

The Renaissance and Reformation



**BEFORE
YOU
READ**

Reach into Your Background

What do you do when you think of or hear about an interesting new idea? You probably share it. Maybe you share it by telling someone

else about it. During the Renaissance and Reformation, many people in Europe had new ideas they wanted to share.

Questions to Explore

1. Why did the Renaissance begin in northern Italy rather than in northern Europe?
2. Why did many northern European leaders want to adopt Protestant religions?

Key Terms

Renaissance
perspective
Reformation
indulgence
Protestant

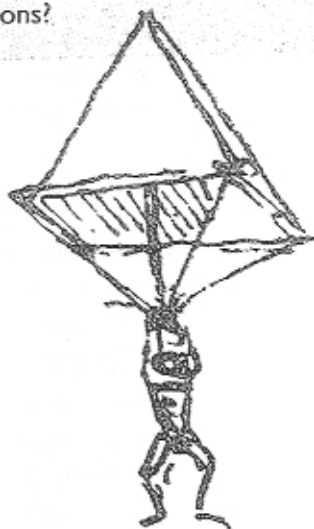
Key People and Places

Leonardo da Vinci
Michelangelo
Martin Luther
Florence

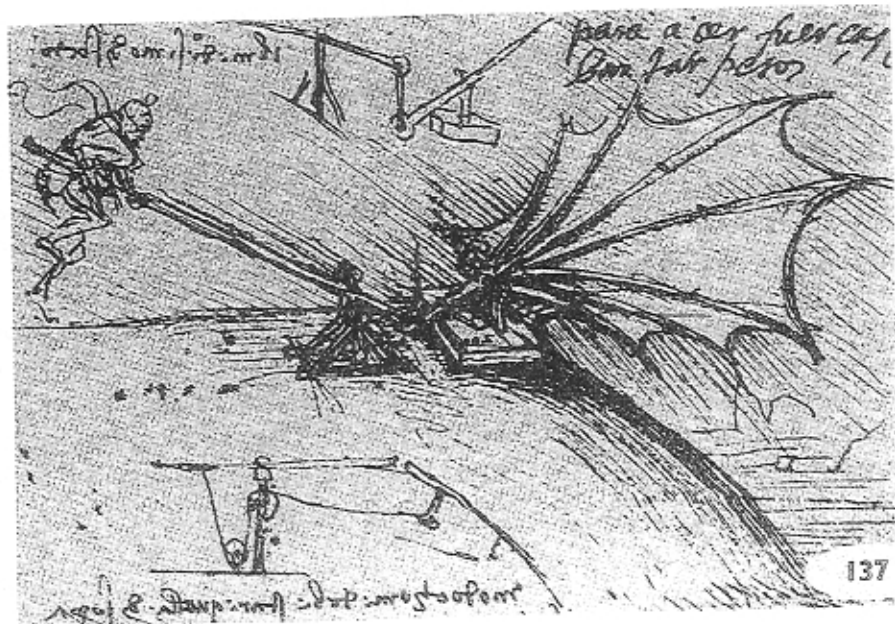
Have you ever wanted to fly like a bird? Leonardo da Vinci (lee uh NAR doh duh VIN chee) did. This brilliant artist and scientist who lived about 500 years ago thought that people could learn to fly. He studied birds and bats, as well as winged toys and seeds, to learn about flying.

