

The Renaissance And Reformation

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UNIT ONE

Renaissance

If you have just completed your study of the Middle Ages you might be left wondering why there are no exact dates for both the beginning and the end of that period. Your question is a good one.

The time-period called the **Middle Ages** is vague. That means fuzzy or unclear. Not because we don't know enough, but because there is no exact boundary between historical time periods.

If you remember your study of the Ancient World you will know that:

1. The Egyptian civilization was ending while the Greek one was beginning
2. The Greeks were winding down while the Romans were rising, and
3. Rome was falling as the Middle Ages began

The story of the **Renaissance** is no different. The late Middle Ages, the Crusades, the Age of Discovery, and the Early Renaissance period were all happening around the same time, the **late 13th century** (1200's) to the **late 15th century** (1400's).

Remember that the Crusades took place over a period of about 200 years and that the "soldiers" that participated in the Holy Wars had to travel all over Europe and the Byzantine Empire.

This travel led to the re-emergence of trade with far off lands and the Silk Road provided access to luxury goods from India and China (the East).

Remember too, that the Mongols lost control of the Eastern trade routes and the trip just became too risky. This led explorers to search for new ways (the sea) to get the luxury goods Europe desired.

All these things caused a change in thinking throughout the Western world and that is how the *Middle Ages* drew to a close.

So, in the 15th century (the 1400's) we had a civilization eager to get more out of life and **Western Civilization was "reborn"**.

The word **Renaissance means rebirth - or to be reborn** - in Italian. And that is exactly what happened. In addition to this, there was also a shifting of political and religious thought. This shift is called the Reformation.

The Renaissance and Reformation are actually two things:

- **A cultural movement** - The culture of Ancient Rome was "reborn". Culture means things like education, art, politics, philosophy, and literature.
- **A historical period** - The discovery of new lands and trade routes, the rejection and reform of the Catholic Church, the formation of new religious beliefs and churches, and the shuffle of political boundaries all make up the historical period of the 1400's to 1600's.

In this course you will learn how these two things combine to make up the period. You cannot only study one part of history

- you must be able to connect ALL the pieces of the puzzle together.

You must also remember that **the reason we study history is to learn about the mistakes and accomplishments of the people who came before us.**

For example: The people of the Early Renaissance period remembered that there were many things about Ancient Rome that were good and felt that they needed to focus on those things once again.

If we were studying American history right now I would remind you that our Founding Fathers also remembered the good things about the ancient world, most notably the idea of a **Democracy** - or rule by the people instead of Kings - and that is how America was born.

So I hope you see that history can tell you things. If you study it well and learn the lessons, **it can help you avoid mistakes and point you in the right direction.**



ACTIVITES for UNIT ONE

1.1 Matching Vocabulary

Directions: Match the vocabulary word on the left with the proper definition on the right. Put the correct letter on the blank.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Western Civilization | A. Holy war |
| 2. _____ Renaissance | B. Study this to learn from our mistakes |
| 3. _____ Democracy | C. Starts with the fall of Rome |
| 4. _____ Cultural | D. Rule by the people |
| 5. _____ Historical | E. Rebirth |
| 6. _____ History | F. The culture of Europe and the West |
| 7. _____ Middle Ages | G. Having to do with political events of the past |
| 8. _____ Crusades | H. Having to do with the arts and education |

Activity 1.2

Multiple Choice

Read the sentence and circle the best answer.

1. The reason we study _____ is to learn about the mistakes and accomplishments of the people who came before us.
 - a. Politics
 - b. History
 - c. Archeology
2. The word _____ means rebirth - or to be reborn - in Italian.
 - a. Democracy
 - b. Cultural
 - c. Renaissance
3. _____ means fuzzy or unclear.
 - a. Vague
 - b. Poor
 - c. Democracy
4. The _____ provided access to luxury goods from India and China.
 - a. Silk Road
 - b. Turkish Rulers
 - c. Mongol Rulers
5. _____ means things like education, art, politics, philosophy, and literature.
 - a. Culture
 - b. Historical
 - c. Vague
6. _____ refers to the political events that happened in the past.
 - a. Culture
 - b. Historical
 - c. Vague

Activity 1.3

True or False?

Put a T for true or a F for false in the blank next to the question.

1. _____ The reason we study history is to learn about the mistakes and accomplishments of the people who came before us.
2. _____ Culture means things like education, art, politics, philosophy, and literature.
3. _____ You can choose to only study one part of history because you don't need to be able to connect all the pieces of the puzzle together.
4. _____ The discovery of new lands and trade routes, the rejection and reform of the Catholic Church, the formation of new religious beliefs and churches, and the shuffle of political boundaries all make up the historical period of the 1400's to 1600's.
5. _____ The late Middle Ages, the Crusades, the Age of Discovery, and the Early Renaissance period were all happening at different periods in history.
6. _____ Historical means things like education, art, politics, philosophy, and literature.
7. _____ The time-period called the Middle Ages is vague.
8. _____ The Silk Road became too risky to travel after the Mongols lost control of it.

UNIT THIRTEEN

John Calvin

Around the same time as Martin Luther, there was another man whose main goal in life was to reform the Church. His name was **John Calvin**.

