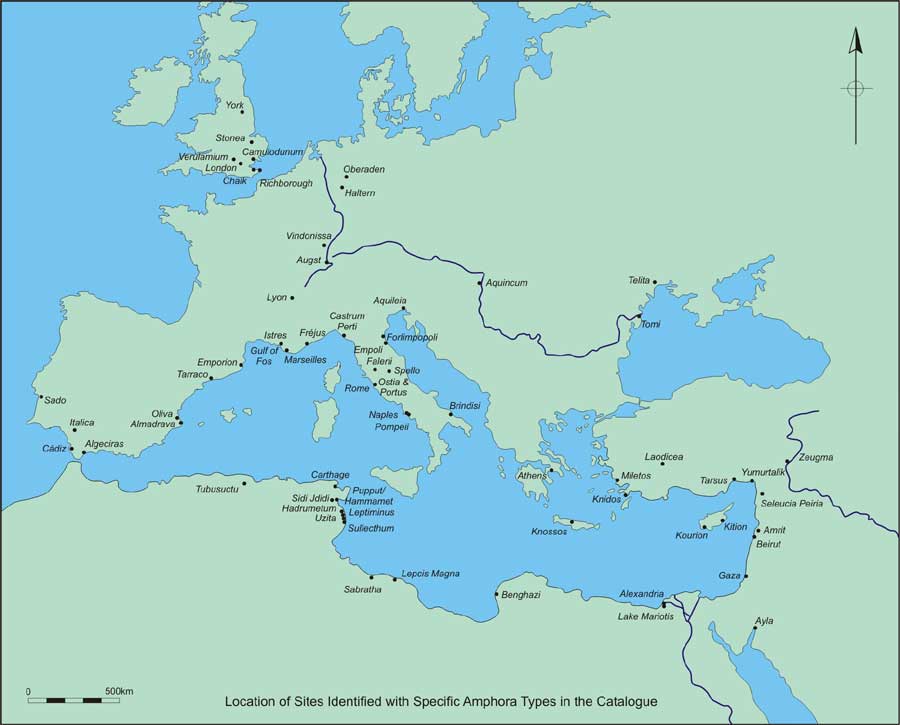
**Name:**

**Mods:**

**The Renaissance- A Quick Overview**

*The following quick read is your first official homework assignment of the year. Please read the following information and answer the questions that follow in complete sentences.*

As Europe slowly recovered in the years following the Black Death—a terrible sickness that claimed the lives of close to half the people of Europe between 1346 and 1353, a new movement emerged. During the next two centuries, European scholars began to study the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome. Art became more true to life. Explorers discovered new lands. Historians call this age "the Renaissance,” a word that derives from the Italian and French languages from a word that means "rebirth."

The Renaissance began in Florence and quickly spread to other parts of Italy such as Milan, Genoa, and Venice. Today these cities are part of the Italian Republic, but in the fourteenth century they were independent city-states. They became centers of trade between Europe and the Middle East. Wealthy merchants in the cities learned that Arab scholars had preserved the writings of the ancient Romans and Greeks in their libraries. So when the merchants traded with the Arabs, they exchanged ideas as well as goods.

But why do the Arabs have ancient Roman and Greek manuscripts? In 330 CE, the Roman Emperor Constantine moved his capital 850 miles east from Rome to the Greek-speaking city of Byzantium. For hundreds of years after Rome fell to Germanic invaders, the Byzantine Empire continued in southeast Europe and, unlike Western Europe, flourished. In 1453, however, the Byzantine Empire fell to Muslim Turks. After, many Christian scholars left Byzantium for Italy, bringing even more knowledge with them.

**Venice**

**Florence**

**Byzantium**

Inventions helped to spread learning during the Renaissance. Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press by 1450, which meant that books could be copied by machine instead of by hand. The discovery of a graphite mine in England led to the invention of the pencil.

The spirit of rebirth in Europe influenced painting, sculpture, and architecture. The merchants used their great wealth to hire painters and sculptors to create great art for their churches, their homes, and their cities. Artists advanced the Renaissance style, a style that showed more scenes of nature and depicted the feelings of people. Painting and sculpture became more realistic and focused less on religious topics.

Historians consider the Renaissance to be the beginning of modern history. In 150 years, the Renaissance would spread throughout Europe. England’s William Shakespeare would write great plays, Leonardo da Vinci would make advances in science and art, and explorers would discover that a “New World” lay beyond the Atlantic Ocean.

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Define “Renaissance” (please do NOT just put “rebirth”: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. What role do Arabs living in Byzantium play in beginning the Renaissance in Italy?

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3. What effect did the Renaissance have on the arts?

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