**European Renaissance**

The Renaissance was a fervent period of European cultural, artistic, political and economic “rebirth” following the Middle Ages. Generally described, the Renaissance promoted the rediscovery of classical philosophy, literature and art. Some of the greatest thinkers, authors, statesmen, scientists and artists in human history thrived during this era, while global exploration opened up new lands and cultures to European commerce. The Renaissance is credited with bridging the gap between the Middle Ages and modern-day civilization.

**From Darkness to Light: The Renaissance Begins:**

During the Middle Ages, a period that took place between the fall of ancient Rome in 476 A.D. and the beginning of the 14th century, Europeans made few advances in science and art.Also known as the “Dark Ages,” the era is often branded as a time of war, ignorance, famine and pandemics such as the Black Death. Some historians, however, believe that such grim depictions of the Middle Ages were greatly exaggerated, though many agree that there was relatively little regard for ancient Greek and Roman philosophies and learning at the time.

**Humanism:**

During the 14th century, a cultural movement called humanism began to gain momentum in Italy. Among its many principles, humanism promoted the idea that man was the center of his own universe, and people should embrace human achievements lcation, classical arts, literature and science.

In 1450, the invention of the Gutenberg printing press allowed for improved communication throughout Europe and for ideas to spread more quickly.As a result of this advance in communication, little-known texts from early humanist authors such as those by Francesco Petrarch and Giovanni Boccaccio, which promoted the renewal of traditional Greek and Roman culture and values, were printed and distributed to the masses.

Additionally, many scholars believe advances in international finance and trade impacted culture in Europe and set the stage for the Renaissance.

**Medici Family:**

The Renaissance started in Florence, Italy, a place with a rich cultural history where wealthy citizens could afford to support budding artists. Members of the powerful Medici family, which ruled Florence for more than 60 years, were famous backers of the movement.Great Italian writers, artists, politicians and others declared that they were participating in an intellectual and artistic revolution that would be much different from what they experienced during the Dark Ages.

The movement first expanded to other Italian city-states, such as Venice, Milan, Bologna, Ferrara and Rome. Then, during the 15th century, Renaissance ideas spread from Italy to France and then throughout western and northern Europe.

Although other European countries experienced their Renaissance later than Italy, the impacts were still revolutionary.

**Renaissance Religion:**

Humanism encouraged Europeans to question the role of the Roman Catholic church during the Renaissance. As more people learned how to read, write and interpret ideas, they began to closely examine and critique religion as they knew it. Also, the printing press allowed for texts, including the Bible, to be easily reproduced and widely read by the people, themselves, for the first time. In the 16th century, Martin Luther, a German monk, led the Protestant Reformation – a revolutionary movement that caused a split in the Catholic church. Luther questioned many of the practices of the church and whether they aligned with the teachings of the Bible. As a result, a new form of Christianity, known as Protestantism, was created.

Questions:

1- what is the new form of the catholic church ?who founded it?

2-how did Renaissance help in joining different fields?

3-when did European Renaissance emerge?

4- who started the European Renaissance, and where ?

5-find in the text key words and translate them.