**Chapter 4 Overview**

Books … it hasn’t always been like Borders. In the beginning of books, monks hand copied text in what was then called a scriptoria, a copying room. Only religious books were copied. And parchment wasn’t easy to get either. This was early paper, made from the skin of goats or sheep. Sometimes, monks scraped the writing of all parchments and reused them. That led to the loss of many Greek and Latin books. As more people began to read though, the monks were overloaded. One book title that remains from these days in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales.*

Then enters Johannes Gutenberg. He was a metal worker in Germany in the mid-1400s. He created moveable type and a printing press. Some of the early fonts you can still find in use. Most originated in the 17th and 18th centuries named after printers who devised them, such as Claude Garamond, William Caslon, John Baskerville and Giambattista Bodoni.

A big change in printing presses occurred in the 1800s. Hand-powered flat-bed presses could print no more than 350 pages a day, but steam-powered rotary presses could print as many as 16,000 sections in the same amount of time. In 1885, another great step was the introduction of the Linotype machine, which let a compositor type at a keyboard rather than pick each letter out by hand. That was the standard, until the computer age.

As for publishers, note it is a global industry. Your text details the world’s top publishers, with McGraw-Hill and Random House at the top. Harcourt and Scholastic are also in the top five.

The 10 steps of the book publishing process are detailed for you from the author’s proposal to the first royalties. Often, it takes about 20 months. Also find of interest the breakdown of textbook costs, for which a large graph is created in your book.

The long tail of Amazon changes the way books are published even today. Your text details how they find any book and can offer 5.6 million English-language books, more than any bookstore can do. They custom-publish some books with publisher partners. It goes back to those seven truths you learned about the media. Truth two – There are no mainstream media. Amazon changes that. No longer is it just the biggest books from the biggest publishers. Vanity presses, where the author pays the costs of printing, also add to the selection of book choices.

Authors help make books what they are. I remember Judy Blume’s *SuperFudge* stories from when I was a child. My fourth-grade teacher would read us portions of books each day. She also told us many stories of *Ralph S. Mouse* from Beverly Cleary. I often think back to books, such as the tale of *1984* and Big Brother. I enjoy classics such as *Gone With the Wind* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. However, today I find myself enjoying listening to my child learn to read Dr. Suess books.

**YOUR ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER FIVE INCLUDE:**

1. Choose an author you enjoy. Research the individual to find information and then answer the following questions under the discussion board. You will then be required to respond to the posts of two other students in the class. The questions are:
   1. How do you think the author’s background shaped the type of writing he/she does?
   2. What type of writing does this author create?
   3. Why did this person begin writing?
2. Explain at least three reasons why people should read. Use at least a paragraph for each reason.

NOTE: The first part of the assignment will be posted on the discussion board under authors. The second part will be submitted to me under the assignments tab.