

Sample Lesson #3

The Medici

The Medici were members of a family of wealthy bankers, and this group was the ruling family of Florence, Italy, throughout much of the Renaissance. Members of the Medici family influenced economics, religious life, and political practices in Florence and throughout Europe. Three Medici men became popes and two Medici women became queens of France. The Medici helped to make humanism more popular, not only in Florence but also throughout Europe.

The family members were significant patrons of the arts, placing Florence at the center of artistic activity for almost three centuries. A famous Renaissance painter, **Botticelli**, painted portraits of members of the Medici family. He also painted scenes from ancient Greek and Roman legends. Another famous sculptor and painter, **Michelangelo**, came to study art at the palace of Lorenzo de Medici at a very young age. The Medici also influenced the development of architecture. A famous architect named **Brunelleschi** designed **il Duomo** (the Dome) for Florence's cathedral, and today, it remains one of Florence's most magnificent landmarks. Brunelleschi used many innovative construction techniques on il Duomo and other projects.

Cosimo de Medici's offices became the **Uffizi**, which was the world's first public art gallery. **Lorenzo de Medici** gave money to numerous Renaissance artists; Botticelli, Michelangelo, and Brunelleschi were just a few of them. Scholars from all over Europe gathered in Florence and then carried their experiences with classical literature and ideas about art, life, and the church back to their homelands. After Lorenzo de Medici died, a fanatical Dominican priest named Savonorola rose to power. Savonorola believed that art and luxurious living celebrated pagan ways, and that these things were leading the clergy and church members astray. Savonorola angered members of the church and clergy, and many artistic geniuses of the day left Florence and scattered across Europe. To this day, however, tourists from all over the world come to Florence to see Brunelleschi's Dome and other works of the great artists that the Medici patronized.



Il Duomo rises spectacularly over the city of Florence

- Why was the influence of the Medici family so important?
 - The Medici helped to spread humanism in Italy and throughout Europe.
 - The Medici were important patrons of the arts and architecture, and many of the works they funded are in existence today.
 - The Medici family influenced economics, religious life, and political practices in Florence and throughout Europe.
 - all of the above
- _____ was the cultural movement that stressed the importance of classical literature, language, and the arts.

Brahmanism

Polytheism

Legalism

Humanism

3. Match each artist with his clue.

_____ Brunelleschi	A) sculptor and painter
_____ Michelangelo	B) portrait artist of the Medici
_____ Botticelli	C) architect of il Duomo

4. Read the passage below. Then determine the religion of the speaker.

I believe in the Four Noble Truths, I follow the Middle Way, and I try to live according to the Eightfold Path. If my teacher could do it, then maybe I can attain enlightenment, too.

The speaker is a _____.

Christian Buddhist Muslim Jew Hindu

5. What physical features affected the growth of civilizations in ancient Egypt, Kush, the Harappan civilization, and China?

_____ mountain ranges	_____ island chains	_____ river valleys
_____ waterfalls	_____ lakes	_____ deserts

6. Cross out the term that does not belong.

knights Janissaries serfs samurai

7. Explain why the word you crossed out is not like the others.

- 8 – 10. An important European city has had at least three different names at various times in history.

Number the names, 1 through 3 in the order in which the names were given.

_____ Byzantium _____ Istanbul _____ Constantinople

Match each name of the city with its clue.

_____ Byzantium	A) capital of the Ottoman Empire
_____ Istanbul	B) ancient Greek city
_____ Constantinople	C) capital of the Roman Empire in the East

What is the name of the city today? _____