



lingoda

The printing revolution

READING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_2035R_EN

LANGUAGE
English

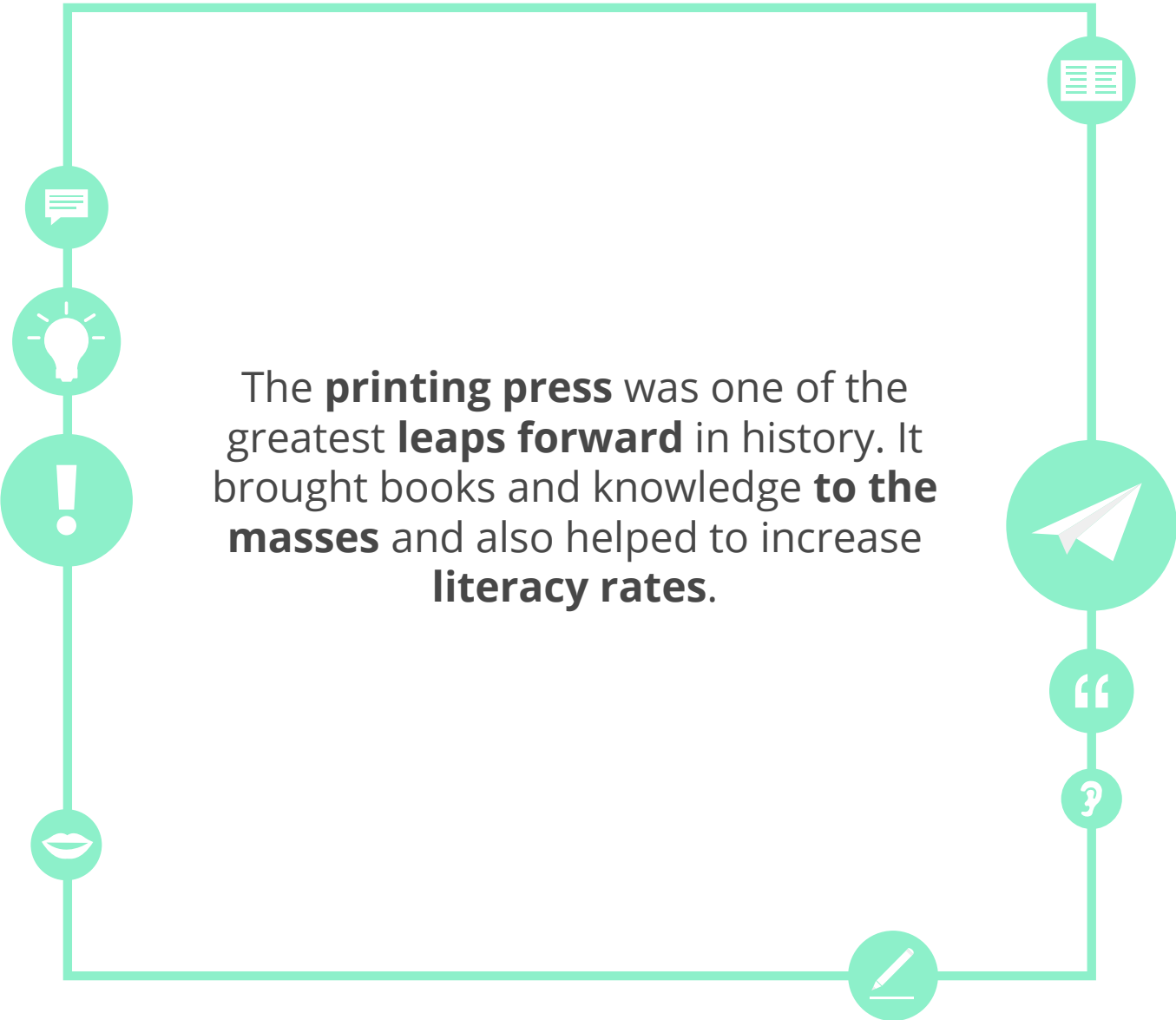




Goals

- Can read and understand a complex text about the printing press.
- Can explain the consequences of the printing press for society and evaluate the importance of the written word.





