



Michelangelo Showing a Pupil the Belvedere Torso, Jean-Léon Gérôme, oil on canvas, 1849

CASE STUDY ONE

How Did the Exchange of Ideas and Knowledge During the Renaissance Shape the Worldviews of the Western World?

What do you think the painting at the left, *Michelangelo Showing a Pupil the Belvedere Torso*, is about? The painter, Gérôme, is showing an imaginary scene between the great Italian artist Michelangelo and his student. The Belvedere torso is part of an ancient Greek sculpture that was discovered in the 1400s and inspired Michelangelo to rethink how artists could portray the human body to show its fullness and its movement. It was one of those moments in history that changed the way people viewed the world. It was a key event in the development of the **Renaissance**.

Of all the time periods in Europe's history, the Renaissance, which stretched from about 1350 CE to 1600 CE, is one of the most notable **eras**. From our viewpoint in the 21st century, we look back at this period that began more than 650 years ago as the time when the modern Western worldview began to develop.

The word *Renaissance* comes from the French word *renaître*, which means "to be born again." This renaissance or rebirth refers to a period of innovation based on the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Roman thinking and the thinking of other civilizations Europeans came into contact with. Many of the ideas found in these documents had been lost or ignored in western Europe for nearly 1000 years. When European scholars rediscovered these classical documents that Muslim and Jewish scholars and the Roman Catholic Church had preserved and studied, they discovered new ideas and ways of looking at the world.

Renaissance: a historical period that originated in Italy in the 14th century, known for the revival of classical art, architecture, literature, and learning

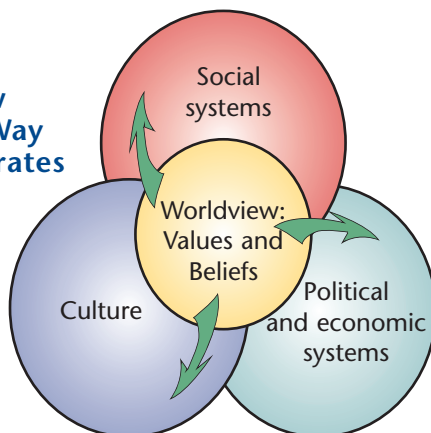
CE: Common Era, referring to a way of numbering years, accepted commonly throughout the world, numbering from the birth of Jesus Christ

era: a historical time period

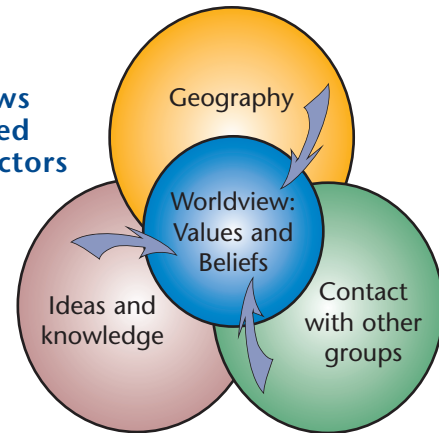
Europe: 1st Century Through the 16th Century



Worldview Affects the Way a Society Operates



Worldviews Are Shaped by These Factors

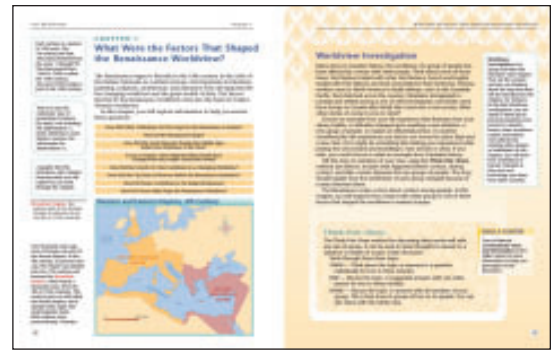


As you learn about the Renaissance in this case study, you will see how the worldviews of communities and individuals of that historical period changed as contact with other cultures introduced new ideas and knowledge. You will see how the people lived and the influences that shaped their worldviews. You will learn about individual citizens of the time whose contributions to their societies helped shape worldviews and spread the new ideas throughout Europe. Finally, you will see how the Renaissance worldview relates to today's Western worldview.

Chapter 1: What Were the Factors That Shaped the Renaissance Worldview?

Chapter 2: How Did the Ideas of the Italian Renaissance Spread Throughout Europe?

Chapter 3: How Did the Western Worldview Grow Out of the Renaissance?



THINK ABOUT IT

- Today, some people believe that Canada is an example of a society undergoing change and adopting new values and beliefs. As a class, brainstorm to develop a list of values and beliefs that you think represent Canada. Discuss whether any of these ideas suggest Canada is a Renaissance society, representing a flourishing of new ideas and a rebirth of knowledge or showing new ways of looking at the world.
- You are now beginning your study of a new topic: worldview and the Renaissance. Jot down questions that you have about worldview and the Renaissance. Also include any knowledge you already have about these topics. Use an organizer, such as a web or a chart, to organize your information.

SKILLS CENTRE

Turn to **How to Organize Information** in the Skills Centre for more information to help you organize your questions and previous knowledge.

Use the **Skills Centre** at the back of the text for reference whenever you need more information about a certain skill. In this case, you can turn to the Skills Centre and find information on ways to organize information.