

Exercise walk-through

Printing ■ 1.4

eXercise

You must be able to

- state what printing changed about the production of texts
- explain its effect on the spread of ideas
- describe how it affected vernacular languages
- avoid claiming printing caused every later development

Method — What changed

Identical copies could be produced in quantity at falling cost. Manuscript copying had produced divergent, expensive texts; print produced standard, cheaper ones.

Method — Spread of ideas

An idea could reach many places quickly and could not easily be suppressed once printed in quantity. That changed the balance between authorities and their critics.

Method — Vernaculars

Printing in vernacular languages standardised spelling and grammar and widened the reading public beyond those who knew Latin.

Method — Not a single cause

Printing enabled and accelerated; it did not by itself cause the Reformation or the Scientific Revolution. Say what it made possible and what still required other conditions.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State two things printing changed about text production.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

identical copies rather than divergent ones **B1**; greater quantity at lower cost **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain how printing affected vernacular languages.

Solution 2.2

Method: Vernaculars

Worked steps

it standardised spelling and grammar **B1** and widened the reading public beyond those who knew Latin **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

A student writes: "Printing caused the Reformation."

- (a) State why this overstates.
- (b) Write a more defensible sentence.

Solution 2.3

Method: Not a single cause

Worked steps

(a) printing enabled and accelerated the spread of reform ideas but did not by itself produce them **B1**. (b) a sentence distinguishing enabling from causing, e.g. "Printing allowed reform arguments to spread faster than authorities could answer them" **B2**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Compared with manuscript copying, printing produced texts that were

A more divergent and more expensive

B standard and cheaper

C rarer

D unreadable

Solution 3.1

Method: What changed

A more divergent and more expensive

B standard and cheaper 

C rarer

D unreadable

Worked steps

B. standardisation and lower cost are the two changes.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Printing shifted the balance between authorities and critics because

- A** critics could be silenced more easily
- B** printed material in quantity could not easily be suppressed
- C** authorities owned all presses
- D** nobody could read

Solution 3.2

Method: Spread of ideas

- A critics could be silenced more easily
- B printed material in quantity could not easily be suppressed** 
- C authorities owned all presses
- D nobody could read

Worked steps

B. quantity made suppression impractical.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A pamphlet is printed in 4,000 copies in three weeks.

- (a) State one consequence for the authorities.
- (b) Explain what other condition was needed for it to have effect.

Solution 3.3

Method: Spread of ideas

Worked steps

(a) suppression becomes impractical once copies are dispersed **B1**. (b) a public able and willing to read it **B1**, which required vernacular printing and a grievance the text spoke to **B1**.