The **printing press** was one of the greatest **leaps forward** in history. It brought books and knowledge **to the masses** and also helped to increase **literacy rates**.



Collocations with *print*

to be in print

to be available
in print

to be out of
print

the small print

the fine print

large print

the print run



the print
version



Collocations with *print*



Classic novels such as Oliver Twist are still **in print**.

Her new novel **is available in print** and as an e-book.



A lot of older titles are **out of print** now.

You should always read **the small print** on a contract.





Collocations with *print*



The fine print of a contract often holds very important details.

People with visual problems need books with **large print**.



The print run describes how many copies of one book are printed.

The print version of newspapers is becoming less popular than the digital version.





Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with the collocations on the previous pages.

version

in

out

run

small

1. You should always read the _____ print of a contract for hidden details.
2. Unpopular books go _____ of print very quickly.
3. Some people still prefer the print _____ of newspapers and magazines.
4. Books which are _____ print are easy to get hold of.
5. Harry Potter had a very large print _____.





Speaking

Answer the questions with your teacher or classmates.



1

Do you always read the fine print in contracts?

2

Do you prefer reading the print or the digital version of newspapers?

3

Have you ever tried to buy a book that was out of print?



Writing

Write sentences using the collocations below.

the print run

available in print

large print

A notebook page with horizontal lines and circular icons, intended for writing sentences.



The printing revolution

The greatest invention of all time is a **point of contention**, but certainly among the greats is the **printing press**. Invented in 1439 by Johannes Gutenberg, the printing press **allowed access** to written materials on a scale unimaginable before its invention.

The printing press invented by Gutenberg had elements of older printing practices, but also had many truly revolutionary aspects. Gutenberg began working on the printing press around 1436 and he put his previous profession as a **goldsmith** to good use. His knowledge of metals allowed him to use different metals to produce **durable** type and high quality books which were much better than those that had come before. Gutenberg's most famous project was his Bible, of which he printed 200 copies and which sold for a very high price, around 3 years' wages for a **clerk**.



The printing revolution

Though Gutenberg tried to keep his printing press and techniques secret, the technology had **spread** around Europe by 1500. By that point, 2,500 European cities had a printing press, and though the technique had been **pioneered** in Germany, the Italians soon became the masters, with Venice being the **epicentre**. The printing press was not only part of the revolution that happened in Europe from the fifteenth century; it was one of the **driving forces**.





Explain these words in the context of the text

printing press

goldsmith

durable

clerk

to pioneer

epicentre



Gutenberg

Have you heard of **Johannes Gutenberg**? Do you know any foundations or institutions in his name?





The printing revolution



By the year 1400, the **Renaissance** had already begun in Italy. Scholars were **clamouring** for copies of works by ancient writers such as Aristotle and Cicero, and **scribes** could not **keep up with demand**. Soon after Gutenberg perfected his printing press, books by these ancient authors were being produced in relatively large numbers, and classics were translated into Latin from Greek and other classical languages. Soon after this, books began to be translated into the **lay languages** of various countries. This was to have a huge impact on European society.



The printing revolution

Before the printing revolution, books were only for the **elite**. Copied by scribes, they were hugely expensive and it was highly unlikely that a **lay person** would be able to **get their hands on** one. This in turn was connected to the fact that most people in pre-Renaissance Europe were **illiterate**. They got information orally: the news of the day was read out loud on the street by a **town crier**, stories were passed from one generation to another, and the bible was read to the **congregation** by priests. Once books were able to be produced in larger numbers for a fraction of the earlier price, communication of information was **democratised** and ordinary people were able to access knowledge without an **intermediary**. The fact that books began to be written in each country's **vernacular** language was also a great help in this.





Vocabulary

Answer these questions about the vocabulary in the text.

