# Unit 5: Dawn of a New Age Renaissance Reading

# About 1450, European scholars became more interested in studying the world around them. At the same time, European artists produced work that was more true to life. And European ships set sail to explore new lands. This new age in Europe was eventually called "the Renaissance", a French word that means "rebirth."

# The Renaissance began in northern Italy and then spread over the next century through Europe. Italian cities such as Naples, Genoa, and Venice became centers of trade between Europe and the Middle East. In the Middle East, Arab scholars had preserved the writings of the ancient Greeks in great libraries. So, when these Italian cities traded with Arab merchants, the Italians were reconnected with the ideas of the ancient Greeks. These “new” ideas, preserved from the ancient past, served as the basis of the Renaissance.

# Foreign trade made many Italian merchant families wealthy. These families became patrons who commissioned great painting, sculpture, and architecture. During the Renaissance, paintings and sculptures became more realistic and focused less often on religious topics. Artists advanced the Renaissance style of showing nature and depicting the feelings of people.

# In ad324, the Roman Empire was under attack, so Emperor Constantine moved his capital 850 miles east to Byzantium, a Greek-speaking city he renamed Constantinople. Visigoth warriors overran Rome in 410, but Constantinople remained a powerful city and a center of Christianity for a century. The Byzantine Empire fell to Muslim Turks in 1453, prompting many Greek-speaking Christian scholars to move to Italy.

# The printing press allowed the ideas of the era to spread far from their native cultures. The Renaissance led to a flowering of music, literature and drama that included the plays of William Shakespeare.

# European adventurers explored places farther from their homelands. In 1492, a Spanish fleet led by Christopher Columbus sailed to the Americas. This spirit of discovery and innovation is why historians consider the Renaissance to be the beginning of modern history.

**Fill in the Blank Notes**

The Renaissance is the “r\_\_b\_\_r\_\_h of Europe, a period when scholars became more interested in studying the w\_\_r\_\_d around them, when a\_\_\_\_ became more \*l\_\_f\_\_l\_\_k\_\_, and when Europeans began to e\_\_p\_\_o\_\_e new lands. Arab s\_\_h\_\_l\_\_rs preserved the writings of the ancient G\_\_e\_\_ks in their l\_\_b\_\_a\_\_i\_\_s. When t\_\_a\_\_e\_\_s from cities in northern I\_\_a\_\_y came into contact with A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, they exchanged i\_\_e\_\_s as well as g\_\_o\_\_s.

Italian m\_\_r\_\_h\_\_n\_\_s used their wealth from foreign trade to c\_\_m\_\_issi\_\_n great p\_\_i\_\_t\_\_ng, sculpture, and a\_\_c\_\_i\_\_e\_\_tu\_\_e. Artists advanced the R\_n\_\_i\_\_s\_\_n\_e style of showing n\_\_t\_\_re and depicting the f\_\_e\_\_i\_\_gs of people. Painting became more r\_\_a\_i\_\_t\_\_c and focused less often on r\_\_l\_\_g\_\_o\_\_s topics.

The fall of the B\_\_z\_\_n\_\_i\_\_e Empire in 14\_\_\_\_ was also a factor in the flowering of Renaissance. Many C\_\_r\_\_s\_\_i\_\_n scholars move to Italy after Muslim T\_\_r\_\_s captured C\_\_n\_\_t\_\_n\_\_i\_\_o\_\_le in 14\_\_\_\_.

The p\_\_i\_\_t\_\_ng press helped spread the ideas of the R\_\_n\_\_i\_\_s\_\_n\_\_e throughout \*E\_\_r\_\_pe. Explorers \*v\_\_y\_\_g\_\_d far from their homes in search of new lands. In 1492, a S\_\_a\_\_i\_\_h fleet led by Christopher C\_\_l\_\_m\_\_us sailed across the \*A\_\_l\_\_n\_\_ic Ocean to reach the A\_\_e\_\_i\_\_as.

1. Why did the Renaissance begin in northern Italy?
2. What was significant about Renaissance art?