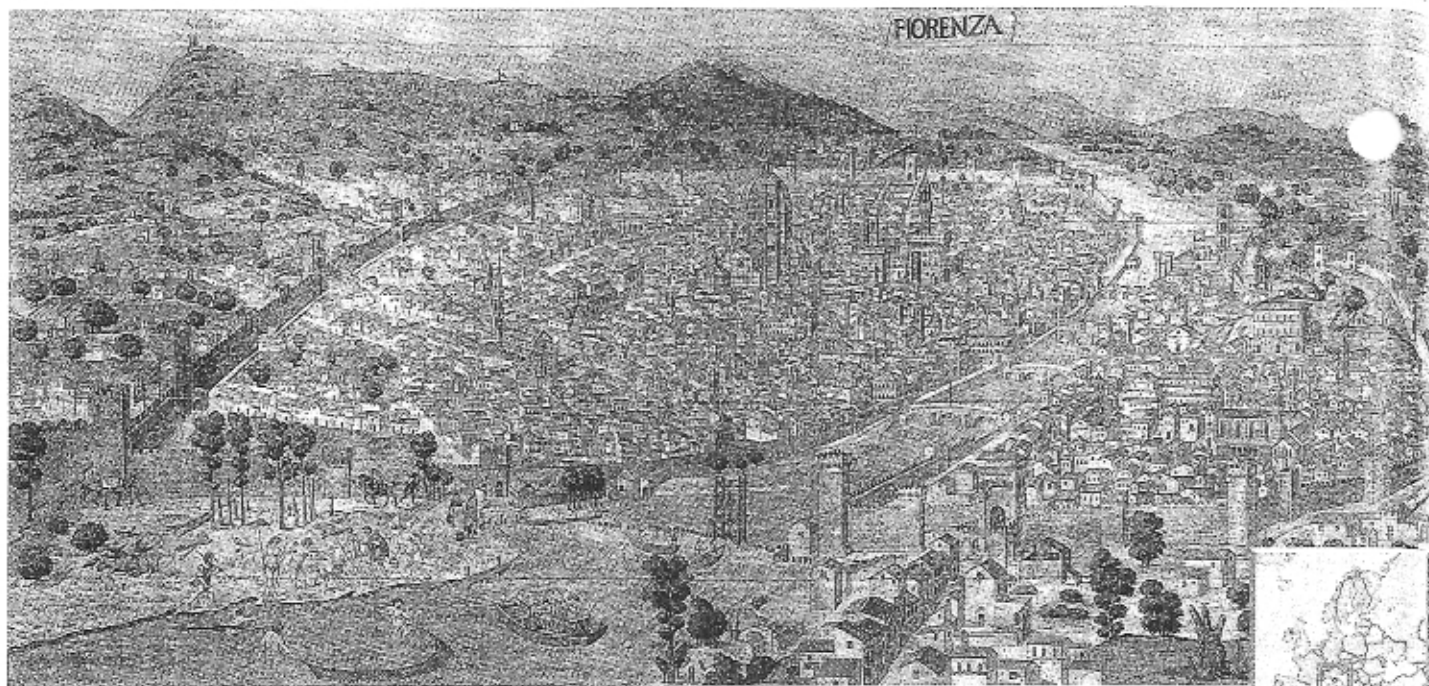
Leonardo never built a working airplane. But, as you can see from his drawings, he drew plans for one. He also made drawings of what looked like early examples of a parachute and a helicopter.

Leonardo was just one of many gifted Europeans who lived between 1300 and about 1600. This was the time of the Renaissance (REN uh sahns), or rebirth of learning in Europe. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, people again became deeply interested in art,



▼ Leonardo's drawing of a parachute (left) looks very much like the real thing. He used what he had learned about bat wings in this idea for a flying machine (below).





▲ The city-state of Florence on the Arno River was an important center of the Renaissance in Italy. Its artists and poets were supported by the city's wealthy merchants and bankers.

literature, science, and many other subjects. People changed the way they saw themselves and their world. The Renaissance began in northern Italy and spread to the rest of Europe.

The World That Made Leonardo

Italy, where Leonardo lived, was an unusual place. During the Middle Ages, life in Italy was easier than in much of the rest of Western Europe. People in northern Europe were threatened by war and disease. They depended on the protection of the clergy and local lords, who were controlled by popes and kings.

But in northern Italy people lived in city-states, or cities that had self-rule. The lives of these people were not as closely controlled by popes and kings. Instead, power was held by wealthy merchants. These merchants controlled European trade with Asia. Muslim traders brought precious goods like silk and spices from the East to the Mediterranean. From here, Italian merchants transported the goods throughout Europe, reselling them at top prices.

Because of their wealth from trade, some northern Italians had more time to think, to read, and to create and enjoy art. In the world of Renaissance Italy, artists competed for fame and money like athletes of today. Wealthy and powerful families sponsored artists and art schools. Because they were proud of their cities and their families, the wealthy built fine homes. Many were religious people who expressed their love of God by spending money to build and decorate churches. Others hoped that offerings of beautiful works of art would lead God to forgive their sins. Some popes sponsored the arts because they hoped to inspire loyalty to the Church.



Building on the Past
People during the Renaissance did not work in isolation. Often, they built upon ideas and methods brought to Europe from other parts of the world. The learning that was carried to Spain by the Muslims of North Africa was an important part of this exchange. For example, the Muslims reintroduced the works of Aristotle and other Greek thinkers and scientists to Europe.

The Renaissance Artist

From its birthplace in northern Italy, the Renaissance spread to other European lands. After all, Italian artists had much to teach other Europeans. They had studied and copied the classical art of ancient Greece and Rome. Like the artists of these two civilizations, they wanted to show things as they really were.

Techniques Used by Artists To better understand how to draw and paint people, Italian artists studied the bones, muscles, and organs of the body. They used **perspective** in their paintings. This is the technique of showing objects as they appear to the eye. One of the ways they did this was to make distant objects smaller in relation to closer objects. This made scenes in their paintings look as they appeared to the human eye. In addition, they used light and shadow to make the things they painted look solid.

Michelangelo and the Sistine Chapel Michelangelo (my kul AN juh loh) was one of these artists. Sponsored by Lorenzo de Medici (loh RENT soh duh MED uh chee), a wealthy citizen of Florence, and others, Michelangelo began his career as a sculptor. He carved marble so that it looked like flowing cloth, rippling muscle, and twisting hair. But his most famous work is a painting, not a sculpture. Actually, it is many paintings. Together these paintings cover the ceiling and walls

▼ This statue of the Virgin Mary holding the body of her son, Jesus, in her arms, still brings an emotional response from visitors to St. Peter's Church in Rome. Michelangelo created it in 1499, when he was in his early 20s.

