



Istituto Comprensivo Statale Leonardo da Vinci  
Monteiasi / Montemesola (Taranto)



## LITERARY AND LEGENDARY HERO

### LESSON PLAN - Leonardo da Vinci “THE ITALIAN GENIUS”

This year marks the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death. In honor of this Genius of art, our school, bearing his name, is planning events, exhibitions, games, meetings with other schools and guided school visits.

It is for this reason we decided to choose Leonardo da Vinci as our Legendary Hero, one of the most representative artists of Italian Renaissance, considered *one of the greatest minds of all time*.

Leonardo da Vinci, one of history's most imaginative geniuses, was born at the right time and in the right place. The Italian Renaissance was an exciting period of discovery and invention, of exploration and creation. Learning his life and inventions, students will discover why Leonardo is considered the ultimate Renaissance man. They will learn about his famous notebooks, focusing upon his machines of motion, then zooming in on the flying machines. As a culminating activity, the students will describe how Leonardo epitomizes the Renaissance man, by discussing this remarkable artist and inventor through the amazing variety of his creativity.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Summarize the life and work of Leonardo da Vinci
- Describe the Renaissance, and explain how Leonardo da Vinci reflected the spirit of the age
- Discuss the many achievements of Leonardo ( The creative genius)
- Explain the significance of his famous notebooks
- Describe some of Leonardo's inventions and key contributions in a variety of fields and art world

#### PREPARATION

Leonardo da Vinci lived during one of the most creative periods in the history of Western Europe, the Renaissance. Leonardo was a mirror of the age in which he lived. Artist, scientist, engineer, architect, musician and courtier par excellence, he embodied what came to be known as the **multi-talented Renaissance Man**. Leonardo carefully studied the world around him. He believed that art should clearly reflect the wonders of the natural world. But his works also contained a certain mystery. His Mona Lisa, perhaps the world's most famous painting, is known for her haunting smile.

Leonardo was also fascinated by the way things worked, he was a keen observer of the world around him. As a young man, he began the habit of writing notes about his observations. He mused endlessly about

cause and effect, filling thousands of pages of his famous notebooks with sketches and commentary dealing with subjects as diverse as the anatomy of a horse and the design of a hydraulic pump.

Leonardo was also intrigued about the possibilities of locomotion, and he designed a number of machines that would enable man to get around faster. Most of all, he was fascinated by the possibilities of human flight. He captured birds and studied their feathers and skeletal systems to puzzle out the secrets of aerodynamics. He studied the flow of water in rivers and streams as well as the effects of tides in order to better understand wind currents. Using what he observed in nature, he designed some very ingenious flying machines.

## **ASSESSMENT**

- 1) The class will be divided into groups, assigning each group a specific area in which Leonardo made a significant contribution to his time and to society in general. Each group will explore its assigned area and then make a case for Leonardo's great contribution to Renaissance knowledge in that particular area.

### **LEONARDO'S CONTRIBUTIONS:**

- Aerodynamics
  - Anatomy
  - Architecture
  - Art
  - Engineering
  - Mathematics
  - Optics
  - Natural History
  - Physics
- 2) As a whole class, will be assigned to students to write an essay on what constitutes a Renaissance man (or woman) and why Leonardo epitomizes the true Renaissance man. The essays should cover the range of Leonardo's creative talents and acknowledge the impact of his ideas and designs on future society as well.
  - 3) The students will visit the *Leonardo da Vinci Machines Museum* (city of Galatone - Puglia) taking notes and exchanging information with their classmates.