

The Printing Press

- believe it or not, the printing press is considered to be the MOST important invention of all time
- well... why?

- before the printing press was invented, there were two ways to print books:

- **Block Printing**

- for each letter, in each word, in each paragraph, you have a separate block
- you coat it in ink and press it on paper

- **Scribing**

- copying out books, word by word, by hand
- took YEARS to copy books out

- books were expensive and hard to get in medieval ages

- b/c of that, very few people had the means to read

- what that does is simple: limits people to having ideas of their own

- ◆ that is why the church was so powerful

- **WELL... everything changes in Germany**

- Johann Gutenberg (1397-1468) was a genius, and his invention changed the course of human history

- he invented the **printing press**

- his press was made of movable parts, so people could set up a page of type quickly
 - books could now be written up in a matter of days, rather than weeks or years

Impacts of the Printing Press

- it changed everything...
- b/c books could be made cheaper and quicker, they became available to normal people in society
 - by 1500, over 12 million books had been printed
 - the literacy (reading) rate rose as people had more access to books
 - now, it became important as to WHO wrote what, and copyright laws were created
- the most important book to be printed was the Bible
- before, people had to believe the church and whatever they said about religion
- not any more...
 - books began to be written in local languages (eg. English for the King James Bible)
 - people began to challenge the church and their teachings
 - now, people could make up their own minds on what to worship and how to be 'good Christians'
 - things like selling salvation and corruption could be addressed
 - resulted in the church losing their hold on people's thoughts and faith