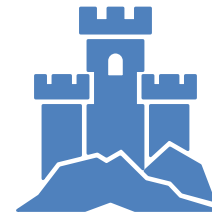




# #1 Florence, Italy

- **Florence was often named as the birth place of the Renaissance. The early writers and artists of the period sprung from this city in the northern hills of Italy. As a center for the European wool trade, the political power of the city rested primarily in the hands of the wealthy merchants who dominated the industry. These merchants built enormous gilded mansions in the city, villas in the country, and contributed to the construction of grand cathedrals, spawning the physical rebirth of the city.**





## #2 Spirit of Competition

---

- A spirit of competition developed between the rich merchants, who often competed with each other to see who could commission the grandest buildings and the finest works of art.
- Competition augmented the fervor with which the city entered into the Renaissance.

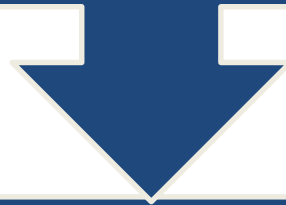
# #3 Medici Family

- The Medici family, which controlled Florence throughout much of the Renaissance, played a large part in the patronage of the arts and the political development of the city.
- In 1397, Giovanni de Medici, the banker to the Papal Court, established headquarters in Florence. As a wealthy and influential citizen, Giovanni had virtually no choice but to participate in public life, holding almost every political office in Florence at some point



## #4 Giovanni & Cosimo

Giovanni died in 1429, leaving behind a legacy of patronage for the arts, an immense fortune, and a son, Cosimo de Medici, who was educated in the principles of humanism.



Cosimo de Medici took over the family banking business at the age of forty. A successful businessman, Cosimo built up his father's fortune and established business connections all over Europe.

# #5 Cosimo Medici

---

He generously supported the arts, commissioning the building of great cathedrals, and commissioning the best artists of the age to decorate them.

---

He demonstrated great support for education, establishing the Platonic Academy for the study of ancient works.

---

It is estimated that before his death in 1464, Cosimo spent approximately 600,000 gold florins supporting architecture, scholarly learning, and other arts

# #6 The Medici Family

---

The Medici family was ousted in 1494. Though the Medici returned, Florence would never return to its former position of preeminence.

---

For carry out the construction of the great architectural works of the times, rich merchants hired the most talented artists and paid them well to do their most inspired work.

---

In constant efforts to maintain their position of power, merchants attempted to marry into nobility, and sometimes more importantly, gain public favor and recognition. Merchants became great patrons of the arts.

# #7 Florence, Italy

- Florence prospered during the Renaissance because of its lines of communication to the world around it. In the late Middle Ages, the city became a crossroads for wool traders.
- Giovanni and Cosimo de Medici used banking to make Florence a crossroads for finance. With these connections established, Florence became a crossroads for ideas.



## #8 Florence & Rome

- The two cities (which might have otherwise been rivals) mutually developed under the spirit of cooperation during the Renaissance
- Rome provided a destination for many Florentine artists and writers, and Florence benefited from the management of the papal purse.

# Reading with a Purpose

- Read the article about the Medici family
- Highlight important evidence as you read





# Writing Prompt

Imagine that you are a member of the famous Medici family. Write a summary paragraph emphasizing the importance of your Medici family in Venice and Florence during the Renaissance.

***Be sure to include:***

- **Topic Sentence**
- **5 supporting sentences**
- **Concluding sentence**

# The Medici Family Article

The Medici family ruled the city of Florence throughout the Renaissance. They had a major influence on the growth of the Italian Renaissance through their patronage of the arts and humanism.

## Rulers of Florence

The Medici family were wool merchants and bankers. Both businesses were very profitable and the family became extremely wealthy. Giovanni de Medici first brought the family to prominence in Florence by starting the Medici bank. He also was the leader of the Florence merchants. His son, Cosimo de Medici became the Gran maestro (leader) of the Florence city-state in 1434. The Medici family ruled Florence for the next 200 years until 1737.

## Leaders of the Renaissance

The Medici are most famous for their patronage of the arts. Patronage is where a wealthy person or family sponsors artists. They would pay artists commissions for major works of art. The Medici patronage had a huge impact on the Renaissance, allowing artists to focus on their work without having to worry about money.

A significant amount of the art and architecture that was produced in Florence at the beginning of the Renaissance was due to the Medici. Early on they supported the painter Masaccio and helped pay the architect Brunelleschi to rebuild the Basilica of San Lorenzo. Other famous artists that the Medici supported include Michelangelo, Raphael, Donatello, and Leonardo da Vinci.

The Medici didn't just support the arts and architecture. They also supported science. They supported the famous scientist Galileo Galilei in his scientific efforts. Galileo also worked as a tutor for the Medici children.

## Bankers

The Medici owed much of their wealth and power to the Medici Bank. It made them one of the richest families in all of Europe. It was the largest bank in Europe at its peak and was very well respected. The bank made notable improvements in accounting procedures including the development of the double-entry bookkeeping system.

## Important Members

Giovanni de Medici (1360 - 1429): Giovanni was the founder of the Medici Bank, which would make the family wealthy and allow them to support the arts.

Cosimo de Medici (1389 - 1464): Cosimo began the Medici dynasty as the first Medici to become leader of the city of Florence. He supported the famous sculptor Donatello and the architect Brunelleschi.

Lorenzo de Medici (1449 - 1492): Also known as Lorenzo the Magnificent, Lorenzo de Medici ruled Florence through much of the peak of the Italian Renaissance. He supported such artists as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Sandro Botticelli.

Pope Leo X (1475 - 1521): The first of four Medici to become Pope, Leo commissioned many works from the artist Raphael.

Catherine de Medici (1529 - 1589): Catherine married King Henry II of France and became Queen of France in 1547. She later served as regent for her son King Charles IX and played a major role in the reign of her third son Henry III. Catherine supported the arts and brought ballet to the French court.

Marie de Medici (1575 - 1642): Marie became Queen of France when she married King Henry IV of France. She also acted as regent for her young son Louis XIII of France before he became king. Her court painter was the famous Peter Paul Rubens.

## Interesting Facts about the Medici Family

- Although the names were later changed, Galileo initially named four of the moons of Jupiter he discovered after children of the Medici family.
- The Medici Family produced four popes in total including Pope Leo X, Pope Clement VII, Pope Pius IV, and Pope Leo XI.
- The Medici Family is sometimes called the Godfathers of the Renaissance.
- In 1478 Giuliano Medici was assassinated by the Pazzi family in front of 10,000 people at the Easter church service.
- Ferdinando de Medici was a patron of music. He helped to fund the invention of the piano.