

Participants in the Renaissance Art tour will learn about Renaissance society and its numerous artistic innovations. Use the suggestions below either before or after your museum visit to encourage further inquiry in the classroom.

ACTIVITIES:

- Use a variety of medieval and renaissance images from the Walters website or your classroom. As a class, have a general discussion about the differences between one of the medieval paintings and one of the renaissance paintings while listing differences on the board. Have students work in groups on two to four paintings and list differences between the paintings. Discuss as a class what each group came up with. What renaissance innovations did students find in the paintings?
- After introducing students to renaissance art go to the Walters website and find *The Ideal City* under the Renaissance collection. How does this city represent Renaissance ideals? What kind of symbolism do the students think each of the objects has? After discussion, have students create their own two-dimensional "Ideal City." What buildings would they have and why? What does an ideal city in the 21st century entail? Share thoughts and opinions as a class.
- Study some of the people of the Renaissance, such as Galileo, da Vinci, Brunelleschi, Raphael, etc. What kinds of things were invented in the Renaissance? Make a list as a class before coming to the museum. When coming to the Walters, have students look for any sign of these inventions in the paintings they see: perspective, domes, mechanical clocks, eyeglasses, printing press, etc. Where did you see evidence of a Renaissance invention? After returning to the classroom, have students consider their own invention. What object would they create today in the 21st century? Have students draw and label the object. Students can also write a short piece explaining the uses of their invention.
<http://galileo.rice.edu/>
<http://www.twingroves.district96.k12.il.us/Renaissance/University/Inventions/Inventions.html>



VOCABULARY

Chiaroscuro - Italian for “light and dark.” The gradations of light and dark within a picture, especially so that forms are determined not by sharp outlines, but by the meeting of lighter and darker outlines.

Classicism - A term used to describe the inspiration of ancient art, especially that of ancient Greece and Rome.

Foreshortening - A method of representing objects or parts of objects as if they were seen at an angle and receding into space, instead of being seen strictly frontally or in profile.

Humanism - Awareness of man’s importance in the world and his individual contributions. Interest in living a good life on earth instead of waiting for salvation in the next life.

Icon - Any image or likeness, but most commonly panel paintings, representing Christ, the Virgin Mary, or a saint, and venerated by Orthodox Christians.

Iconography - The study of symbolic, often religious, meaning of objects, persons, or events pictured in works of art.

Naturalism - The principle that art should adhere as closely as possible to the appearance of the natural world.

Order - An architectural system based on the column. The Greek classical orders are Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, and the Roman classical orders are Tuscan and Corinthian.

Perspective (atmospheric) - Also called “aerial” perspective. The representation of spatial effects caused by the insertion or interposition of the atmosphere between the viewer and distant objects. Objects seen at a distance might appear with a bluish hue, might be blurred at the outlines, or could appear to have lost some detail.

Perspective (one-point) - The representation on a two-dimensional surface of three-dimensional objects in space. Specifically, a method developed during the 15th century, in which all parallel lines and edges of surfaces receding at the same angle are drawn on the picture plane in such a way that converges toward a single vanishing point.

Renaissance - The rebirth, specifically of ancient Greek and Roman ideas and arts during the 16th century in Italy.

Sfumato - From the Italian word *fumo*, meaning smoke, this term describes the very subtle gradations of light and dark developed by Leonardo da Vinci to model his figures.

Symbolism - The representation of visible signs which stand for something else in a work of art.

Tempera - Paint consisting of pigments mixed or “tempered” with egg yolk instead of oil as a medium. Tempera was widely used for Italian panel painting before the 16th century.

Virtues and Vices – Abstract personalities that are frequently represented in Renaissance art. The Theological Virtues are Faith, Hope, and Charity. The Cardinal Virtues are Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. These seven Virtues are opposed by the seven Vices, Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Gardner’s Art Through the Ages, Fred S. Kleiner

The Italian Renaissance, J.H. Plumb

The Lives of the Artists, Giorgio Vasari

Renaissance (Eyewitness Books), Alison Cole

The Renaissance Art Book, Wenda O’Reilly

<http://members.aol.com/MrDonnHistory/World.html#Renaissance>

<http://www.teachnet.ie/modubhain/ren/>

<http://www.mos.org/leonardo/artist.html>

Borrow the Walters’ *Renaissance Art* Teacher Resource Kit for more lesson ideas, resources, and images of objects! Email schoolprograms@thewalters.org for more information.