Over the entire Protest Period (the time of the Catholic Reformation) many different sects of churches came into being.

We're already talked about **Lutheranism**, but there were others such as the **Anabaptists** (believed that baptism should take place as an adult), the **Anglicans** (The Church of England), and **Calvinism**, which we will discuss next.

John Calvin was a trained lawyer who took part in establishing a protest religion named after him called **Calvinism**. He was born in France in 1509.

He wrote a book, called "**Institutes of the Christian Religion**". This book was first published in 1536 and it was a protestant "Primer" or introduction, and contained what would become the defining doctrine of Calvinism.

John Calvin wanted to turn society into a **theocracy** (government controlled by religion). His thoughts were seen by the Catholic Church as **heretical**. Remember that word from the Middle Ages course? A **heretic** was someone who went against the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.

In France, and other places, during Calvin's time, heretics were being burned at the stake. In fact, 24 of them were burned in the year 1534, so Calvin left France for Geneva, Switzerland.

Geneva would turn out to be the perfect city for his "reforms" and in the year 1541 he finally got his chance to impose his **doctrine** (his belief system) on the city and people of Geneva.

This doctrine was a code of morality where certain things were determined to be "right" and certain things were determined to be "wrong".

- Praying was right - singing was wrong.
- No work or pleasure on Sunday was right - entertaining or parties on Sunday were wrong.
- A tavern that preached the Scriptures while serving alcohol was right - a tavern that did not preach while serving alcohol was wrong.

Calvin got slammed for that last one - it was pretty dumb to say alcohol was OK only if you were praying when you were drinking it; and the regular taverns reopened.

Another core belief of Calvin was the idea of **predestination**. For whatever reason this idea was pretty popular and even made its way to the early British colonies in America.

Predestination means that you have a destiny that has been pre-ordained (Set IN STONE!) by God and neither you nor any good deeds you do, can really change that.

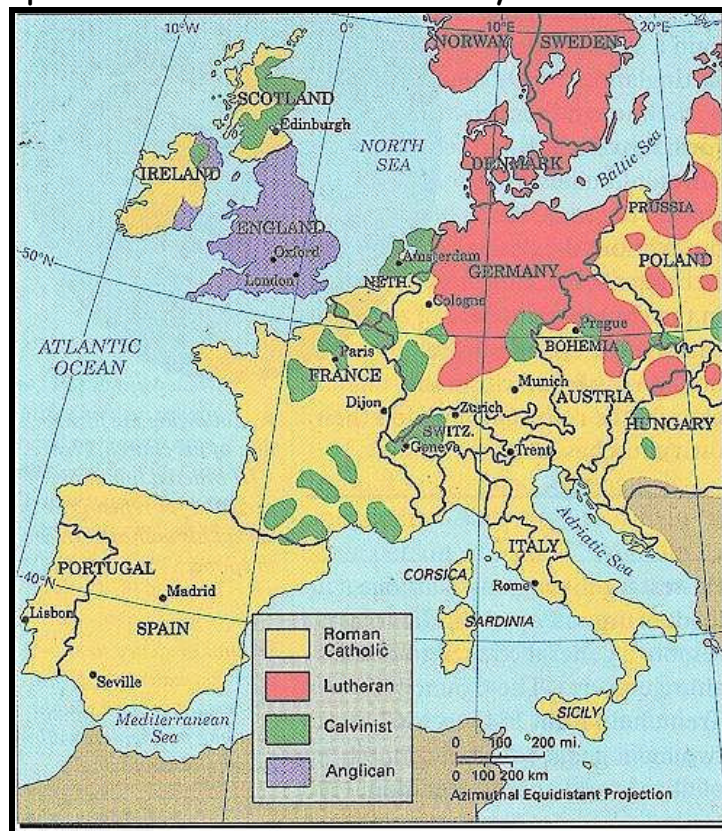
His beliefs were that there are two types of people on Earth, the **Elect** and the **Reprobates**.

The Elect are the lucky ones because they are predestined to be saved by God and no matter what they do - they cannot fall from grace.

On the other hand, the reprobates were the unlucky ones because they were predestined by God to suffer **everlasting damnation!**

Calvin preached that you couldn't change your "destiny" and so the reprobates could do all the good deeds they wanted, the most it would get them is the knowledge that they lived the best life they could. Part of the problem though, was that no one ever knew which one they were, because it was impossible to know the will of God.

Calvinism went on to spread throughout Europe (see map below) and is still popular in several forms today.



ACTIVITES for UNIT THIRTEEN

Activity 13.1

Short Answer Questions

1. Who was John Calvin?
2. When was he born?
3. What is a theocracy?
4. What happened to heretics in France and other places during Calvin's lifetime?
5. Why do you think Calvin would risk his life for what he believed?
6. What city did Calvin finally settle in and start his reformed theocracy?

Activity 13.2

Short Answer Questions

1. Think about what a theocracy is for a minute. Can you think of a nation on earth right now that has a theocracy? If you need help ask your mom or look it up n the internet.
2. Is the country you picked a stable place, or does it have many conflicts?
3. Can you think of a good reason why most countries on earth do NOT have a theocracy?

