Objectives
As you teach this section, keep students focused on the following objectives to help them answer the Section Focus Question and master core content.
- Explain how the printing revolution shaped European society.
- Describe the themes that northern European artists, humanists, and writers explored.

Prepare to Read
Build Background Knowledge
Have students predict the effect of Italy's Renaissance on northern Europe.

Set a Purpose
- WITNESS HISTORY Read the selection aloud or play the audio.
- Ask Why does Rabelais compare his time to that of Plato and Cicero? (Renaissance humanists measured their own time against the classical period.)
- Focus Point out the Section Focus Question and write it on the board. Tell students to refer to this question as they read. (Answer appears with Section 2 Assessment answers.)
- Preview Have students preview the Section Objectives and the list of Terms, People, and Places.
- Note Taking Have students read this section using the Paragraph Shrinking strategy (TE, p. T20), and have them fill in the chart with the main features of the Renaissance in the North.

Answer
- It enabled books to be printed more cheaply, raised literacy rates, and spread new ideas quickly.

The Renaissance in the North

Objectives
- Explain how the printing revolution shaped European society.
- Describe the themes that northern European artists, humanists, and writers explored.

Terms, People, and Places
Johann Gutenberg
Flanders
Albrecht Dürer
ingraving
vernacular
Erasmus
Thomas More
Shakespeare

The Printing Revolution
An astounding invention aided the spread of the Renaissance. In about 1455, Johann Gutenberg (GOOT un burg) of Mainz, Germany, printed the first complete edition of the Bible using a printing press with movable type. A printing revolution had begun that would transform Europe. Before the printing press, there were only a few thousand books in all of Europe. These books had been slowly copied out by hand. By 1500, according to some estimates, 15 to 20 million volumes had been produced on printing presses.

The Renaissance began to flower in Italy, northern Europe was still recovering from the ravages of the Black Death. But by the 1400s, the cities of the north began to enjoy the economic growth—and the wealth—needed to develop their own Renaissance.

Focus Question
How did the Renaissance develop in northern Europe?

Vocabulary Builder
Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.
- Online Teaching Resources, Unit 3, p. 7; Teaching Resources, Skills Handbook, p. 3

High-Use Word "Prosperous, p. 97"
Definition and Sample Sentence
Prosperous, adj; wealthy
The prosperous lawyer lived in a large, expensive home.
Northern Renaissance Artists

The northern Renaissance began in the prosperous cities of Flanders, a region that included parts of present-day northern France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Flanders was a thriving center of trade for northern Europe. From Flanders, the Renaissance spread to Spain, France, Germany, and England.

Flemish Painters: In the 1400s, Jan van Eyck was one of the most important Flemish painters. Van Eyck's portrayals of townspeople as well as religious scenes abound in rich, realistic details. In 1494, Flemish painter Peter Bruegel (BRUG ul) used vibrant colors to portray lively scenes of peasant life, earning him the nickname "Peasant Bruegel." Bruegel also addressed religious and classical themes, but he set them against a background of common people.

In the 1600s, Peter Paul Rubens blended the realistic tradition of Flemish painters like Bruegel with the classical themes and artistic freedom of the Italian Renaissance. As a scholar and humanist, Rubens had a wide knowledge of mythology, the Bible, and classical history. Many of his enormous paintings portray these themes.

Dürer: "Leonardo of the North" German painter Albrecht Dürer (DOOR ur) was one of the first northern artists to be profoundly affected by Renaissance Italy. In 1494, he traveled to Italy to study the Italian masters. He soon became a pioneer in spreading Renaissance ideas to northern Europe. At the same time, his own methods influenced artists in Italy. Because of his wide-ranging interests, which extended far beyond art, he is sometimes called the "Leonardo of the North."

Dürer's important innovation was to apply the painting technique he had learned in Italy to engraving. In engraving, an artist etches a design on a metal plate with acid. The artist then uses the plate to make prints. Dürer had studied engraving in his goldsmith father's workshop and perfected the technique. Many of Dürer's engravings and paintings portray religious upheaval, one of the northern Renaissance's most powerful themes.

Vocabulary Builder

- **profuse** (prof uhs) adj. successful, wealthy

Teach

The Printing Revolution/Northern Renaissance Artists

Instruct

- **Introduce:** Vocabulary Builder
  Have students read the Vocabulary Builder term and definition. Give them what they know about the Renaissance, ask students to predict what they will learn about prosperous cities in Northern Europe.

- **Teach**
  Ask Why was the Bible the first book Gutenberg printed? (Most hand-copied books at the time were Bibles or other religious works; most people had great familiarity with the Bible.) How did the printing press encourage the spread of ideas? (It brought information to large numbers of people quickly; it encouraged the rise of literacy.)

- **Quick Activity**
  Have students look at the map on page 413. Point out that Flanders, like the cities of northern Italy, was a center of trade and commerce. Use the Think-Write-Pair-Share strategy (TE, p. 723) to have students identify reasons why the main centers of the Renaissance were located in areas of trade and commerce.

Independent Practice

Ask students to suppose that there are no printing presses. All books have to be carefully and slowly copied by hand, and there are no newspapers or magazines. Have groups think about how life would be different. Would information be harder to get? Would the levels of education and literacy among people be different?

Monitor Progress

Display Color Transparency 9B: The Renaissance. Ask students to study the graphic organizer and then write a paragraph restating its meaning. Ensure that paragraphs contain all of the main points shown in the graphic organizer.

