**Renaissance Text**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Core: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the text below. Highlight key people and inventions/discoveries.

1. Divide the text into sections according to its topic.
2. Create a sub-heading for each section.
3. Answer the questions in the margins.

When was the Renaissance?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Why was it called “Renaissance?”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How did Copernicus’ and Aristotle’s views differ? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Why did people want to believe Aristotle’s viewpoint? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Why were the telescope, compass and astrolabe important? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What was a humanist? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The Renaissance**

The Renaissance was a period of time between 1300 and 1500 in which new discoveries and inventions were made and the old ways of thinking about life were changing. In addition, new interest in art and learning began. The word “Renaissance” means “rebirth” which expresses what an enormous change the Renaissance made in the lives of the people forever afterwards.

One of the major changes that took place in people’s thinking was a change in the way people viewed their position in the universe. Before the Renaissance everyone agreed with Aristotle that the earth was the center of the universe and that all the planets and stars moved around it. However, in the sixteenth century Nicholas Copernicus used mathematics to prove that the sun, not the earth, was the center of the universe. This concept was new to people because they had never before realized that the earth moved. For a time many people refused to believe his theory because it made them feel less important in God’s scheme of life.

Johann Kepler was a mathematician who proved the formula that showed that the planets revolved around the sun in a circle motion. Other mathematical inventions of the Renaissance included the telescope, the compass, and the astrolabe, which was used by ships to show location at sea.

Another important change took place in the way people thought about religion. Many people felt that the Catholic Church should return to its earlier simplicity – the way it was taught by Christ and the apostles. The Church had become very complex and many churchmen had become very corrupt. Therefore, many people came to believe it would be better to put their faith in God, and the teachings of Jesus, instead of in man. These people were called humanists and this concept spread.

One of the most important inventions of the Renaissance was that of the printing press. Until the 1400s, books had been written by hand, usually by the monks in monasteries. Books could take years to make and were sometimes copied incorrectly. Some were written on cloth and decorated with jewels, while others were perfumed and dusted with gold or silver. However, most people could not afford such things and many people went through life without ever seeing a book.

Then, a German named Johann Gutenberg invented a printing process using movable pieces of metal type. These pieces were formed in the shape of letters that could be placed in rows to create a page of information. Hundreds of copies of each page could be made in a few minutes and books slowly began to circulate throughout Europe. New ideas and information spread as more books became available. The Bible was one of the first books to be printed.

Why was Gutenberg’s invention important? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Describe what Renaissance plays were like. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What does calling a time period the “Age of Shakespeare” tell you about Shakespeare? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How would cannons and gunpowder have changed feudalism? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How did artwork change after the Renaissance began? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What are Michalangelo and Leonardo da Vinci remembered for? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gunpowder and cannons came into more common use during the Renaissance. These two new methods of warfare made a mockery of armor and walled cities. Armed knights who exchanged military service for land became less important in battle. Large numbers of people were able to be killed faster than ever before.

The theater became an important part of Renaissance life. Plays were usually full of action and costumes were very fancy. Very little scenery or props were used so audiences had to use their imagination. The most important English playwright was William Shakespeare who wrote many plays still seen today. In fact, his time period was called the “Age of Shakespeare.”

The artwork of the Renaissance is especially well known today. Before the 13th century, most artists painted religious subjects. But after the Renaissance began, other subjects became widespread as well. New techniques and styles were also used, such as the use of perspective and paintings done in oils.

The most important artist of the Renaissance was an Italian named Michelangelo. He was famous as a sculptor and as a painter. Some of his best known works include a nude, marble statue, called “David,” that stood sixteen feet high and is scientifically perfect in every detail. He is also especially well known for his paintings on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. Michelangelo developed his own type of scaffold as a means to reach and paint the ceiling.

Another famous Renaissance artist was Leonardo da Vinci, who painted the “Last Supper” and the “Mona Lisa.” However, da Vinci was also known as an inventor. He came up with ideas for the life jacket and the parachute and he installed central heating in a palace. He was fascinated by birds and even had a set of wings with which he tried to learn to fly!

*Paraphrased from Miliken Publishing Co.*