

# THE RENAISSANCE REVEALED



## MEDICI: PATRONS OF THE RENAISSANCE

### WHAT WE LEARNED:

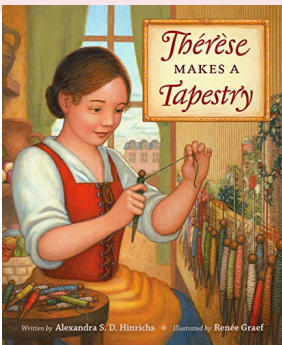
- The Medici family were wealthy merchant bankers.
- They helped to usher in the Italian Renaissance by using their wealth to sponsor the arts and commission buildings, sculptures, paintings, and tapestries.
- We discussed tapestries and the weaving process.

### ART ACTIVITY: WEAVING

Cosimo de' Medici commissioned a series of twenty tapestries depicting the life of Old Testament character Joseph. Because of the time-consuming workmanship and materials used, tapestries were very expensive and considered the most valuable objects of their time. Only royalty or the wealthy could afford them. The activity simulates a plain weave used in tapestry making—a common and basic style of weave in which the weft alternates over and under the warp.

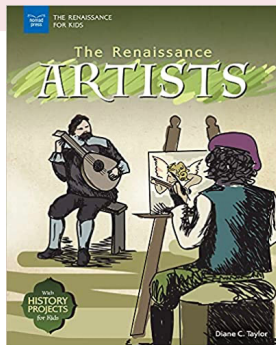


### BOOK NOOK



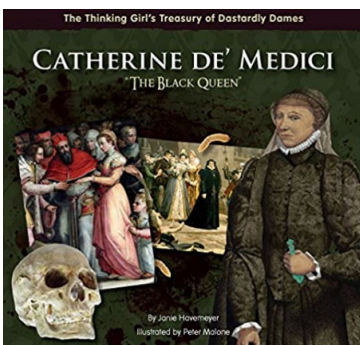
#### *Thérèse Makes a Tapestry*

by Alexandra S.D. Hinrichs



#### *The Renaissance Artists: With History Projects for Kids*

Diane C. Taylor



#### *Catherine de' Medici: "The Black Queen"*

Janie Havemeyer

The Medici family used their power and influence to build their own reputation. This book explains that Catherine was married to French royal heir Henry II at age fourteen, arranged by her great-uncle, Pope Clement VII. Although the book is historically correct, it does reference her husband's mistress and the evil actions Catherine took to ensure that her sons would become kings. She also had a fascination with black magic, which is why she is called "The Black Queen." This book is recommended for ages 9-13.

## WHO'S WHO IN THE MEDICI CLAN

Draw a line to match the description on the left with the picture/ name on the right. Find the answers at the bottom.

**1.** Known as a patron of the arts



**2.** Pope when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on Wittenberg Church



**3.** Ruled in France



**4.** Helped grow the family fortune and power



**5.** Founded the family bank



Answers to Who's Who matching section:  
1. Lorenzo, 2. Leo X, 3. Catherine, 4. Cosimo, 5. Giovanni!



## CONNECTIONS AT HOME:

Pope Leo X (originally Giovanni de' Medici II) was the pope during the Protestant Reformation and the financial sponsor for much of the rebuilding of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. He was a great patron of the arts and commissioned artists like Raphael to decorate some of the Vatican rooms. However, his main interest of patronage was architecture.

### ARCHITECTURAL FUN: BUILDING A CATHEDRAL STRUCTURE

Create a structure that can stand on its own! Or for a more challenging project, use uncooked spaghetti instead of toothpicks. For other experiments, check out this resource: Toothpick and Marshmallow Tower Challenge ([littlebinsforlittlehands.com](http://littlebinsforlittlehands.com))