1. What is the Renaissance?

2. If people are clamouring for something, what are they doing?

3. What was the job of a scribe?

4. What is a lay or vernacular language?

5. Who were the elite?

6. What does it mean to be illiterate?

7. What was the job of a town crier?

8. When would you need an intermediary?



Classical authors



How important do you think it was that **classical authors** were **reprinted** in the 1400s? What kind of impact did it have?



Ordinary people

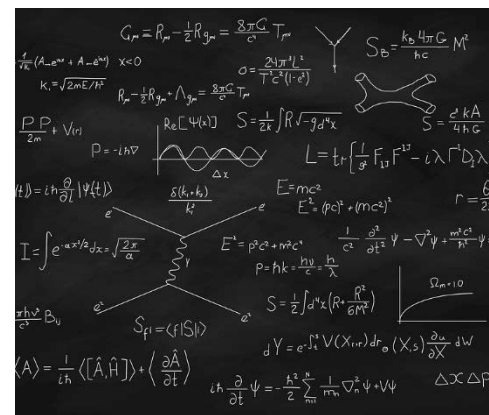
In what ways does the text say that the printing revolution affected ordinary people? Can you think of any other ways? Why was it important?





The printing revolution

In scientific circles, the printing press allowed scientists to form a community and to **circulate** knowledge much more quickly and easily in the form of scientific journals. European scientists were able to use the discoveries of others to **further their own knowledge** and develop it, which brought the scientific revolution much closer. Printed diagrams, charts and tables also eliminated the need for scientists to reproduce hundreds of calculations.





The printing revolution

Despite the huge **gains** for the general population, there were a few minor **drawbacks** to the printing revolution. Firstly, Latin began to **decline** as a language; formerly widely known and used in academic circles, it was replaced by vernacular languages. Secondly, scribes were put out of work, with the need for them rapidly declining; this was a **precursor** to the **multitudes** of jobs which were eliminated by the industrial revolution a couple of hundred years later. Finally, **memorisation** techniques, which had been key when only a few copies of any book were available, began to lose their importance and the skill of memorising was also lost.

The printing revolution sped up development in many different areas, and was the greatest information revolution until the advent of the internet some 500 years later.



Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with the words in bold in the text on the last two pages. Remember that you might have to change them to the correct form.

1. There were very few _____ to the printing revolution, but one was that scribes lost their jobs.
2. Before books could be printed in large numbers, people had to _____ a lot of information.
3. The _____ of knowledge in the scientific community was much faster after the printing press was introduced.
4. The printing revolution produced mostly _____ for the lay population.





Scientific discoveries



Which **scientific discoveries** do you know about that occurred in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?

Do you think they would have happened at that time without the **printing press**?



Speaking

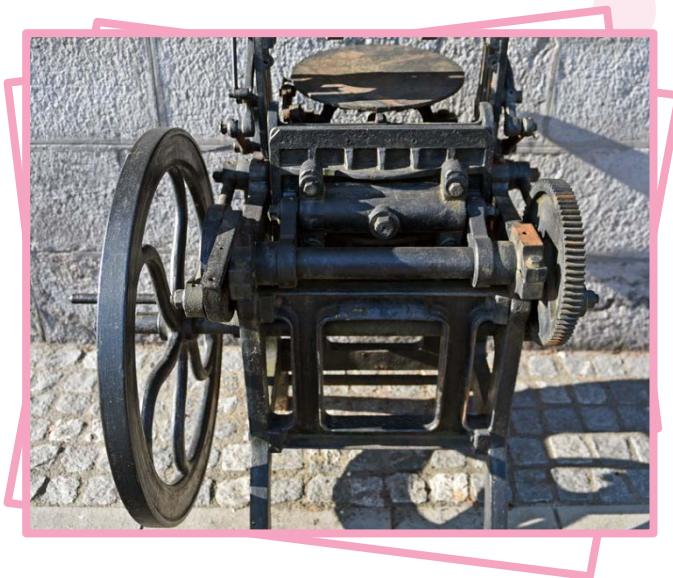
Do you think the advantages brought about by the printing press outweigh the disadvantages?





