



# BELL WORK

Imagine being a historian Florence, Italy in the late 1300s. In your writings you describe the wonders of your city today. But the place was very different about 50 years ago. At that time the Black Death was sweeping through the city. 50,000 people living in your city died from the Black Death. Today, Florence is growing in population and culture and is now known for its beauty, art, and culture.

**Write 3-5 sentences predicting how your city changed so quickly.**

# Objective & Standard

**I can cite evidence of the significance of the Florence, Venice, and the Medici family.**

- SPI 7.44 Cite evidence in writing explaining the importance of Florence, Italy and the Medici Family in the early stages of the Renaissance and the growth of independent trading cities, such as Venice, and their importance in the spread of Renaissance ideas.

# 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.**

# 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.



# 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

# 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.

# Giovanni & Cosimo

- 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

# 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.



# 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.

# 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

- You will read an article about the Medici family and answer the 10 questions.





# 5 Paragraph Essay

You are a member of the Medici family today. You are going to do some ancestor research on your family and how important the family, Venice, and Florence were to the Renaissance. This report will be due on Friday. We will organize our thoughts and begin today. THIS WILL BE FINISHED AT HOME.

We will organize our thoughts today.