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Individual Website

Senior Division

Process Paper: 444 Words

After learning about this year's theme, communication in history, I began thinking about unique ways that people can communicate with each other. Because I am taking AP European history, I had to choose a topic from somewhere in Europe. I have always loved Italian history, so I started looking for something Italy related. I was having a conversation with a teacher when she mentioned Renaissance art and how it might have been used for communication. After some research, I found an article that explained how Renaissance art was sometimes used as propaganda. That sounded very interesting to me, especially considering how propaganda is such a prominent aspect of our society today. After researching art and propaganda, I found articles about how the Medici family specifically used art as a means of communication. This topic connected to the NHD theme because the Medici used certain symbolisms in their commissioned art to convey their power and wealth to Florence.

I began my research by looking through books of artwork commissioned by the Medici and by reading general Medici information on databases such as JSTOR. I began to see similar trends between some symbolism in their artworks. After separating the different categories of symbolism, I selected a few artworks for each kind. I then did separate research for each piece of art and learned about all of the different underlying meanings and messages in each painting and sculpture.

I decided that a website would be the best mode to display my project because I had many images and I needed a larger word count to be able to explain the art. I created pages for each of the three categories of art and planned out the most effective way to present the information and pictures. After making my pages, I wrote my thesis.

The Medici's patronage of the arts connects to this year's theme because they used different kinds of symbolism in the art to convey their prominence and accomplishments. This communication ultimately enhanced their power and ensured their influence on the culture of Florence. The family is also very significant in history. They were one of the greatest patrons of the arts and they are seen as the cultivators of the Renaissance. They brought Florence to a time of economic prosperity with the founding of the Medici Bank. Because of their art commissions, we now have hundreds of works of art that teach us about their time period and Renaissance art styles. They were also involved with the spread of Renaissance humanism, an extremely important movement in European culture. Overall, the Medicis were very influential and important in shaping the world of art we know today.