

Creative Commons Licence

This material was created by Antonio Manuel Brenes Castaño at the University of Cádiz (UCA) as part of the OpenCourseWare (OCW).

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Licence (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).

You are free to share and adapt this material for non-commercial purposes, provided that appropriate credit is given, a link to the original resource and the licence is included, any modifications are indicated, and any adapted material is distributed under the same licence.

Unit 5: Activity 4: Listening Comprehension

Life in a Medieval Castle

Transcript

Good morning, everyone. Today we're going to talk about one of the most exciting periods in history: the **Early Modern World**. This period lasted from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century and introduced many important changes that still influence our lives today.

Let's begin with the **Renaissance**. The Renaissance started in Italy during the fifteenth century and later spread across Europe. The word *Renaissance* means "rebirth" because people became interested again in the ideas of Ancient Greece and Rome. During this period, artists, writers and scholars believed that education and knowledge could improve society.

Some of the most famous artists in history lived during the Renaissance. Leonardo da Vinci painted the *Mona Lisa* and also designed machines that were far ahead of his time. Michelangelo created beautiful sculptures and painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Their works are still admired by millions of people today.

Another important development was the invention of the **printing press** by Johannes Gutenberg. Before the printing press, books were copied by hand and were very expensive. After Gutenberg's invention, books became cheaper, more people learned to read, and new ideas spread much faster throughout Europe.

The Early Modern period was also the time of the **Age of Exploration**. European countries wanted to find new trade routes to Asia because spices, silk and other products

were very valuable. Portuguese and Spanish sailors explored unknown seas using better maps, compasses and stronger ships.

Christopher Columbus reached the Americas in 1492 while looking for a route to Asia. Although he believed he had arrived in Asia, his journey opened the way for European exploration and colonisation of the American continent. Later, Vasco da Gama reached India by sailing around Africa, creating a direct sea route between Europe and Asia. These voyages increased international trade but also had negative consequences for many indigenous peoples, who lost their lands, suffered from diseases and were often forced to work for European colonists.

Religion also changed during this period. In 1517, Martin Luther criticised some practices of the Catholic Church and published his ideas. His actions started the Protestant Reformation. Soon, new Christian churches appeared in different parts of Europe. The Catholic Church also introduced reforms in response to these changes.

Finally, the Early Modern period witnessed the **Scientific Revolution**. Scientists began to observe nature carefully instead of accepting traditional ideas without evidence. Nicolaus Copernicus proposed that the Earth moved around the Sun. Galileo Galilei used a telescope to study the sky and supported this new idea. Later, Isaac Newton explained the laws of motion and gravity. These discoveries completely changed the way people understood the universe.

Today, historians believe that the Early Modern period was a turning point in world history. The Renaissance encouraged learning and creativity, exploration connected continents, the Reformation transformed religion, and scientific discoveries changed the way people thought about the world. Together, these developments helped create the modern society we know today.