Humanism

Reasons for Growth of Humanism
• People wanted to enjoy life after having suffered through wars and the plague in the late Middle Ages.
• Increased trade in the 14th and 15th centuries introduced new ideas to the people in Europe.
• Ancient Greek and Latin texts became more available. As a result, interest in the classics grew. Scholars studied the classical works to learn more about the values of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Some of the qualities prized by the Greeks, such as order, harmony, balance, logic, and individual achievement, influenced the development of humanism and Renaissance values.

1. Why did scholars study the classics in the 14th and 15th centuries?
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2. Which qualities prized by the Greeks influence the development of humanism?
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Humanism
• This revival of classical learning and other factors led to humanism, the intellectual movement that focuses on human potential and achievements.
• Humanism stressed the study of subjects such as history, grammar, literature, and philosophy.
• It emphasized the individual. In the Middle Ages, institutions such as the Church were more important than the people who belonged to them.
• Humanists tried to achieve a balance between intellect and faith. They felt that people should not accept blindly the teachings of the Church.
• Humanism also taught that people could enjoy life and still be good Christians.

2. What was the focus of humanism? _____________________________________________________

3. Identify what humanism stressed and emphasized. _______________________________________
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4. How did humanism try to balance intellect and faith? ______________________________________
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Effects of Humanism
• Society adopted a more secular view. This meant that instead of the focus being on religion, it was on the things of the world.
• Important Church officials and wealthy merchants became patrons, or supporters, of the arts. They sponsored the creation of great works of art to bring glory to themselves.
• Artists and architects returned to the classical styles of the Greeks and Romans.
• The renewed interest in classical culture strengthened the Renaissance, which had already begun in Italy. The Renaissance was an explosion of creativity in the arts, literature, and thought from 1300 to 1600.

5. How is a secular view different from a religious view? ____________________________________
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6. In what ways did church officials and wealthy merchant support the arts? __________________
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7. What was the Renaissance? ____________________________________________________________
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