Eyck showed every fold in their rich gowns and every detail of the chandelier above their heads.

Albrecht Dürer (AHL•brehkt DUR•uhr) is perhaps one of the greatest artists of the Northern Renaissance. Dürer was able to master both perspective and fine detail. He is best known for his engravings. An engraving is made from an image carved on metal, wood, or stone. Ink is applied to the surface, and then the image is printed on paper.

Dürer’s *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* is an outstanding example of a woodcut, a print made from carved wood. In it, four fierce horsemen ride to announce the end of the world.

Globe Theater

William Shakespeare’s plays were performed at the Globe Theater in London. It could hold about 3,000 people. Plays were performed every day of the week except Sunday. Performances occurred during the day, since the theater had no lights. *When did the Renaissance spread to northern Europe and England?*

- Flags announced the type of play. White flags meant comedies, black flags meant tragedies, and red flags stood for history plays.
- Wealthy and important people sat beneath the covered section.
- Poor commoners, called groundlings, stood on the ground for the show. They often brought fruit and vegetables to throw at actors they did not like.
Who Was William Shakespeare? In England, the Renaissance took place in writing and theater more than in art. The Renaissance began in England in the later 1500s, during the rule of Elizabeth I.

Theater was popular in England in the 1500s. Admission was only one or two cents, so even the poor could attend. English playwrights, or writers who create plays, wrote about people’s strengths, weaknesses, and emotions.

The greatest English writer of that era was William Shakespeare (SHAYK•SPIHR). He wrote tragedies, comedies, and historical plays. Some of his great tragedies include Hamlet, Macbeth, and Romeo and Juliet. In each tragedy, the characters’ flaws cause their downfall. Among his most famous comedies are A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night, and Much Ado About Nothing. His best-known historical plays include Henry V and Richard III. Shakespeare’s plays are still performed today and remain very popular.

Compare How did the northern Renaissance differ from the Italian Renaissance?

Leonardo da Vinci
Michelangelo
Jan van Eyck
Shakespeare

Dürer’s Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Henry V and Richard III. Shakespeare’s plays are still performed today and remain very popular.

Reading Check Compare How did the northern Renaissance differ from the Italian Renaissance?

Reading Summary

Review the Main Ideas

1. During the Renaissance, scholars examined the ancient works of the Greeks and Romans, began to write in the vernacular, and explored many scientific fields.
2. Italian Renaissance artists employed new techniques and created masterpieces of painting and sculpture.
3. As the Renaissance spread to northern Europe and England, artists and writers, such as Dürer and Shakespeare, created great works.

Critical Thinking

3. Summarizing Information
Draw a chart like the one below. Use it to describe the artistic work and techniques of each artist listed.

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<td>Leonardo da Vinci</td>
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<td>Jan van Eyck</td>
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<td>Shakespeare</td>
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What Did You Learn?

1. Explain the beliefs of humanists during the Renaissance.
2. Explain the artistic technique of perspective.
3. Summarizing Information
   Draw a chart like the one below. Use it to describe the artistic work and techniques of each artist listed.
4. Evaluate What was the importance of the printing press on Renaissance society?
5. Science Link Describe the scientific efforts and contributions of Leonardo da Vinci.
6. Explain How were the ideals of the Renaissance expressed in England? Provide examples in your answer.
7. Expository Writing Choose a painting or sculpture shown in this section. In a short essay, describe the work and explain how it demonstrates Renaissance techniques or characteristics.