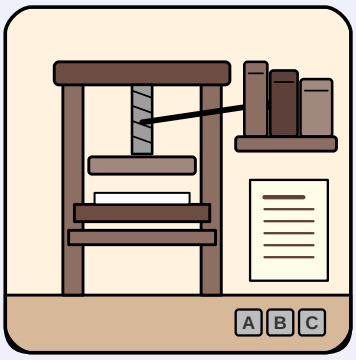
Gutenberg's Printing Press

Name: _____ Date: _____



Imagine a world where every book had to be copied by hand. Before the 1450s, that is how it was in Europe. Skilled writers called scribes copied books letter by letter with pens and ink. Making a single Bible could take a scribe more than a year, so books were rare and very expensive. Only wealthy families, churches and universities owned many of them.

Around 1440, a German goldsmith named Johannes Gutenberg began working on a better way. His big idea was movable type: small metal blocks, each with one raised letter or punctuation mark. Workers arranged the blocks into words and lines, spread ink on them and pressed paper on top with a machine based on the presses used to squeeze grapes. After printing, the letters could be taken apart and used again for the next page.

In about 1455, Gutenberg's workshop in Mainz finished printing a Bible. Experts think around 180 copies were made, more than a scribe could copy in a lifetime.

The invention spread quickly. By 1500, print shops in more than 200 European cities had produced millions of books. As books became cheaper, more people learned to read, and news, maps and new ideas in science traveled faster than ever before. Many historians call the printing press one of the most important inventions in history.

1 WHO? **Who were scribes?**

writers who copied books by hand | people who grew grapes | German goldsmiths

2 WORD: **What is "movable type"?**

metal letters that can be rearranged | a kind of wine press | a book about travel

3 **Number the events in order from 1 to 3.**

- ☐ Gutenberg began working on movable type.
- ☐ Scribes copied books by hand.
- ☐ Print shops spread to more than 200 cities.

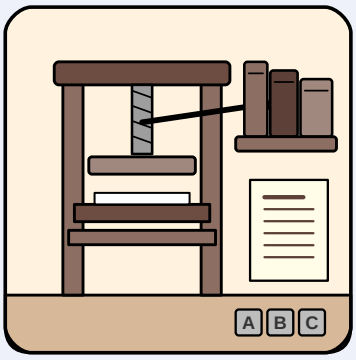
4 HOW? **How did the printing press change people's lives? Give two effects.**

_____

_____

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Answer Key



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