Ideas on the Move

Trace how the Renaissance began, spread, and changed.

WH.4.1 "Trace the origins and developments of the European Renaissance and its impact throughout Western Europe."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two conditions that helped start the Renaissance in Italy. Number three steps that show how its ideas developed and reached other parts of Western Europe.

From Florence to Western Europe

1. In the 1300s, Florence was a busy center of banking and cloth trading. Wealthy families and city leaders paid artists and scholars to make works that brought honor to the city. Italy also held buildings, statues, and writings from ancient Rome. Scholars studied Greek texts brought through trade and by people arriving from the eastern Mediterranean. Wealth, competition among cities, and access to ancient learning helped spark a cultural movement later called the Renaissance.

2. During the 1400s, Italian scholars developed humanism, an approach that studied ancient texts to explore human life, language, and ethics. Artists experimented with perspective, making painted spaces appear deep. These changes did not replace Christianity: many patrons ordered religious art, and many humanists studied Christian writings. Around 1450, Johannes Gutenberg's movable-type printing methods in Mainz made it easier to produce many copies of a text. Printed books helped ideas travel beyond Italy more quickly.

3. By the 1500s, travelers, students, and printed books had carried Renaissance ideas into France, England, and the Low Countries. There, scholars and artists adapted them rather than simply copying Italian work. In England, Thomas More used humanist learning to question how society was organized. In the Low Countries, Erasmus applied close reading to Christian texts and called for reform. Across Western Europe, this exchange changed writing, education, and art, while local concerns shaped how people used the new ideas.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Florence's wealth and competition among cities help start the Renaissance?

2. How did Italian learning and art change during the 1400s without replacing Christianity?

3. How did printing help Renaissance ideas spread beyond Italy?

4. How did More and Erasmus each adapt Renaissance learning outside Italy?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence exhibit label arguing which link in the Renaissance's spread mattered most. Trace two Italian starting conditions, a change in ideas, a way ideas traveled, and an adaptation outside Italy.

ANSWER KEY

Ideas on the Move

HIGH SCHOOL · WH.4.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two conditions that helped start the Renaissance in Italy. Number three steps that show how its ideas developed and reached other parts of Western Europe. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Florence's wealth and competition among cities help start the Renaissance?	**Trade and banking created wealth that patrons used to pay artists and scholars; competing cities sought honor through their work.**
2	How did Italian learning and art change during the 1400s without replacing Christianity?	**Humanists studied ancient texts, and artists used perspective. Patrons still ordered religious art, and humanists also studied Christian writings.**
3	How did printing help Renaissance ideas spread beyond Italy?	**Movable-type printing made it easier to produce many copies of texts, so printed ideas could reach readers beyond Italy more quickly.**
4	How did More and Erasmus each adapt Renaissance learning outside Italy?	**In England, More used humanist learning to question society. In the Low Countries, Erasmus closely read Christian texts and called for reform.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Florence's trading wealth helped pay for new art and scholarship, while city leaders competed for honor. In Italy, humanists studied ancient texts to explore human life. Printing mattered most to the Renaissance's spread because it helped texts reach readers beyond Italy. In the Low Countries, Erasmus used close reading of Christian writings to call for reform. His work shows how an approach developed in Italy could serve a different purpose elsewhere in Western Europe.

Accept other supported choices for the most important link if the label explains the choice and traces all requested stages. Students may identify ancient learning, patronage, or competition as Italian starting conditions.