


## Renaissance Thinkers CARC Social Studies

Please note, all support materials are after the lesson plan template and begin on page 4. Each support page is linked in the lesson plan. Click on the red push pin (  ) in each support page to return to the lesson plan template.

<b>Grade Level</b>	8	<b>General Outcome</b>	8.2 Through an examination of Renaissance Europe, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how the exchange of ideas and knowledge contributed to shaping the worldview of the western world.
<b>Time Frame</b>	5 – 6 classes	<b>Enduring Understanding (purpose of the lesson)</b>	In this challenge students rank the contributions of great thinkers/philosophers of the Renaissance. Students report their rankings in a newspaper article, editorial or letter to the editor of the <i>Renaissance Times</i> .
<b>Developed By</b>	Edith Dening, Connie Visser, Ken Hoekstra, Brent Nixon		
<b>Critical Challenge/ Big Idea</b>	<b>Rank the philosophers/thinkers of Renaissance (Luther, Petrarch, Machiavelli, Dante, Erasmus and Montaigne) in order of their influence and their contribution to the Western worldview.</b>		
<b>Values and Attitudes Outcomes</b>	<b>Knowledge and Understanding Outcomes</b>	<b>Skills and Processes Outcomes</b>	
8.2.1 students will appreciate how Renaissance Europe formed the basis for the worldview of the western world	8.2.4 critically examine the factors that shaped the worldview evolving in western Europe during the Renaissance 8.2.4.2 students will understand how the Renaissance sparked the growth and exchange of ideas and knowledge across Europe (i.e., astronomy, mathematics, science, politics, religion, arts) 8.2.4.5 students will understand how thinkers and philosophers influenced society in the development of the humanist worldview during the Renaissance	develop skills of historical thinking 8.S.2.1 distinguish cause, effect, sequence and correlation in historical events, including the long and short-term causal relations 8.S.2.3 analyze the historical contexts of key events of a given time period  apply the research process 8.S.7.1 integrate and synthesize concepts to provide an informed point of view on a research question or an issue 8.S.7.2 develop a position supported by information gathered through research	

		<p><b>8.S.7.3</b> draw conclusions based upon research and evidence        8.S.7.7 practice responsible and ethical use of information and technology        8.S.7.8 include and organize references as part of research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ 8.S.7.9 plan and conduct a search, using a wide variety of electronic sources</li> <li>□ 8.S.7.10 refine searches to limit sources to a manageable number</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral, Written and Visual Literacy</b>  <b>8.S.8.1</b> communicate in a persuasive and engaging manner through speeches, multimedia presentations and written and oral reports, taking particular audiences and purposes into consideration</p>
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**Note: Not all of the outcomes are summatively assessed and thus are not listed in bold type above. If students have had practice with the research process, the rubric can be modified to include those outcomes.**

<b>Summative Assessment Strategies</b>	<b>Great Thinkers Rubric</b>
<p><b>Introductory Activity/ The Hook</b></p>	<p><b>Activity 1: Characteristics of a Great Thinker</b></p> <p>1. In groups of three or four, ask students to come to an agreement on answers to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a philosopher? (No dictionaries allowed.)</li> <li>• What makes a great thinker?</li> <li>• Who in our society (the last 100 years) would you say is a great thinker?</li> <li>• Why did you choose this person? Give specific reasons.</li> <li>• Define "Humanism" as it applies to the Renaissance period.</li> </ul> <p>Alternatively you may want to brainstorm one or more of the questions before assigning the remainder to the groups or provide students with the Handout: <a href="#"><i>Great Thinkers</i></a></p>
	<p><b>Activity 2: Create Criteria for a Significant Contribution</b></p>

## Teaching/ Learning Strategies and Activities

2. Suggest to students that their community has decided to erect a statue of the person who has made the most significant contribution to the community. Community officials have asked for their help in nominating individuals worthy of this honour. In order to determine a significant contribution suggest that the class establish criteria for a significant contribution. Criteria may include:

- Major accomplishment
- Positive impact
- Lasting difference

3. Ask students to nominate individuals from their community based upon the established criteria. You may wish to have them justify their choice.

### Activity 3: Rank the Renaissance Thinkers

4. Suggest to the students that *The Renaissance Times* wants to publish a list of the top five most influential philosophers/thinkers of the Renaissance. In order to publish this list, you have been asked to participate in completing a chart, which asks you to rank these philosophers in order of their influence, and their contribution to the Western worldview using the criteria established. (Handout: [Great Thinkers of the Renaissance Retrieval Chart](#)) You may wish to give students a template for researching the thinkers. (Handout: [Retrieving Information](#)). You may also want to handout: [Justifying my Ranking](#) to prepare students for Activity 4.
5. Remind students to keep track of the reference material they are using as it should be a requirement of the final product.

### Activity 4: Reporting Your Findings

6. As an extension activity you may want to have students write a letter to the editor for the *Renaissance Times* to report their findings to the public at large. Ask students what might be the criteria for an effective newspaper letter to the editor. These may include:
  - Concise: requires as little reading as possible
  - Comprehensive: presents key information including historical context
  - Convincing: makes readers think that the ranking is reasonable and justifiable

The handout [Writing a Letter to the Editor](#) may be helpful.