Changing history

**Do you think it is fair to say
that the printing press
changed history?**

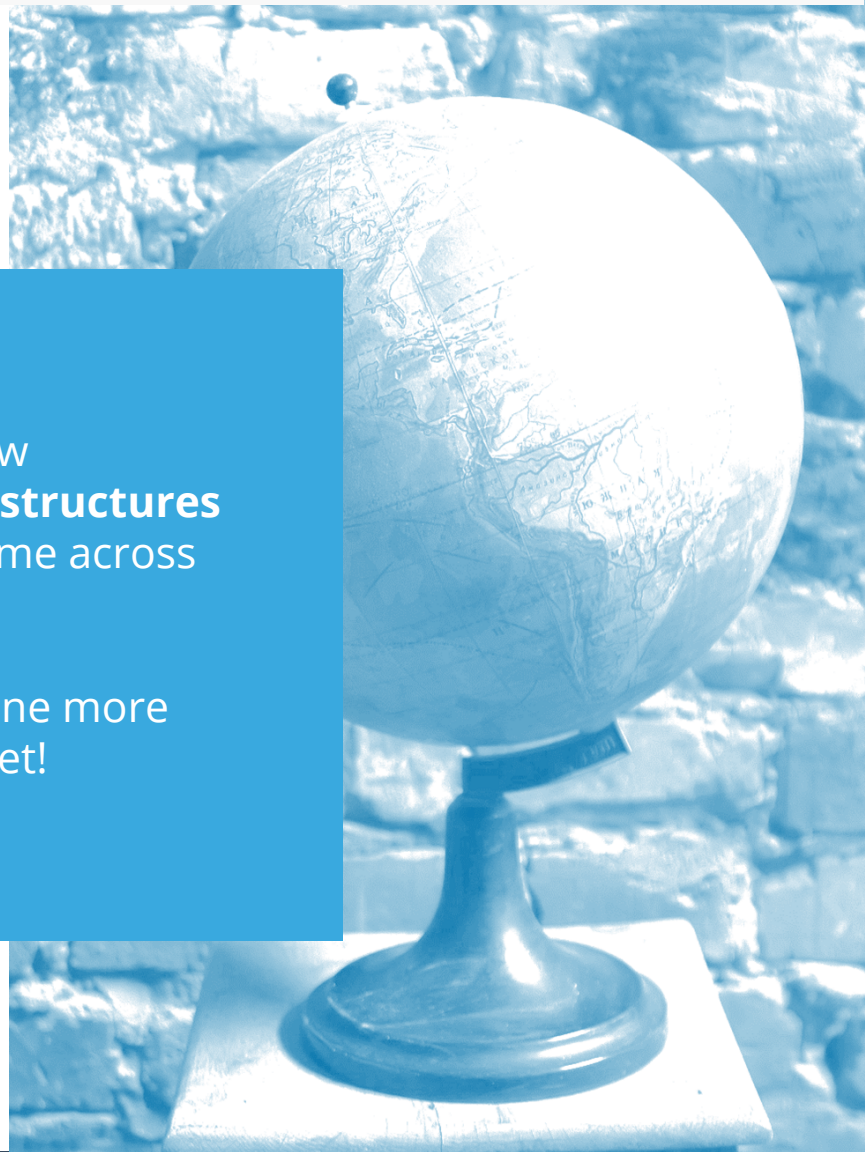




Reflect on this lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





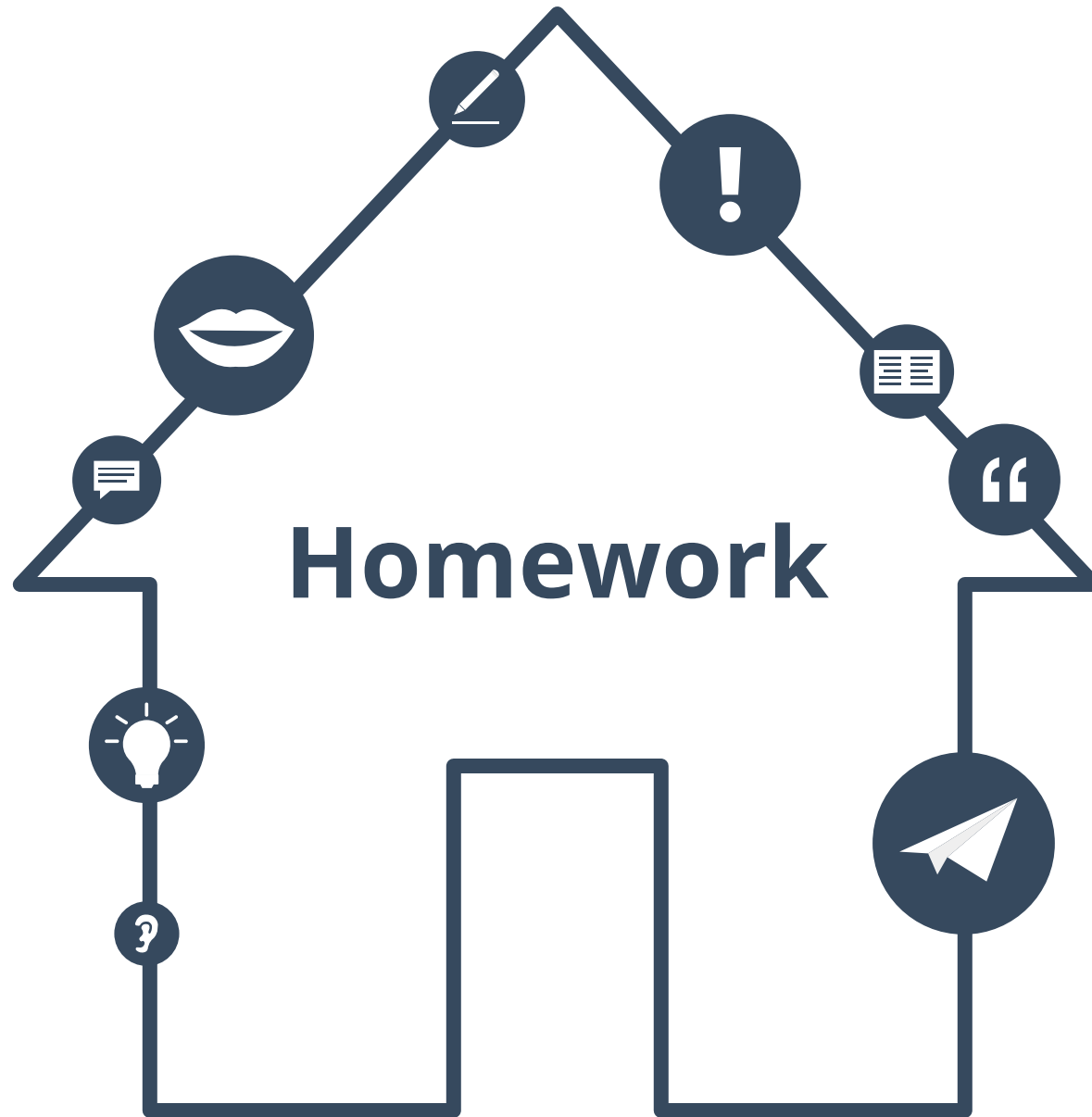
Answer key

Exercise p. 21

1. drawbacks, 2. memorise, 3. circulation 4. gains

Exercise p. 7

1. small, 2. out, 3. version, 4. in, 5. run





Fill in the gaps with the words on the right

1. Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing _____ in the mid 1400s.
2. Many classic novels are still _____ print.
3. People called _____ used to copy books out by hand.
4. One main advantage of the printing revolution was that books started to be printed in _____ languages.
5. Before the printing revolution, most lay people were _____.

in

illiterate

vernacular

press

scribes



Writing

**Was the printing press the most important invention in history?
Write your answer to this question.**

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Homework answer key

Exercise p. 28

1. press, 2. in, 3. scribes, 4. vernacular, 5. illiterate



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