

The Printing Press

Week 15 • Tuesday • The Machine That Filled the World with Books

Reading Time

Before the printing press, every book was written by hand! Monks copied books one letter at a time, and one book could take a whole year to finish. Books were so rare and expensive that most people never owned one.

Around the year 1450, a German man named **Johannes Gutenberg** built the **printing press**. It used little metal letters called **type**. Workers arranged the letters, rolled ink over them, and pressed paper on top. Suddenly, they could print a page again and again!

Books became faster and cheaper to make. More people learned to read. Ideas spread across the world like never before. Many people call the printing press one of the greatest inventions ever.

Reading Questions

1. How were books made before the printing press?

2. Who built the printing press, and about when?

3. How did the printing press work?

4. What changed after the printing press was invented?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

printing press

type

ink

monk

copy

rare

Before or After the Printing Press?

Write B (before) or A (after) for each sentence.

Sentence	B or A?
Books are copied by hand, one letter at a time.	
Books are fast and cheap to make.	
Most people never own a book.	
More and more people learn to read.	
One book takes a year to finish.	
Ideas spread quickly around the world.	

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ Before the printing press, monks copied books by hand.
- ☐ Gutenberg built the printing press around 1450.
- ☐ The press used little metal letters called type.
- ☐ After the press, books became more expensive.
- ☐ The printing press helped more people learn to read.
- ☐ Books were common before the printing press.

Fill in the Blanks

Gutenberg hand type ink read press

1. Before the press, books were written by _____.
2. Johannes _____ built the printing press.
3. The metal letters were called _____.
4. Workers rolled _____ over the letters.
5. Then they pressed paper down on the printing _____.
6. After the press, more people learned to _____.

Think About It

1. Count the books in your home. Imagine each one took a YEAR to copy by hand. Why are books everywhere now?

2. What is your favorite book? How would your life be different without books?

Review

I learned...	Circle one
How books were made before the press	YES / NOT YET
How the printing press worked	YES / NOT YET
Why the printing press changed the world	YES / NOT YET