LISTENING

a. Watch the video about the Medieval & Renaissance Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), then answer the questions.

http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/videos/m/video-medieval-and-renaissance-galleries/

1. Why was the new Medieval and Renaissance wing created?
2. How many galleries opened in December 2009?
3. How many objects do they house and from which historical periods?
4. What happened in 2002?
5. What did curators and conservators do in the new location?
6. What can you see at the Splendour and Society gallery? And the Rise of Gothic?
7. What does the third gallery (Devotion and Display) show?
8. What does the Noble Living gallery focus on?
9. What can you see in the Wing’s biggest gallery?
10. Why is Sir Paul Pindar’s London house important?

READING

a. Read paragraphs 1-9 and write the corresponding subtitles. Then, for each paragraph, write/underline the main sentence.

Medieval writing and printing

1. Until the 11th and 12th centuries most manuscripts were made by hand in monasteries. The work was done in scriptoria or writing rooms with monks and nuns participating in the work. The production of manuscripts was a slow and expensive process. The preparation of the manuscript involved several stages and was not confined to one person or scribe.

2. Abbeys and monasteries that could not produce their own skilled craftsmen would use illustrators and bookbinders from outside. The pages of medieval manuscripts are generally made of vellum or parchment (animal skin) which is very strong and long lasting. The illuminated manuscripts that can be seen in this box show a good selection of style, quality and subject matter although not all manuscripts were illuminated.

3. Printing with movable type was invented by a goldsmith, named Johannes Gutenberg, in the Rhineland city of Mainz in about 1450. The first printed books continued to copy the design of illuminated manuscripts, and printed texts still needed scribes and illuminators to add initials, miniatures and decoration.

4. Gutenberg’s first major printing project was a lectern bible produced in two volumes. Some of these bibles were printed on paper and some on vellum. The page layout was identical to hand illuminated manuscripts and large capital letters and decoration were added to the printed text by hand. Printing made it cheaper and easier to produce multiple copies of books and helped spread ideas more widely.
The process of production

5
By the thirteenth century the skilled scribes who produced the text worked either in monasteries or as professionals in outside workshops. The guild apprenticeship to become a scribe took about seven years. Although some scribes did compose, text was generally copied from another manuscript. From workshop ledgers and letters from monasteries we know that scribes could write about four large leaves a day.

6
An illuminated manuscript was the work of a number of skilled craftsmen. The text was written first by one or more scribes, with spaces left for initials and illustration. The sheets were then passed to an illustrator, who would outline the borders and the illuminated letters. Details were added with pen and ink, sometimes using compasses, ruler and set square. Colour outlines were also done by pen, with the final infilling completed with a fine brush.

7
Most of the illuminated manuscripts that can be seen in the Print Room are religious texts. Many abbeys and monasteries would produce their own works but those that did not have their own skilled craftsmen would use illustrators and bookbinders from outside. By the end of the twelfth century the monopoly of the church over teaching and scholarship had weakened, and universities prospered. There was growing demand for texts to support administration and commerce, for scholarship and learning, and for an increasingly prosperous, urban, literate middle class. Lay workshops outside monasteries formed into guilds, and drafted official documents for the merchants.

From the thirteenth century the number of new subjects grew to include mathematics, astronomy and philosophy, fiction, Greek and Roman classics, and even travel. Most manuscripts were still produced on commission as they were too expensive for a workshop to produce speculatively. The Prints, Drawings and Paintings Collection does not have as many examples of secular texts, such as legal and medical, as religious texts.

8
Though the technology of printing was developed around the 1450s onwards, the production of illuminated manuscripts did not cease immediately. The similarity between printed leaves and manuscript leaves can be seen in the page layout and the style of lettering. The illumination is just as detailed and colourful. Some workshops even printed on vellum in imitation of hand-produced texts.

9
This is not surprising. Printed texts arose as a quicker and cheaper way of meeting the demand for manuscripts and had to convince the buyers of expensive illuminated manuscripts that the new product was equal in quality. At first, only the text was printed, and spaces were left on the page for the illustrator to draw and colour the illumination. Later, woodblocked outlines were added to the spaces, but the colouring was still done by hand.

Paper was introduced as a cheaper alternative to vellum. It was already manufactured in Europe, and was made from linen rags and sometimes hemp. Since printing was only economical if a substantial number of copies were made of each text, printers had to be fairly certain that their texts would sell. They therefore printed texts on subjects already in demand in manuscript, such as religious texts and scholarly texts for the growing universities.

The handwriting of texts did not disappear altogether, as manuscripts continued to be commissioned if the number required was too small to justify printing costs. Manuscript was also used for prestigious texts, presentation scrolls or special prayer books. This tradition still continues today.

