**Renaissance** means “rebirth” - in this case, the rebirth of the intellectual and artistic energies that characterised ancient Greek and Roman civilization.

The Renaissance had its origins in **Italy** in the fourteenth century, primarily in the work of the following important figures:

* Petrarch (1304 - 1374) and Boccaccio (1313 - 1375) in literature
* Giotto (1266? - 1337?) in painting
* Brunelleschi (1377? - 1446) in architecture
* Donatello (1386 - 1466) in sculpture

**Renaissance Humanism** - movement lead by **Lorenzo de’ Medici**, which emphasised the capacities of the human mind and the achievements of human culture - this differed from the Medieval emphasis on God.

Both **Leonardo da Vinci** and **Michelangelo** began their careers during this era - the visual arts flourished as never before!

The Renaissance fervor spread to other European countries, making it to England last of all - this was a time of great exploration and discovery -

Columbus discovered the Americas in **1492**

**England** was slow to participate in the European Renaissance due, primarily to internal turmoil and instability - consider the following factors:

* **The Wars of the Roses** (1455-1485)
* The invention of **moveable type** - a significant Renaissance invention which had only recently reached England.

With the crowning of **Henry VII** and later, his son **Henry VIII**, the **Tudor** line was established, bring stability to the throne and the country.

Under King Henry VIII, the Renaissance ***really*** began in England with the work of **Sir Thomas More, Sir Thomas Wyatt,** and **Henry Howard.**

The **Protestant Reformation** was born in 1517, when **Martin Luther** nailed his Ninety-five Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, Germany.

The Pope’s refusal to grant Henry VIII’s request for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon further fueled the protestant reform movement as Henry gave birth to the **Anglican Church** (the Church of England) in defiance of Rome.

Further turmoil was fueled when Henry’ particularly the half Spanish **Mary and her husband Philip II of Spain** (devout Catholics) instituted a “reign of terror” against English protestants - the queen was known as **Bloody Mary**.

Upon Mary’s death after only 5 years on the throne, **Elizabeth**, her half sister and Henry VIII’s daughter by Anne Boleyn, became queen.

Elizabeth I is considered to be one of England’s greatest monarchs - under her leadership, England became a world power!

* She encouraged literary and artistic development
* She moderated the internal tension between Protestants and Catholics
* She encouraged British exploration of the New World
* She encouraged the increase in British revenues through raids on Spanish shipping - Spain was England’s major foreign enemy.
* Her authority was culminated in the defeat of the **Spanish Armada** by the British navy in 1588.