Ideas in Print

Trace how books changed learning and religious authority.

MWH.C.2 "Analyze patterns of social, economic, political, and cultural changes during the Late Middle Ages to the Age of Exploration. Describe the impact of medieval English legal and constitutional practices, as established in the Magna Carta..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two places where sharing ideas changed who could learn or speak about religion. Circle one limit on the spread of those ideas.

When Books Crossed Borders

1. Italian humanists studied Greek and Roman writings and asked what people could achieve through learning. Their interest in individual judgment and civic life helped fuel Renaissance art and scholarship. In the 1450s, Gutenberg developed a printing press using movable metal type. Printers could produce books more quickly and cheaply than scribes who copied them by hand. Classical works and new ideas could travel beyond the cities where they began, though books still cost money and many people could not read.

2. In northern Europe, Erasmus used printed books to call for reform within the Catholic Church. Martin Luther criticized the sale of indulgences and argued that salvation comes through faith, not purchased favors. Printers reproduced his arguments in German, helping them reach readers beyond universities. William Tyndale translated the Bible into English, challenging the idea that religious understanding should depend on Latin texts and clergy. Printed words did not create these disputes, but they made them harder for authorities to contain.

3. As Protestant movements grew, rulers had to decide which churches could operate in their lands. In England, Henry VIII broke with papal authority and made the monarch head of the Church of England, a change driven partly by his effort to end his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Catholic leaders responded by reaffirming doctrine and improving the training of priests at the Council of Trent. Across Europe, printing expanded debate, but governments and churches also censored books and punished religious dissent.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did printing help Renaissance learning spread beyond Italy?

2. How did Erasmus and Luther each use print to pursue religious change?

3. Why could Tyndale's English Bible translation change the role of clergy?

4. How did Henry VIII's action and the Council of Trent respond differently to challenges to church authority?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise a town council deciding whether to provide books in the local language. In three or four sentences, recommend a policy, predict one benefit and one risk, and use two details from the passage to explain your reasoning.

ANSWER KEY

Ideas in Print

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two places where sharing ideas changed who could learn or speak about religion. Circle one limit on the spread of those ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did printing help Renaissance learning spread beyond Italy?	**Printers made copies of classical works and new ideas more quickly and cheaply, allowing them to travel beyond the cities where they began.**
2	How did Erasmus and Luther each use print to pursue religious change?	**Erasmus used books to call for reform within the Catholic Church. Printers spread Luther's criticism of indulgences and his argument about faith to readers beyond universities.**
3	Why could Tyndale's English Bible translation change the role of clergy?	**It could let English readers encounter the Bible without relying on clergy to explain a Latin text.**
4	How did Henry VIII's action and the Council of Trent respond differently to challenges to church authority?	**Henry VIII rejected papal authority and made the English monarch head of a church. Catholic leaders reaffirmed doctrine and improved priest training at the Council of Trent.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would provide books in the local language and offer reading lessons. Printed German arguments reached readers beyond universities, so these books could widen public discussion. Since many people still could not read, lessons would help more residents take part. Authorities sometimes punished religious dissent, so the council should also protect peaceful discussion.

Accept other supported explanations of how print changed access to ideas or challenged authority. For the open task, look for a clear policy, a plausible benefit and risk, and two accurate passage details.