

# The Renaissance

## Humanism



*The Wedding at Cana, was painted by Italian artist Paolo Veronese in 1563*

## Why Humanism?

During the Middle Ages art and learning were centered on the church and religion.



At the start of the 14th century, people became less interested in thinking about God.



Part of this change was influenced by the study of ancient Greek and Roman writings.

The values and ideals popular during the European Renaissance can be described by the term **secular humanism**

When scholars during the Renaissance began to study these writings, their interests turned away from traditional areas of study such as religion, medicine and the law

# Humanist Art

The rise of Humanism can be seen in paintings created by Renaissance artists.

During the Middle Ages, saints in paintings wore halos.

Artists also used hieratic scale in paintings during the Middle Ages.



As Humanism became more popular during the Renaissance, ordinary people grew to be the same size as saints in paintings and saints began to look more like ordinary people.

The Madonna and child in this Medieval painting are larger to help viewers understand that they are the most important figures in the painting.



The holy family of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus in this Renaissance painting are joined by shepherds and an angel in the center playing a lute. The landscape around them is earthly rather than heavenly.

# Humanist Education

Literature and education were probably the first to show signs of Greek and Roman (classical) influence.



The Italian poet Petrarch (1304-1374) studied the works of Roman writers Cicero and Virgil and modeled some of his own writings on their works.

His best know work is a collection of love sonnets to Laura, a married women with whom he'd become infatuated.



*Breeze, blowing that blonde curling hair,  
stirring it, and being softly stirred in turn,  
scattering that sweet gold about, then  
gathering it, in a lovely knot of curls again,*

*you linger around bright eyes whose loving sting  
pierces me so, till I feel it and weep,  
and I wander searching for my treasure,  
like a creature that often shies and kicks:*

*now I seem to find her, now I realise  
she's far away, now I'm comforted, now despair,  
now longing for her, now truly seeing her.*