Color Transparencies, 9B

Answers

- religious upheaval, realism in the human form and in daily life, and classical themes

Caption

He had a lofty view of himself. The portrait is like that of a nobleman seated next to a window overlooking his estate.
Northern Humanists and Writers

Instruct

■ Introduce: Key Terms Tell students that while both northern and Italian humanists emphasized education and learning, northern humanists put a greater focus on religious themes. Then point out the key term vernacular (in blue) in the text and review its meaning. Ask Why did humanists like Erasmus call for translating the Bible into the vernacular? (He believed that all people should have access to religious and classical learning.) How did More’s visions of a utopian society fit in with the ideas of Erasmus? (More believed in a society in which all people were educated.)

■ Teach Describe the growth of interest in fiction and plays in Renaissance Europe. Ask What contributed to the popularity of this kind of entertainment? (A growing middle class had more money and time for such entertainments; because of the printing press, literacy had risen, and books and plays were more widely available.) How did popular writers spread humanistic ideas? (They helped raise literacy by writing in the vernacular; they focused on individuals and religious themes.)

Independent Practice

Link to Literature To help students better understand the popular literature of the Renaissance, have them read the excerpt from Macbeth by William Shakespeare and complete the worksheet Teaching Resources, Unit 3, p. 11

Monitor Progress

As students fill in their charts, circulate to make sure they understand how the Renaissance developed in the north. For a completed version of the chart, see Note Taking Transparencies, p. 102

History Background

Rise of the Middle Class The plague, with its devastation of the European population, had far-reaching consequences for Western Europe’s society and economy. With fewer farmers available, agricultural production dropped. Those who survived demanded higher wages or moved to the cities to take up jobs vacated by artisans who had died. At the time when the landowning class was weakening, artisans and merchants in the cities found themselves in positions of growing power. With less competition, they could charge higher prices for their goods. This new middle class, continued to gain strength as the Renaissance took hold.

Erasmus helped spread Renaissance humanism to a wider public. He called for a translation of the Bible into the vernacular. He scorned those who “... don’t want the holy scriptures to be read in translation by the unlearned... as if the chief strength of the Christian religion lay in people’s ignorance of it.” To Erasmus, an individual’s chief duties were to be open-minded and to show good will toward others. As a priest, he was disturbed by corruption in the Church and called for reform.

Sir Thomas More’s Ideal Society Erasmus’s friend, the English humanist Sir Thomas More, also pressed for social reform. In Utopia, More describes an ideal society in which men and women live in peace and harmony. No one is idle, all are educated, and justice is used to end crime rather than to eliminate the criminal. Today, the word utopian has come to describe any ideal, but ultimately impractical, society.

Rabelais’ Comic Masterpiece The French humanist François Rabelais (rah-eh LAH) had a varied career as a monk, physician, Greek scholar, and author. In Gargantua and Pantagruel, he chronicles the adventures of two gentle giants. On the surface, the novel is a comic tale of travel and war. But Rabelais uses his characters to offer opinions on religion, education, and other serious subjects. Like More and Erasmus, Rabelais was deeply religious, but had doubts about the organized church.

Shakespeare Writes for All Time The towering figure of Renaissance literature was the English poet and playwright William Shakespeare. Between 1590 and 1613, he wrote 37 plays that are still performed around the world. Fellow playwright and poet Ben Jonson correctly predicted at the time that Shakespeare “... was not of an age, but for all time.”
Shakespeare’s genius was in expressing universal themes in everyday, realistic settings. His work explores Renaissance ideals such as the complexity of the individual and the importance of the classics. At the same time, his characters speak in language that common people can understand and appreciate. Shakespeare’s love of words also vastly enriched the English language. More than 1,700 words appeared for the first time in his works.

**Terms, People, and Places**

1. **Desiderius Erasmus**

   - **Biography**: A noted humanist scholar, Erasmus condemned the excesses of the Catholic Church, and his religious training gave him specific ideas for reform. His critiques of the Church sparked the changes brought about by the Protestant Reformation. Erasmus was born in 1466 and died in 1536.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did Erasmus’s training as a priest sharpen his critique of the Church? How did Erasmus’s humanist thinking influence his ideas for reform?

2. **Jan van Eyck**

   - **Biography**: One of the founding artists of the Flemish school of the northern Renaissance, van Eyck created the first oil paintings and refined the German art of engraving; he was also known for his miniature portraits.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did north European artists blend Italian Renaissance ideas with their own? How did the printing press encourage the spread of ideas in Renaissance society?

3. **Albrecht Dürer**

   - **Biography**: Dürer was one of the greatest artists of the northern Renaissance and the first northern artist to sensitize his audience to the art of the South by introducing them to the works of the Italian masters.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did Dürer keep extensive notebooks on nature? How did his curiosity and his keen powers of observation to paint amazingly realistic pictures of plants and animals?

4. **Albrecht Diirer kept extensive notebooks on nature. He used his and curiosity and his keen powers of observation to paint amazingly realistic pictures of plants and animals.**

5. **North European artists**

   - **Biography**: Northern artists were the first to use oil paints to create the shimmering webs of light, adding depth and glow.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did north European artists blend Italian Renaissance ideas with their own? How did the printing press encourage the spread of ideas in Renaissance society?

6. **The printing press**

   - **Biography**: The printing press was a technological development that allowed the spread of ideas and reform in early Renaissance society. It made it easier for artists, writers, and thinkers to share their ideas with a larger audience.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

7. **North European artists**

   - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

8. **The printing press**

   - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

9. **The printing press**

   - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

   - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

10. **The printing press**

    - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

    - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

11. **The printing press**

    - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

    - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

12. **The printing press**

    - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

    - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

13. **The printing press**

    - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

    - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

14. **The printing press**

    - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

    - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?

15. **The printing press**

    - **Biography**: Common people were able to read the Bible at church, and religious reformers could use the printing press to spread their ideas to large numbers of people quickly.

    - **Focus Questions**: How did the printing press influence the spread of ideas in northern Europe? How does the printing press illustrate the growth of the middle class, the humanist emphasis on education, and the printing press?