Objectives

- Describe the characteristics of the Renaissance and understand why it began in Italy.
- Identify Renaissance artists and explain how new ideas affected the arts of the period.
- Understand how writers of the time addressed Renaissance themes.
Terms and People

- **humanism** – the Renaissance intellectual movement that studied classical cultures to increase understanding of their own times

- **humanities** – subjects such as grammar, poetry, rhetoric, and history

- **Petrarch** – Florentine humanist, poet, and scholar who assembled a library of Greek and Roman manuscripts to encourage learning

- **Florence** – an Italian city-state that produced many gifted artists, scholars, scientists, and architects
Terms and People (continued)

- **patron** – person who provides financial support for the arts

- **perspective** – the artistic technique that allows an artist to portray depth and three-dimensional qualities by making distant objects smaller

- **Leonardo** – artist, scientist, and inventor best known for the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper* and sketches of inventions such as flying machines

- **Michelangelo** – artist; created sculpture of *David* and painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel
Terms and People (continued)

- **Raphael** – painter; blended Christian and classical styles; famous works include *The School of Athens* and his portrayals of the Madonna

- **Baldassare Castiglione** – wrote the *Book of the Courtier* describing the manners and qualities aristocratic men and women should display

- **Niccolò Machiavelli** – wrote *The Prince*, describing how to rule in an age of ruthless power politics
What were the ideals of the Renaissance, and how did Italian artists and writers reflect these ideals?

A new age dawned in Western Europe, given expression by remarkable artists and thinkers. This age is called the Renaissance, meaning “rebirth.” It began in the 1300s and reached its peak around 1500.

The Renaissance marked the transition from medieval times to the early modern world.
The Renaissance began in Italy in the 1300s.

During the Renaissance, people:

- Sought to bring their age out of disorder and disunity
- Placed a greater emphasis on individual achievement
- Tried to understand the world with more accuracy

Renaissance thinkers evolved a new worldview and reawakened interest in classical Greek and Roman learning.
During the Renaissance there was a new spirit of adventure and curiosity.

- Trade assumed greater importance than before.
- Navigators sailed across the oceans.
- Scientists viewed the universe in new ways.
- Writers and artists experimented with new techniques.
Italy’s central location in the Mediterranean helped encourage trade.

Banking, manufacturing, and a merchant network provided the wealth that fueled the Renaissance.

Trade routes carried new ideas from Asia and Muslim scholars.
Europe in 1500

Italy’s central location helped make it a center for the trade of goods and ideas.
The heart of the Italian Renaissance was humanism.

Humanists:

- Focused on worldly issues, not religion
- Believed education should stimulate creativity
- Emphasized the humanities, such as grammar, rhetoric, poetry, and history

Humanists studied the works of Greece and Rome to learn about their own culture.
Italy’s city states played an important role in the Renaissance.

Each city was dominated by a wealthy and powerful merchant family.

• These families brought trade and wealth, and provided leadership.

• They were interested in art and emphasized personal achievement.

• They were patrons of the arts and supported artists, writers, and scholars.
The Medici family of merchants and bankers controlled Florence after 1434.

- Lorenzo d’Medici invited poets, philosophers, and artists to the city.
- Florence became a leader, with numerous gifted artists, poets, architects, and scientists.

Ordinary people began to appreciate art outside of the Church.
Artists continued to portray religious themes, but they did so against classic Greek and Roman backgrounds.

- Donatello created a life-size soldier on horseback, the first sculpture of this size since ancient times.
- In *The School of Athens*, **Raphael** painted a gathering of Greek and Roman scholars that included the faces of Michelangelo, Leonardo, and himself.
The Renaissance in Italy

They returned from the stylized forms of the medieval period to the realism of classic Greece and Rome.

They used new techniques to represent both humans and landscapes.

Renaissance artists used new techniques, leading to greater realism.
One new technique was **perspective**, credited to Filippo Brunelleschi.

Distant objects appeared smaller.

Perspective allowed more realistic art.
The Renaissance in Italy

• Objects were portrayed in a three-dimensional fashion.

• Painters studied human anatomy and drew from observing models, resulting in more accuracy.

Artists also used new oil paints that reflected light, and used shading techniques to make objects look more real.
Leonardo da Vinci was an artist and inventor. He studied botany, optics, anatomy, architecture, and engineering.

He used perspective in painting “The Last Supper.”

He left sketchbooks filled with ideas for inventions, including submarines and flying machines.
Michelangelo Buonarroti was a sculptor, engineer, painter, architect, and poet.

- He is best known for sculptures such as *David* and for painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.
- He also designed the dome for St. Peter’s Cathedral.
Writers were also humanists. Some described how to succeed in the Renaissance world.

- Men played music and knew literature and history, but were not arrogant.
- Women were kind, graceful, and lively, and possessed outward beauty.

**Baldassare Castiglione’s** *Book of the Courtier* described the manners and behavior of the ideal aristocratic man and woman.
Niccolò Machiavelli’s *The Prince* was a guide for rulers to gain and maintain power.

- Rather than discuss high ideals, he stressed that the ends justify the means.
- “Machiavellian” has come to refer to the use of deceit in politics. He was attacked as cynical.
- Others said he was simply providing a realistic look at politics.
Section Review

QuickTake Quiz

Know It, Show It Quiz