VOCABULARY - EXAMPLES FROM THE COLLECTION

a. Complete the following descriptions with the right words.
LESSON 3 – DESCRIPTING SOURCES

i. Page from Codex Justinianus, printed 1488. Museum no. 4065

Page from Codex Justinianus
Published by Anton Koberger
Nuremberg, Germany
1488
Museum no. 4065

different — colouring — added — was

This leaf 1._________ printed first and the illumination hand 2._________, using water-based paint and gold leaf, were 3._________ by hand later. Note the 4._________ page layout from the hand-written page.

ii. Leaf from an antiphoner, a book of sung psalms

3
Leaf from an antiphoner, a book of sung psalms
Southern France
Early 15th century
Museum no. 256.1

background - of - ink - by - painted - illuminated - lower - on – placed- and

This page is _______vellum and is written and hand. The initial S is _______in blue and is _______on a _______of burnished gold. The letters FPP _______the drawings _______the tree, man, bird and beasts in the _______margin are all in _______.

iii. Leaf from the Teutonic Knights’ Bible, about 1300. Museum no. 9036.Z

Leaf from the Teutonic Knights’ Bible
The Netherlands
About 1300
Water-based pigments, gilding and ink on parchment
LESSON 3 – DESCRIBING SOURCES

Museum no. 9036.Z

clearly - made - dated - as - comes - although - in - form - written - during - were - viewing -
consisting - the – designed- at - playing - from - lectern - initial -

The illuminated 1.__________ is the letter U. The figure 2. _______ the centre of the page is 3. ________ a bagpipe.

This leaf 4._________ from a large Bible 5. _________ of three volumes 6. ________ for the monastery of the
Teutonic Knights 7. ________ Nieuwe Biesen, near Maastricht in 8. _________ Netherlands. It is 9. ______
about 1300. The text, 10. _________ in Latin, is 11. ______ the Old Testament, The Book of Zephaniah.

These books 12. ______ very large. They were 13. ________ to be read aloud from a14. _________ (a reading
desk) to the assembled congregation, or to monks and nuns15. ________ meal times and prayer. Several volumes
were needed to contain the complete text of the Bible.

16. __________ not visible here on the webpage, when 17. ________ the original pages, prickings (marks made
at the side of a page with a point or knife) can be 18. ________ seen. These acted 19. ______ a guide for ruling the
lines on which the text was written.

Comic figures combining human and animal 20. ________, in this case the man with a tall peaked hat, playing
bag-pipes, were sometimes added to the margins of the text. These decorations, known as grotesques, often bear
no obvious relation to the texts they are decorating.

iv. Four leaves from a Book of Hours, about 1470. Museum no. 9015A
France
About 1470
Museum no. 9015A, 9015B, 9015C, 9015D (clockwise from the top left corner)

These four pages are from a French book of hours of about 1470-80. Books of hours were prayer books, not for monks or priests, but for ordinary people. They were produced in great numbers in lay workshops. They are small and often highly decorated and were intended for reading in the home.

The owner of a book of hours was meant to stop eight times a day and read the appropriate text just as those in monastic orders would do. The central text in a book of hours was the Hours of the Virgin, comprising prayers and psalms intended to be used in honour of the Virgin Mary at particular hours of the day (Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline). These four pages show clockwise from the top left corner:

1. ________________________________________________________________
2. ________________________________________________________________
3. ________________________________________________________________
4. ________________________________________________________________

Pictures or miniatures which appear at the beginning of the text guided the thoughts of the user. The border decoration of acanthus sprays in blue and brushed gold, and flowers, berries and gold dots on string stems, are in a conventional style probably executed by junior illuminators. They probably worked on contract to the illuminator or bookseller who had taken the order from the customer.

b. Read the information about the manuscripts below, then write their extended descriptions on the model of those provided in exercise a.

HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS
OF THE VILNIUS
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

MANUSCRIPTS

http://www.unesco.org/webworld/mdm/visite/vilnius/rankrasciai/erankr.htm

1. Zikgimont… korol polskij velikij kn[ia]z' litovskij… igumen manastyria s[via]togo Sp[a]sa s Kobryna vkazyval… list knel[gi] ni Kobryn'skoe...

Krakow. 1512. 1 leaf. 28x39.5 cm. Manuscript. In the Slavic language of the Chancery of the GDL.
Signature: pisar nash Dovkgovskij. Seal: the small seal of the GDL.
Sigismund I the Old (1467-1548), King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania (1506-1548), confirms an endowment by Duchess Fedora to the monastery of St. Spas in Kobrin.

2. In nomine Domini Amen… Nos Albertus… epis[copus] Vilnensis significamus...
LESSON 3 – DESCRIBING SOURCES

Vilnius. 1504. 1 leaf. 41x29 cm. Manuscript. Latin. Parchment. Signatures: 2, illegible. Seals: of officials of the Vilnius diocese (2), emblematic, in wax, affixed with braids of red silk thread. Albertus Taborus, the bishop of Vilnius, bestows a piece of property located across from the bishop’s curia, to the Cathedral organist, for the purpose of erecting a house or tavern.

3. Omnibus Praesentes lecturis salutem in Domino... Henricus Lelheffel... dignus Gradu Magisterii A. A. L. L. et Philos[ophiae]...

4. In Nomine Domini Amen Anno a nativitate eiusdem millesimo quingentesimo tricesimo sexto...
Vilnius. 1536. 1 leaf. 33.5x62 cm. Manuscript. Latin. Parchment. Seals: of the elders of the Franciscan Order(3), in wax, attached by a braid of red silk thread. The Vilnius Franciscan monastery confirms its earlier sale of a plot of land to Ulricus Hosius