**Who was Leonardo da Vinci?**

**Teacher’s Guide**

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Suggested Vocabulary, Discussion questions and Activities

**Chapters 1 - 2 (Pages 1 – 24)**

Vocabulary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| failure | apprentice |
| respectable | frescoes |
| silvery | bristles |
| destruction | contracts |
| practical | commission |
| respectable | genius |

Discussion Questions Chapters 1-2

1. Preview this book. What text features do you notice? Predict what this story will be about.
2. What genre is this text?
3. What is the main idea or central message of the first two chapters?
4. What would be another good title for Chapter 1 - An Unwanted Boy?
5. How did Verrocchio’s opinion of Leonardo change toward the end of Chapter 2 – The Art Studio?
6. Predict what you think will happen in the next two chapters.

Suggested Activities

* Start a timeline of the events of Leonardo da Vinci’s life to be completed as the book is being read. There is a great reference at the back of the book.
* Have a roundtable discussion about the Chapter 1 - An Unwanted Boy.

Chapters 3 - 4 (pages 25 - 54)

Vocabulary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| studio | scheming |
| three-dimensional | pageants |
| realistic | lute |
| scenery | spectacle |
| depth | opinions |
| perspective | dramatic |

Discussion Questions Chapters 3-4

1. Why were the books copied by hand during da Vinci’s time?
2. What is your opinion about why the Bible was the first book printed on Gutenburg’s printing press?
3. Describe what it means to paint in perspective.
4. What character traits would you use to describe Leonardo?
5. Based on what you have learned about Leonardo, why do you think it took ten years for him to finish the model of the horse he was building for the duke?
6. Why do you think Leonardo decided to take care of Salai? Could there be a connection to his own childhood?

Suggested Activities

* Continue filling in the timeline with new dates from chapters 3 and 4
* Allow the students to view the Muffin Story about Leonardo da Vinci on you tube. Start a Venn Diagram to discuss the similarities and differences in this short video and the book.
* Have the students take turns retelling different parts of the each chapter that has been read so far.

Chapter 5 (pages 55 -77)

Vocabulary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| encyclopedia | contraption |
| rediscovered | illegal |
| mirror writing | astounding |
| Instrument | cutaway drawings |
| power-hungry | underneath |
| bloodthirsty | evidence |

Discussion Questions

1. What five words would you use to describe Leonardo da Vinci?
2. Why do you think Leonardo da Vinci had so many unfinished projects?
3. What effect do you think some of Leonardo’s ideas have had on the world today?
4. What does the author mean when she says, “He was a man way ahead of his time”?
5. What are your thoughts on the fact that Leonardo used mirror writing to write his information in his notebooks?
6. Based on what you have read so far, what generalization can you make about people who lived during the Renaissance Period of history?
7. What are some things/distractions that people have today that could possibly block the type of creativity displayed during Leonardo’s time?

Suggested Activities

* Continue to update the timeline with life events from chapters 5.
* Get some small mirrors and allow the students to try mirror writing.
* Chapter 5 described many of Leonardo’s ideas for inventions. Have your student describe and illustrate an idea they have for an invention.

Chapters 6 - 8 (78 - 101)

Vocabulary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| produced | expression |
| transferred | haunting |
| scaffold | evidently |
| portrait | presence |
| viewer | appreciated |
| dreamy | treatise |

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Michelangelo and Leonardo dislike one another?
2. What does the author mean by a “fierce contest” on page 83?
3. Why did Leonardo refuse to do the frescoes the traditional way?
4. How are modern cartoons different than renaissance cartoons?
5. What can you conclude about Leonardo’s family based on the way they treated him after his father passed away?

Suggested Activities

* Finish filling in the timeline with events from chapters 6 - 8.
* Print a copy of Young Girl with Ermine and the Mona Lisa and work with the students to compare and contrast two of Leonardo’s most famous paintings.
* Create a power point of Leonardo da Vinci’s Life.
* Write a research paper telling about da Vinci’s Life.
* Create an individual or class collage around themes or characters in the book.
* Make individual or group posters of Leonardo’s most important life events.
* Make a class poster comparing and contrasting Leonardo and another artist or another person from the same historical period.