Remind students to include a list of references they used in their research.

## Great Thinkers Rubric

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Level Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate	Limited
<b>Explains contributions</b> (8.2.4.2, 8.2.4.5)	Uses <b>comprehensive</b> information to describe role of thinkers and philosophers to the development of.	Uses <b>thorough</b> information to describe role of thinkers and philosophers to the development of humanism.	Uses <b> cursory</b> information to describe role of thinkers and philosophers to the development of humanism.	Uses <b> sketchy</b> information to describe role of thinkers and philosophers to the development of humanism.
<b>Analyzes Historical context</b> (8.S.2.3)	Provides a <b>precise</b> examination of the historical context that allowed thinkers to be influential.	Provides a <b>relevant</b> examination of the historical context that allowed thinkers to be influential.	Provides a <b>generally accurate</b> examination of the historical context that allowed thinkers to be influential.	Provides a <b>inaccurate</b> examination of the historical context that allowed thinkers to be influential.
<b>Describes effect of Renaissance thinkers on today's society</b> (8.S.2.1)	Description of effect of Renaissance thinkers on today's society is <b>insightful</b>	Description of effect of Renaissance thinkers on today's society is <b>meaningful</b>	Description of effect of Renaissance thinkers on today's society is <b>appropriate</b>	Description of effect of Renaissance thinkers on today's society is <b>superficial</b>
<b>Supports conclusions</b> (8.S.7.1, 8.S.7.2, 8.S.7.3)	Researched evidence used to support conclusions is <b>compelling</b>	Researched evidence used to support conclusions is <b>convincing</b>	Researched evidence used to support conclusions is <b>believable</b>	Researched evidence used to support conclusions is <b>weak</b>
<b>Communicates information</b> (8.S.8.1)	Communicates information in a <b>captivating</b> manner	Communicates information in a <b>substantially engaging</b> manner	Communicates information in a <b>partially engaging</b> manner	Communicates information in an <b>minimally engaging</b> manner

**Comments:**

# Great Thinkers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 1

In your group attempt to come to a consensus on the following questions:

1. What is a philosopher? (No dictionaries allowed.)
2. What makes a great thinker?
3. Who in our society (the last 100 years) would you say is a great thinker?
4. Why did you choose this person? Give specific reasons.
5. Define "Humanism" as it applies to the Renaissance period.

## Retrieving Information: Template

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of resource	Keywords or subject headings I will try	Sources I plan to use
1.General works like dictionaries, encyclopaedias, atlases, almanacs		
2.School library like online library catalogue, print and non-print resources		
3.Internet like search engines, web sites, LearnAlberta.ca		
4. Other sources like interviews, virtual fieldtrips, etc.		

# Great Thinkers of the Renaissance

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Critical Challenge: Your task is to rank the following philosophers and thinkers of Renaissance in order of their influence and their contribution to the Western worldview: Luther, Machiavelli, Petrarch, Dante, Erasmus and Montaigne. To do this, you must first collect information on each of these people.

Name	Significant Biographical Information	Major Accomplishments	Impact On the Renaissance (Positive Impact)	Impact on the World Today (Lasting Difference)
Luther				

Name	Significant Biographical Information	Accomplishments	Impact On the Renaissance	Impact on the World Today
Machiavelli				
Dante				

Name	Significant Biographical Information	Accomplishments	Impact On the Renaissance	Impact on the World Today
Petrarch				
Erasmus				

Name	Significant Biographical Information	Accomplishments	Impact On the Renaissance	Impact on the World Today
Montaigne				

## Justifying My Ranking 📌

Name of the Philosopher	Ranking number	Reasons why I choose him for this position
Luther		
Machiavelli		
Petrarch		
Dante		
Erasmus		
Montaigne		

## Writing a Letter to the Editor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Task:

You are to write a letter to the editor that shows your concerns or support for a particular philosopher's views. You must choose a character from Column #1 and adopt that role. Then you are to write about the issues in Column #2 to a great thinker from Column #3.

### Format:

The format of this task is a newspaper style letter to the editor, written on plain white paper, edited carefully, in handwriting or typed in script. Be creative and age the letter with tea or singe the edges of the paper.

Character/Role	Issues/Considerations	Great Thinkers	Format
1. Pope 2. artist 3. Doge 4. soldier 5. merchant 6. wife of merchant 7. Lorenzo de' Medici 8. peasant 9. priest 10. other	Who: describes his/her social status/position in society -describes his/her present rights and freedoms Why: asks two relevant questions about the great thinkers' beliefs and worldviews or makes relevant comments about philosophies How: discusses how the ideas and worldview of the great thinkers might change the writer's own way of life	-Luther -Dante -Petrarch -Erasmus -Machiavelli -Montaigne	-letter of approximately 200 words

### Enrichment Activity

Students may exchange letters and write a reply as one of the great thinkers or one of the characters.