THE RENAISSANCE
Rise of Cities in North Italy

- Several factors combined to spur the growth of towns in Northern Italy
  - 1st - the Crusades & later growth of the Mongol Empire fostered long-distance trade
  - 2nd - outbreak of Bubonic Plague
    - drove up wages
    - created a demand for labor
- Florence benefitted from these developments
  - grew into an important manufacturing center for wool cloth in 1300s
Rise of Cities in North Italy

- **During this period, Florence was an independent city-state**
  - Operated as a **republic form of government**
  - The republic was controlled by wealthy merchants & artisans
  - Became an ideal place to do business
  - Guilds regulated trade and manufacturing to ensure economic benefit and limited risk for members.
Rise of Cities in North Italy

- Political independence & guild regulation fostered continued growth & led to Florence becoming a major financial center in the 1400s

- The development of the financial institutions of Florence was orchestrated by the Medici family
  - established a bank in Florence with branches in Flanders, London, & other cities of Italy
  - The Medici bank made major advances in financial services
    - checking accounts
    - lending

- Florence also saw the development of share holding companies
Rise of Cities in North Italy

- Many citizens of Florence were able to accumulate vast wealth
- The wealthiest of all was Cosimo de Medici
  - *Used his wealth & control of the banking industry to take control of the government*
  - *While Cosimo de Medici maintained the appearance of a republic he ruled Florence as a dictator*
  - *This continued under his son Lorenzo de Medici*
  - *Under Medici leadership, Florence continued to thrive as a center of commerce*

- The vast wealth held by the residents of Florence funded major cultural developments in art and architecture
Many citizens of Florence were able to accumulate vast wealth

The wealthiest of all was Cosimo de Medici

- Used his wealth & control of the banking industry to take control of the government
- While Cosimo de Medici maintained the appearance of a republic he ruled Florence as a dictator
- This continued under his son Lorenzo de Medici
- Under Medici leadership, Florence continued to thrive as a center of commerce

The vast wealth held by the residents of Florence funded major cultural developments in art and architecture
The Medici Family
 Achievements of the Renaissance: The Arts

■ During the Medieval period sculpture and painting were considered the work of tradesman
  - Most of the work was commissioned by the church
  - limited to the depiction of scenes from the bible
  - Paintings & sculptures were fairly simple & relied heavily on symbolism

■ This changed during the Renaissance
  - which started in Italy & later spread to Northern Europe

■ Wealth patrons in Italy willing to pay for high quality works
  - inspired a new approach to the arts
Achievements of the Renaissance: The Arts

- Artist like Botticelli, **Michelangelo**, & **Leonardo da Vinci** found inspiration in Greek & Roman use of realism
  - approached the visual arts as an intellectual pursuit
- This new approach led to major advances in techniques like the use of perspective and shading.
- Highly realistic paintings like da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa* & Raphael’s *School of Athens* conveyed human emotion, movement, & space in a way never seen done before
- In sculpture, Michelangelo’s *David* depicted muscle tone, bone structure, & emotion in marble.
Achievements of the Renaissance: The Arts

- Literature also took a turn to the realistic
- Authors like Boccaccio, Petrarch, & Shakespeare wrote stories steeped in human emotion
- Authors began to move away from the tradition of writing in Latin & instead chose the language of their homes
Achievements of the Renaissance: Learning

- This period also saw advances in other intellectual pursuits
- In the 11th century, Greek manuscripts were reintroduced to Europe
- Much of this work had been lost in Europe after the fall of Rome but it was preserved & built upon in the Arab Muslim world
- When this work was reintroduced to Europe & translated into Latin, it inspired European intellectuals to pursue studies in mathematics, medicine, geography, & science
- A renewed interest in scientific inquiry led to growth of colleges in the 1200s & development of modern universities in 1300s
Achievements of the Renaissance: Humanism

- Medieval European intellectual life was dominated by the study of the bible & the pursuit of salvation.
- While intellectuals of the Renaissance remained devotedly Catholic, a new intellectual movement encouraged individuals to also pursue secular concerns.
- The Humanist argued that the faithful could live an enjoyable life full of worldly pleasures without offending God.
- **Humanism**, outlook focused on human pursuits rather than spiritual, inspired by the Greek classics & focused on study of history, literature, & philosophy (called the Humanities).
- The movement idealized intellectual curiosity & versatility.
- Also celebrated human potential & achievement.
Achievements of the Renaissance: Inventions

- Block printing & moveable type was developed in China & Korea between the 9th & 12th century
- This technology, along with papermaking, diffused to Europe in 1300 & 1400s
- Around 1450, 3 key innovations in the process were combined by Johann Gutenberg of Mainz
  - moveable type, the printing press, and ink suitable for printing on paper.
  - This breakthrough allowed Gutenberg to efficiently print books
- In 1454, he completed the first printed book in Europe, the Gutenberg Bible.
- The technology took hold rapidly in Europe with 10 million printed books produced by presses in 238 towns by 1500.
- This printing boom contributed to the growth of Humanism, the development of universities, the Protestant Reformation, & increased literacy across the continent.