

Name: _____

The Birth of New Ideas: The Northern Renaissance

Key Terms and People

William Shakespeare famous Renaissance writer

Johann Gutenberg German craftsman who developed the printing press

Utopia an ideal place

THE NORTHERN RENAISSANCE BEGINS

Why was the time right for the northern Renaissance to begin?

By 1450, the bubonic plague had ended in northern Europe. Also, the Hundred Years' War between France and England was ending. This allowed new ideas from Italy to spread to northern Europe. They were quickly adopted. Here, too, rulers and merchants used their money to sponsor artists. But the northern Renaissance had a difference. Educated people combined classical learning with interest in religious ideas and social reform.

ARTISTIC IDEAS SPREAD

What ideas about art developed in northern Europe?

The new ideas of Italian art moved to the north, where artists began to use them. Major artists appeared in parts of Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Dürer painted religious subjects and realistic landscapes. Holbein, van Eyck, and Bruegel painted lifelike portraits and scenes of peasant life. They revealed much about the times. They began to use oil-based paints. Oils became very popular, and their use spread to Italy.

NORTHERN WRITERS TRY TO REFORM SOCIETY; THE ELIZABETHAN AGE

What did northern writers write?

Writers of the northern Renaissance combined humanism with a deep Christian faith. They urged reforms in the Church. They tried to make people more devoted to God. They also wanted society to be fairer. Thomas More wrote a

book about Utopia, an imaginary ideal society where greed, war, and conflict do not exist. In English, **1** has come to refer to an ideal place.

In England, the Renaissance was known as the Elizabethan Age, after Queen Elizabeth I. The most famous writer of the Elizabethan Age was **2**, who is also often called the greatest playwright of all time. His plays showed a brilliant command of the English language. They also show a deep understanding of people and how they interact with one another.

PRINTING SPREADS RENAISSANCE IDEAS

Why was the printing press such an important development?

One reason that learning spread so rapidly during the Renaissance was the invention of movable type. The Chinese had invented the process of carving characters onto wooden blocks. They then arranged them in words, inked the blocks, and pressed them against paper to print pages.

In 1440, a German, **3**, improved on this same practice to invent his printing press. He produced his first book—the Gutenberg Bible—in 1455 on this press. The technology then spread rapidly.

Printing made it easier to make many copies of a book. For the first time, books were cheap enough for many people to buy them. The first printed books were religious works. Soon, however, books on other subjects began to appear.

4. How was the northern Renaissance different from the Renaissance in Italy?

5. What did northern European artists paint?

6. Who were two of the most famous writers of the northern Renaissance?

7. What effects did the printing press have?

Directions: After you read about the ways that northern Europeans adapted the ideas of the Renaissance, complete the following table.

What factory led to the beginning of the Renaissance in northern Europe?	8
How did the invention of the printing press help spread learning and Renaissance ideas?	9

Describe briefly how each of the following showed Renaissance influences in his work.

Dürer	10
Van Eyck	11
Bruegel	12
More	13
William Shakespeare	14