

RENAISSANCE

Historical context

- the Wars of the Roses
- the establishment of the Tudor dynasty
- the strengthening of the English state under the rule of Queen Elizabeth I

Social context

- the plague
- the Great Fire of London
- a spirit of exploration
- London becomes the largest city in Europe

Key concepts

- Humanism
- Reformation
- cult of beauty

Literary context

- literature influenced by classic Greek and Roman literature and ideas
- literature reveals interest in the mind and heart
- sonnet becomes the most popular poetic form
- the rise of the printing press and levels of literacy

Key works

- *The Alchemist*
- *Astrophel and Stella*
- *The Anatomy of Melancholy*
- *Bacon's Essays*
- *The Faerie Queene*
- *The Good-morrow*
- Shakespeare's plays and sonnets
- *The Spanish Tragedy*
- *Tamburlaine*
- *The Tragic History of Doctor Faustus*
- *Utopia*
- *Valpone*

Key figures

- Francis Bacon
- Robert Burton
- John Donne
- Ben Jonson
- Thomas Kyd
- Christopher Marlowe
- Thomas Moore
- William Shakespeare
- Philip Sidney
- John Skelton
- Edmund Spenser
- Earl of Surrey
- Thomas Wyatt

Key terms

- conceit
- essay
- iambic pentameter
- Metaphysical poetry
- skeltonics
- sonnet