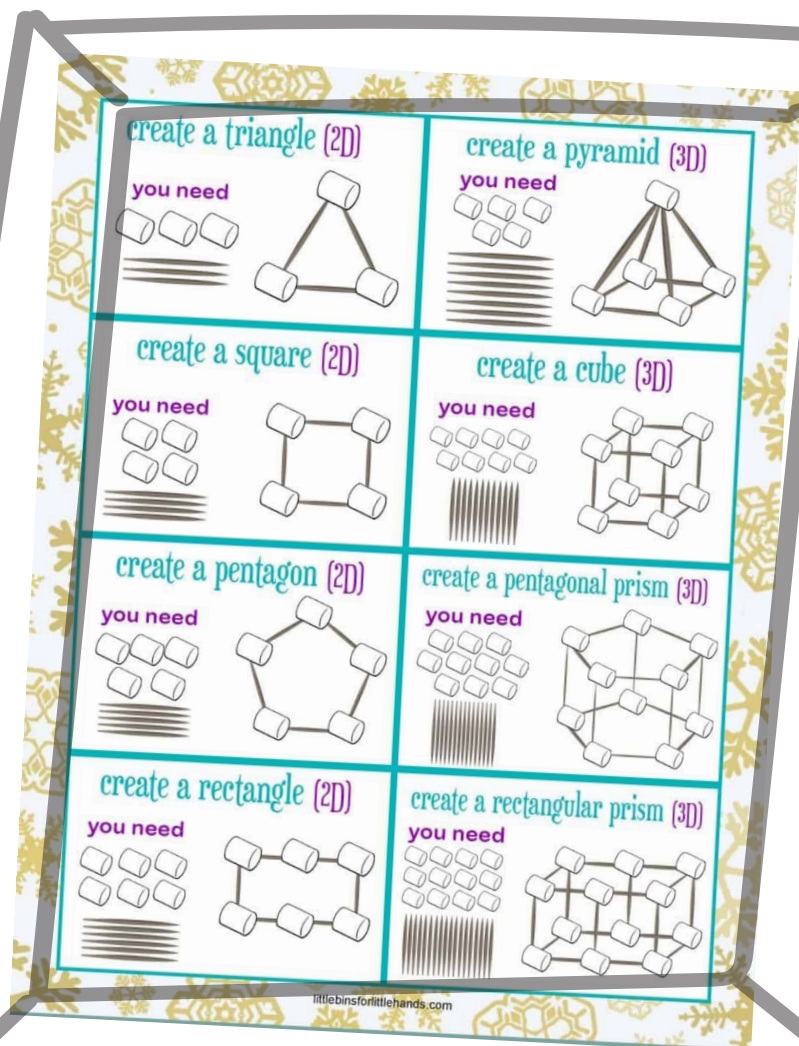
#### Materials:

Marshmallows

Toothpicks (or spaghetti)

#### Directions:

1. Using the toothpicks, connect four marshmallows into a square. You'll need to do this three times.
2. Take one of the squares as a base. Connect another toothpick to each corner going up and meeting at the middle. Add a marshmallow to the meeting point. (See diagram for pyramid.)
3. Take the two remaining squares and connect them with toothpicks with one above the other, forming a cube. (See diagram for cube.)
4. Then, add more toothpicks to one side of the cube to make an extra rectangle on the "back" of your cube. (See diagram for rectangular prism.)
5. Finally, use the pyramid you made earlier as the top of the cube.
6. Congratulations, you now have a marshmallow cathedral! Hopefully that gives you some insight into how complicated architecture really is, and maybe understand why having a rich and powerful patron like Pope Leo X would be so beneficial to the architects of Italy.



## FURTHER FUN: A FAMILY TREE

Established by Cosimo de' Medici, the Medici became an influential and powerful family for several generations. Beginning with the founding of the clan as a banking family in 1397 by Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, the family's wealth and members expanded in each century. With so many generations dating back to the Renaissance, family members today would need a way to track the bloodline. To understand how big this task could be, try making your own family tree.

Find ideas here: [9 Family Tree Activities for Kids](#)

Due to the changing nature of web resources, M&G strongly urges you as the parent to preview these sites before your child accesses them. The fact that these sites are available on this handout does not imply that M&G endorses their content from the standpoint of morals, philosophy, theology, or scientific hypotheses.



## FOR PARENTS:

The Medici family was a very powerful and wealthy family during the Renaissance. They obtained their wealth through banking and used their power to influence politics and the church. The family line included popes, queens, and dukes. The Medici helped usher in the Italian Renaissance by being patrons of the arts. Lorenzo de' Medici was the greatest supporter commissioning artists like Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo.

**PLEASE NOTE:** As M&G's host location for *Homeschool Days*, Mack Library will feature books each month for parents to reference as resources. We hope these additional features will further support your teaching at home.



### M&G Educational Mission:

Through tours, events, and publications, the Museum & Gallery seeks to partner with educators in fulfilling all of the National Visual Arts Content Standards. By integrating art into the core curriculum, M&G's goals are to teach children to value the arts, to communicate through the arts, to become creative problem solvers through the inclusion of STEAM-related concepts and fully-developed STEAM units, to understand history and culture in light of the arts, to improve literary interest and understanding through visual storytelling, to critique the arts, and to develop an aesthetic awareness of the arts. Through fulfilling the mission, M&G is able to help develop citizens who have the ability to think, feel, and understand the world in which they live.