Year: 8	Subject: History	Unit title: The Renaissance	Term: Autumn
Knowledge (Learn that): • Scholars understand the conditions in medieval Europe prior to the Renaissance. • Scholars know that the Renaissance originated in Italy and was a renewed focus on humans, evidence and the real world. • Scholars know that Renaissance inventions spread knowledge, changed warfare and helped people question old beliefs about the universe. • Scholars know that exploration led to global trade and empires, but also resulted in colonisation and suffering for indigenous peoples. • Scholars know that the Renaissance was a turning point for art, science and exploration, but change was slower for ordinary people. • Scholars understand that the Renaissance changed the world in many ways but that these changes happened at different speeds for different groups.		**Core Vocabulary:** Renaissance, Rebirth, Classical revival, Humanism, Patron, Perspective, Printing press, Movable type, Gunpowder, Telescope, Geocentric model, Heliocentric model, Exploration, Colonisation, Indigenous peoples, Treaty of Tordesillas, Circumnavigation, Change, Continuity, Extent of change **Vocabulary to Encounter:** Medici, Brunelleschi, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Johannes Gutenberg, Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, Ptolemy, Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan, Cape of Good Hope **Vocabulary to Retrieve:** Catholic Church, Pope, Monastery, Latin, Byzantine Empire, Constantinople, Islamic Golden Age, Baghdad, Algebra, Astrolabe, Empire, Trade, Hajj, Patronage, Scholar, Manuscript	**Teaching Sequence:** Lesson 1: Europe before the Renaissance Lesson 2: Beginnings of the Renaissance Lesson 3: Inventions Lesson 4: Exploration Lesson 5: Continuities Lesson 6: Knowledge Test/Revision/Buffer Lesson Lesson 7: Planning Lesson Lesson 8: Essay Writing Lesson Lesson 9: Whole Class Feedback Lesson

Disciplinary aims:

The primary disciplinary aim is for scholars to understand **change and continuity.**

Scholars will be encouraged to:

- Establish a clear pre-Renaissance reference point before judging what changed.
- Identify changes and continuities across art, ideas, inventions, warfare, exploration, religion and daily life.
- Judge the extent, pace, reach and depth of change using precise disciplinary language.
- Recognise that change could be transformative in one area but limited or gradual in another.
- Consider how experiences differed between rich and poor, educated and uneducated, and urban and rural populations.
- Understand that change and continuity were intertwined because new ideas often developed from older classical, Islamic, Byzantine and Chinese knowledge.
- Avoid treating the Renaissance as a sudden or complete break from the medieval world.
- Select and organise evidence to reach a balanced judgement about whether the Renaissance was a turning point.

This enquiry develops scholars' understanding that historical change is uneven and rarely complete. It requires scholars to compare a reference point with later developments, assess who experienced change and distinguish dramatic innovation from persistence and adaptation.

Writing curriculum:

Throughout this unit, scholars use writing to practise comparison and judgements about change and continuity.

- Scholars use precise terms such as transformative, significant, far-reaching, partial, gradual, uneven, limited, persistent and unchanged.
- Vocabulary and prior knowledge are continually revisited through retrieval practice, comparison tables, source analysis and extended responses.
- Scholars use structures such as "because, but, so" to connect explanation, qualification and consequence.
- Writing progresses from supporting individual claims to comparing conditions before and during the Renaissance.
- Scholars distinguish description from explanation by showing how developments altered access to knowledge, authority, warfare, belief and global connections.
- Claims are qualified by considering differences between groups and places and by weighing beneficial and harmful consequences.
- The final essay organises evidence into change and continuity before reaching a judgement about the overall extent to which the Renaissance changed the world.

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Links to other units:

Why this and why now?

The Renaissance enquiry opens Year 8 by using secure Year 7 knowledge to investigate the transition from the medieval to the early modern world. It is deliberately positioned here to:

- Begin Year 8 with a broad enquiry that revisits the disciplinary concept of change and continuity at greater complexity.
- Connect European developments to knowledge preserved and developed in the Islamic world, Byzantine Empire and China.
- Show how ideas, technologies, goods and people moved across regions and shaped change in Europe.
- Establish printing, humanism, exploration and challenges to authority as foundations for later Year 8 enquiries.

How does this speak to what came before?

- The Roman and Byzantine enquiries provide knowledge of classical learning, empire and Constantinople.
- The Rise of Islam and Medieval Mali enquiries provide knowledge of translation, mathematics, astronomy, trade, scholarship, manuscripts and patronage.
- The Crusades enquiry provides context for contact between Latin Christian Europe, Byzantium and the Islamic world.
- The Medieval Monarchy enquiry provides knowledge of Church authority, ordinary life and the political structures of medieval Europe.
- The Norman enquiry introduced change and continuity; this unit develops more precise judgements about scale, reach, pace and uneven experience.

How does this prepare scholars for what comes next?

- Later Year 8 study of the Reformation builds directly on humanism, printing, literacy, classical learning and challenges to Church authority.
- Subsequent Year 8 enquiries can return to questions about scientific, religious and political change and the persistence of older institutions.
- In Year 9, exploration, colonisation, indigenous peoples, empire and global exchange provide essential foundations for studying the modern world.
- The enquiry prepares scholars to make increasingly sophisticated judgements about turning points and uneven change.

Links to the national curriculum:

This unit supports the key stage 3 study of the development of Church, state and society in Britain and Europe and contributes to understanding a significant interconnected development in world history. It examines Renaissance art and thought, inventions, scientific ideas, exploration, colonisation and continuities in religion and daily life.

Linking to the KS3 National Curriculum

- Scholars study the Renaissance as a transition between the medieval and early modern worlds.
- The unit connects Europe with the Islamic world, Byzantine Empire, China, Africa, Asia and the Americas through learning, technology, trade and exploration.
- Scholars examine the continuing power of the Catholic Church alongside new artistic, scientific and intellectual developments.
- The enquiry develops chronological perspective and judgements about change and continuity across cultural, economic, religious, scientific and political history.

Moving Beyond the KS3 National Curriculum

1. Global and Connected Renaissance

- The Renaissance is not presented as an isolated European achievement, but as dependent on older and wider networks of knowledge and exchange.
- Scholars consider the contributions of Islamic, Byzantine and Chinese societies to developments associated with the Renaissance.

2. Uneven and Contested Change

- Scholars compare change across groups, regions and areas of life rather than assuming that innovation affected everyone equally.
- Exploration is evaluated through both European expansion and its consequences for indigenous peoples.

3. Turning Points and Periodisation

- The enquiry tests whether the Renaissance deserves to be understood as a turning point or a gradual development built upon continuities.
- Scholars recognise that historical periods are analytical frameworks rather than complete breaks in lived experience.

4. Disciplinary Literacy and Argument

- A shared vocabulary of extent enables scholars to make increasingly precise and qualified claims.
- The final essay requires thematic organisation, comparison and a balanced judgement supported by evidence.