

## THE RENAISSANCE

### 1. FILL IN THE BLANKS

favourable, founding, currency, height, revival, ancient, stability, lavish, dispensation, spread

It is the artistic, literary and scientific 1----- which originated in Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and which influenced the rest of Europe in a great variety of ways in the next two centuries.

Broadly, it was typified by the 2 ----- of humanism, a return to classical values and the beginning of objective scientific inquiry. It is also considered as the intermediate between the Middle Ages and modern time.

The term "Renaissance" was given 3----- in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Burckhardt, who emphasized the contrast between the Church-centered culture of the Middle Ages and the new sense of the primacy of personality of 14<sup>th</sup> c. Italy.

The political and economic situation of Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. was peculiarly 4 ----- to the development of the Renaissance. The presence of a wealthy leisured class of merchants and bankers made secular patronage of men of genius possible. The city-states were ruled by families-The Medici, The Sforza etc.- for whom 5 ----- patronage of the arts was often a means of justifying their otherwise weak title to political power.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> c. the invention of printing and the 6 ----- of libraries and academies by princes and popes helped to spread the new ideas. The Renaissance reached its 7 ----- in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. under the patronage of Julius II and Leo X, with Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci in Rome and Giovanni Bellini and Titian in Venice.

The Italian Wars (1494-1559) ended political 8 ----- but were effective in spreading Renaissance to other parts of Europe.

The Renaissance created a culture which, though based in large part on the imitation of the 9 -----, freed men to prove and enjoy the world in a way not possible under the medieval Church's 10 ----- . In this release lay the way of development of the modern world.

### 2. LEONARDO da VINCI- 1452-1519

Can you guess if the following questions are True or False?

1. Leonardo da Vinci was an artist, sculptor, engineer, scientist and inventor.
2. He was born near the town of Vinci, hence the name.
3. He was illegitimate.
4. Leonardo moved to Milan where he worked independently.
5. *The Last Supper* has been described as one of the least spiritual paintings.
6. When he was living in Florence, he painted *Mona Lisa*, which is a portrait of a poor woman.
7. *Mona Lisa* is famous for her ordinary looks.
8. Later in his life, he moved to France where he died.
9. Leonardo is best known as an inventor and an engineer.
10. He was the first who *invented* the bicycle, airplane, helicopter and parachute.
11. He had studied the human body in great detail.
12. Leonardo is the combination of an artist-engineer.

### 3. THE MONA LISA

- Why is *Mona Lisa* the most famous painting?
- Why is it considered to be a masterpiece?
- Why is *Mona Lisa* smiling?

- Why doesn't she have any eyebrows?
- Why is the painting in France and not in Italy?
- How much does the painting cost?

#### 4. Michelangelo's Biography

Match the words in the two columns.

1. A magistrate	a. a special right or advantage
2. A stone cutter	b formally arrange with sb to do a piece of work for you
3. A hammer	c. a tool which is used for hitting things (nails into walls)
4. A chisel	d. be very sure of yourself, to be conceited
5. To detest	e. a judge in law courts which deal with less serious crimes
6. A disgrace	f. form sth as a sculpture
7. Apprenticeship	g. sb whose job involves cutting stones
8. A privilege	h. a tool with a long metal blade with a sharp edge
9. To fuel sb's passion	i. to loathe, to dislike sth very much
10. To commission sth to sb	j. training for a fixed period of time
11, a fortress	k. shame, dishonour
12, To be cocky	l. treasure
13. To sculpt	m. encourage
14. A tomb	n. a large strong building which is intended to be difficult for enemies to enter
15. The pride of sth	o. a large grave that is above ground and that usually has a sculpture on it

#### 5. THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS - FILL IN THE BLANKS

**embodiment, commission, dimensions, masterpiece, fresco, divergence, branches, gesturing, depicted**

*The School of Athens* is a **1** ----- by the Italian Renaissance artist Raphael. It was painted between 1509 and 1514 as a part of Raphael's **2** ----- by Pope Julius II to decorate the rooms now known as the Stanze di Raffaello, in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican.

