

CHAPTER <b>13</b> SECTION 2	<b>Section Summary</b> <b>THE RENAISSANCE IN THE NORTH</b>
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**READING CHECK**

Where did the northern Renaissance begin?

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**VOCABULARY STRATEGY**

What does the word *prosperous* mean in the underlined sentence? Ask yourself what is meant by a “thriving center of trade.” Use that information to help you figure out what *prosperous* means.

**READING SKILL**

**Identify Main Ideas** Write the sentence from the second paragraph of the Summary that states the main idea of that paragraph.

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By the 1400s, northern Europe began to enjoy the economic growth needed to develop its own Renaissance. An astounding invention—the printing press—helped to spread Renaissance ideas. In about 1455, **Johann Gutenberg** printed the first complete edition of the Bible using the new printing press. The printing press caused a printing revolution. Before, books were made by hand. They were rare and expensive. Printed books were cheaper and easier to produce. Now more books were available, so more people learned to read. Printed books exposed Europeans to new ideas and new places.

The northern Renaissance began in the prosperous cities of Flanders, a thriving center of trade. Flemish painters pursued realism in their art. One of the most important Flemish painters was Jan van Eyck. He portrayed townspeople and religious scenes in rich detail. Pieter Bruegel used vibrant color to portray lively scenes of peasant life. Peter Paul Rubens blended the tradition of Flemish realism with themes from mythology, the Bible, and history. German painter **Albrecht Dürer** traveled to Italy to study the techniques of the Italian masters. He soon became a pioneer in spreading Renaissance ideas to northern Europe. Dürer applied the painting techniques he learned in Italy to **engraving**. Many of his engravings and paintings portray the theme of religious upheaval.

Northern European humanists and writers also helped spread Renaissance ideas. The Dutch priest and humanist Desiderius **Erasmus** called for a translation of the Bible into the **vernacular** so that it could be read by a wider audience. The English humanist **Sir Thomas More** called for social reform in the form of a **utopian**, or ideal, society in which people live together in peace and harmony.

The towering figure of Renaissance literature, however, was the English poet and playwright William **Shakespeare**. His 37 plays are still performed around the world. Shakespeare’s genius was in expressing universal themes, such as the complexity of the individual, in everyday, realistic settings. He used language that people understand and enjoy. Shakespeare’s love of words also enriched the English language with 1,700 new words.

**Review Questions**

1. What changes did the invention of the printing press bring about?

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2. What theme did Dürer explore in many of his paintings and engravings?

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