General Questions: Write a FULL essay to one of the following questions, always using specific material to back your generalizations and connecting or applying that to material we have seen in class or book—show off, in other words! Avoid simply having 3 small essays—comparisons and contrasts should be drawn.

1. Use some of the following words in an essay that describes the Age of the European Renaissance: materialism, individualism, empiricism. Support your generalizations with specific examples from Chapters 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

2. Using examples from as many readings as are relevant, compile a general picture of the middle class Italian female of 1600. How might she have differed from upper and lower class females? (This is a gender AND class question). Lucretia Marinella, Lavina Fontana, and Sofanisba Anguilosa would all be good here, as might Christine de Pisan and Filippa from the *Decameron* and/or the Wife of Bath from *The Canterbury Tales*. What conditions might have helped women achieve career success during the Renaissance?

3. Speculate on the changing role of artists between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. What was responsible for this change? How was it possible? You need to look at both writers AND artists. Michelangelo is a good endpoint here, as he seems to represent the ultimate Renaissance artist, but start with some of the anonymous artists of the Middle Ages—the fact that the cathedral builders were simply teams that went town to town (research this a little)

4. Take your choice of some of the “Renaissance Men” (and women). What makes them Renaissance (and not medieval). In other words, what about Alberti, Machiavalli, Pico, Petrarch, Christine, and Leonardo is so Renaissance? What qualities do they have that makes them Renaissance, and how are those qualities Renaissance? Separate biographies on each personage is like three separate papers. It might be better to come up with criterion that makes something Renaissance and hammer out who meets those criterion and how those personages meet those criterion.

5. In what ways did religious, technological, and artistic developments of the era from 1300 to 1550 anticipate modern culture and modern life? Cite specific examples to support your generalizations—look at the introductory section just before Chapters 18 and 19, “A Brave New World,” before trying your hand at this one. In what ways did technology influence the arts in the Age of the European Renaissance? Cite specific examples to support your generalizations.

6. The Rinascimento, or Renaissance, was a rebirth of western culture. Discuss how it was so—how did scholars and artists LITERALLY use fragments, statues, poems, learning, and other elements of classical cultures in their works—and to what effects? There are plenty of artistic examples here (Botticelli’s use of the *Medici Venus* for example), but add at least one literary example—one of the Renaissance Men using past writings for the present, such as Thomas More’s *Utopia*, or discussions of Aristotle or Plato.

7. Argue for or against this statement: the Renaissance and the Reformation go hand-in-hand, occurring as they do, at the same time, and playing off each other. How do Northern Europeans react (both good, as with Durer, and bad, as with Luther) to what is happening in the south? How, then, do all of them react to the Age of Exploration? Durer remarked of the “wonderful art treasures” that the Dutch were unloading as Aztec gold came into the harbors of Amsterdam. Did contact with these New World cultures have an effect on Europeans? Take a look at Montaigne and his essay “Of Cannibals” in Chapter 19 for help here.

8. Trace the beginnings of Protestant Christianity from pre-Luther times. Start with the Pauline tradition in the early Church and move forward through Peter Waldo and the Waldensians, Jan Hus, and John Wycliff and the Lollards to the Devotio Moderna, then Luther. How does it develop in opposition to the ecumenical (Catholic) church?

9. What factors—political, economic, and technological—contributed to increased global travel in the age of the Renaissance?

10. The social class of the Portuguese soldier shown in Chapter 18 is worth stressing, as is that of the Spanish Conquistadors, since the vanguard of colonization in both Africa and Mesoamerica consisted of military men accompanied by priests. Would such social classes be likely to take notice of the astronomy, mathematics, horticulture, and medicine developed over millennia by the “savages” of these lands? Is it surprising that Spanish missionaries destroyed the legacy of the Maya when they were fully engaged in burning the books of the “enemies of the faith” of their own race and culture back in Europe?

11. In what ways did the Northern Renaissance differ from the Renaissance in Italy? Is the word “renaissance” even appropriate for the North during this era? Or, is the impact on the Reformation on the arts too great to say the North had a Renaissance? Support your generalizations with specific examples from Chapter 19 and compare them to Chapter 17 and 16. Is the detailed realism of Northern painting (look at the lamp above Giovanni Arnolfini!) a result of this?