The Genius of Michelangelo

This section of the Sistine Chapel ceiling shows how Michelangelo brought figures from the Bible to life.



READ ACTIVELY



Visualize Visualize Michelangelo working on the Sistine Chapel paintings. How do you think he would feel after a day's work?

of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican in Rome, Italy. Michelangelo did these paintings for Pope Julius II. See the picture on the previous page for a view of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.

It took Michelangelo about four years to finish painting the Sistine Chapel. He worked on scaffolding, or a framework, 80 feet (24 m) above the ground. Much of the time he painted lying on his back. Sometimes he stood for hours with his arm up in the air and his neck bent backward.

The pope was angry because the work took so long. Once he even hit Michelangelo with his cane and threatened to push him from the scaffolding. But Michelangelo kept working. When he finished, viewers were amazed. Michelangelo had used his artist's understanding of bone and muscle to bring scenes from the Bible to life in paint.

The Reformation

Michelangelo's work showed the great power of the Roman Catholic Church in his time. But not everyone was happy with the Church. In 1517, five years after Michelangelo finished painting the Sistine Chapel, a German monk named Martin Luther sharply criticized the Church. Luther nailed a list of his complaints on the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany. This act changed the religion of his times. The change he caused was called the **Reformation** because it was meant to reform, or improve, religious customs.

Martin Luther Speaks Out

Martin Luther was a professor of Bible studies at the University in Wittenberg, Germany. This modern stained-glass window shows him nailing up a list of complaints against the Roman Catholic Church. Below Luther's right hand is a symbol of Christianity. It is made up of the first two Greek letters in the word *Christ*. Other symbols on the window include an ink pot with a quill pen, a desk, and books.

Critical Thinking Why do you think the artist might have used these symbols?



Major Religions in Europe in the 1500s



Map Study The Reformation spread throughout Europe during the 1500s. Not all people who rejected the Roman Catholic Church were Lutherans, however. Some followed the teachings of a French reformer named John Calvin. He agreed with Luther on many points. However, Calvin taught that only the *Elect*, special

people picked by God, would get to heaven. Anglicans were followers of the reformed Church of England. **Place** Name one country that was mostly Lutheran. What was the major religion of England? Of France?



The Protestant Reformation Luther's beliefs were very different from those of the pope. According to Luther, people did not need bishops and popes to tell them what God wanted them to do. Belief in God, not obedience to the Church, was the key to getting into heaven.

Luther especially disliked the way the Church raised money by selling *indulgences*, official pardons given by the pope. If people committed a sin, they could pay money to the Church for an indulgence and be forgiven. Luther believed that the Church did not have the power to do this.

In Germany, princes and nobles who disliked the power of the pope quickly accepted Luther's ideas. These rulers wanted to collect their own taxes and make their own laws. They wanted the same powers enjoyed by the leaders of Italy's city-states. By the time Luther died, most of what is now northern Germany was Lutheran. That is, people there believed in Luther's ideas about how to be a Christian, not in the ideas of the Roman Catholic Church.

Ignatius Loyola



The words in the book held by Ignatius Loyola are the Latin for "To the greater glory of God." To achieve this aim, Loyola gave up his life as a noble in Spain to become a priest.



People with views similar to Luther's spread protests against the Roman Catholic Church to other parts of northern Europe. These people were called Protestants because their religions grew out of protest against Roman Catholicism.

The Catholic Reformation Many Roman Catholics agreed with some of the criticisms made by Protestants. But they did not turn away from the Church. Instead, they worked from inside the Church to change it. Pope Paul III was the first pope who worked to change the Church during the Catholic Reformation. Working with other Church leaders, he was able to solve many problems in the Church. Even though the Catholic reformers brought about many changes, they continued to preach that only the clergy could explain the Bible to people.

This effort to improve the Church inspired people. St. Vincent de Paul worked to help the poor people of Paris. Ignatius Loyola founded the Society of Jesus. Jesuits, as members of the society were called, were among the best-educated people of Europe at this time. They also became well known for their work as teachers. In more than 500 schools in Catholic countries, they taught children about religion as well as other subjects. Many Jesuits became missionaries who traveled throughout Europe trying to win back those who had left the Church.

SECTION 1 REVIEW

1. Define (a) Renaissance, (b) perspective, (c) Reformation, (d) indulgence, (e) Protestant.
2. Identify (a) Leonardo da Vinci, (b) Michelangelo, (c) Martin Luther, (d) Florence.
3. What conditions in northern Italy led to the Renaissance?
4. Why did kings and nobles in northern Europe want to break away from the Roman Catholic Church?

Critical Thinking

5. Identifying Central Issues Why do you think people were so astonished by Michelangelo's work in the Sistine Chapel?

Activity

6. Writing to Learn You are a Catholic who thinks that your Church needs to reform. Write a letter to a friend explaining why changes are needed.