The Stanza della Segnatura was the first of the rooms to be decorated, and *The School of Athens*, representing *Philosophy*, was probably the third painting to be finished there, after *Theology* on the opposite wall and *Literature*. On the fourth wall *Justice* was depicted, thus completing the four **3** ----- of human knowledge.

Commentators have suggested that nearly every great ancient Greek philosopher can be found in the painting. The two central figures are beyond dispute Plato on the left and Aristotle, his student, on the right. Both figures hold modern, bound copies of their books in their left hands, while **4** ----- with their right. Plato holds *Timaeus*,

Aristotle his *Nicomachean Ethics*. Plato is **5** ----- as old, grey and bare-foot. By contrast, Aristotle is in mature manhood, wearing sandals and gold-trimmed robes. In addition, these two central figures gesture along different **6** -----: Plato vertically, upward, Aristotle on the horizon plane.

It is popularly thought that their gestures indicate central aspects of their philosophies, for Plato, his **Theory of Forms**, and for Aristotle, with an emphasis on **7** ----- particulars. Many interpret the painting to show a **8** ----- of the two philosophical schools. Plato argues a sense of timelessness whilst Aristotle looks into the physicality of life and the present realm.

The picture has long been regarded as “Raphael’s **9** -----” and the perfect **10** ----- of the classical spirit of the Renaissance.

## 6, THE SISTINE CHAPEL-FILL IN THE BLANKS

**depict, foretold, ubiquitous, unadorned, effects, sculptor, altar, jewels, ceremonies**

The Sistine Chapel is the pope’s private chapel in the Vatican, Rome, built by Sixtus IV and famous for Michelangelo’s frescoes. It is a rectangular brick building with six arched windows on each of the two main (side) walls and a barrel-vaulted ceiling. The exterior is drab and **1** ----- but its interior walls and ceiling are decorated with frescoes by many Florentine Renaissance masters, such as Raphael, Botticelli etc. The most important artworks in the chapel are the frescoes by Michelangelo on the ceiling and on the west wall behind the **2** ----- . The frescoes on the ceiling, collectively known as the Sistine Ceiling, were commissioned by Pope Julius II in 1508 and were painted in the years between 1508 to 1512. They **3** ----- incidents and personages from the Old Testament, which, along with The Last Judgment fresco, constitute the greatest achievements of Western painting. The Sistine Chapel had great symbolic meaning for the papacy as the chief consecrated space in the Vatican used for great **4** ----- , such as electing and inaugurating new popes. It already contained distinguished wall painting and Michelangelo was asked to add works for the relatively unimportant ceiling.

### The subject of the frescoes

The narrative begins at the altar and is divided into three sections: The Creation of the Heavens and Earth; The Creation of Adam and Eve and the Expulsion from the Garden Of Eden; finally is the story of Noah and the Great Flood. Nude youths sit around these frescoes and they are accompanied by prophets and sibyls (ancient seers who, according to tradition, **5** ----- the coming of Christ).

The most famous of these frescoes is without a doubt The Creation of Adam, reproductions of which have become **6** ----- in modern culture for its dramatic positioning of the two monumental figures reaching towards each other.

The Creation of Adam is one of the great **7** ----- of Western Art, though it and the rest of the Sistine Chapel ceiling suffered the ill **8** ----- of centuries of smoke that had caused the ceiling to darken considerably. It was not until 1971 that the cleaning began. The result of the cleaning was astonishing after its **9** ----- in 1989; what was only dark and drab became vivid. The change from pre-cleaning to post-cleaning was so great that some initially refused to believe that this is the way Michelangelo painted. Today we have a much better understanding of the miraculous way Michelangelo painted. Not bad for an artist who primarily thought of himself being a **10** ----- rather than a painter.

[Ubiquitous=πανταχού παρών]