

**GLOBAL HISTORY II  
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS  
DUE FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2009**

**I. William Shakespeare** – Answer the questions below *on a separate answer sheet.*

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) is widely considered to be one of the greatest English writers of all time. His plays and poems have fascinated readers for almost four centuries. Among his works are his tragedies, such as *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*. *Macbeth* tells the story of the title character, a medieval Scottish lord driven by greed and ambition. In his desire to gain more power, he is persuaded by his wife to murder the king of Scotland and seize the throne. Macbeth’s enemies have now surrounded his castle and it appears that his end is near. He has just heard that his wife has gone insane from guilt over this crime and committed suicide. Macbeth’s reaction to this news is expressed below in one of the most famous soliloquies\* in all of Shakespeare’s plays. ♦ *As you read, think about how Shakespeare used carefully chosen words to express Macbeth’s thoughts and feelings. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.*

**From *Macbeth* (Act 5, Scene V) by William Shakespeare**

*Enter Macbeth, Seyton, and Soldiers*  
**Macbeth** Hang out our banners on the outward walls;  
 The cry is still, “They come!” Our castle’s strength  
 Will laugh a siege to scorn; here let them lie  
 Till famine and the ague eat them up.  
 Were they not forc’d [reinforced] with those that should be ours,  
 We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
 And beat them backward home.  
*A cry of women within.*  
 What is that noise?  
*Seyton* It is the cry of women, my good lord.  
**Macbeth** I have almost forgot the taste of fears.  
 The time has been, my senses would have cool’d  
 To hear a night-shriek, and my fell [covering] of hair  
 Would at a dismal treatise [story] rouse and stir  
 As life were in ‘t. I have supp’d full with horrors;



**William Shakespeare**

Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
 Cannot once start me.  
 Wherefore was that cry?  
*Seyton* The Queen, my lord, is dead.  
**Macbeth** She should have died hereafter;  
 There would have been a time for such a word.  
 To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
 To the last syllable of recorded time,  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death.  
 Out, out, brief candle!  
 Life’s but a walking shadow;  
 a poor player,  
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
 Signifying nothing.

\*a speech spoken by one character to express inner thoughts

**Questions to Think About**

1. To what does Macbeth compare life?
2. **Summarize** Using everyday language, paraphrase Macbeth’s soliloquy about death at the end of the excerpt.
3. **Synthesize Information** Shakespeare chose his words carefully to convey Macbeth’s thoughts and feelings to people watching the play. What words does Shakespeare use to reveal Macbeth’s fears?

## II. Desiderius Erasmus — Answer the questions below on a separate answer sheet.

Desiderius Erasmus was the leading humanist scholar in northern Europe during the sixteenth century. From England to Italy, he spread his views on education, championed the study of the masterpieces of the classical world, and presented his liberal approach to the study of Christianity. ♦ As you read, think about the role that Erasmus played in his society. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.

### Desiderius Erasmus (1469–1536)

Desiderius Erasmus was born in the Dutch city of Rotterdam on October 27, 1469. After both of his parents died, Erasmus and his brother were sent to live at a school that groomed boys for the religious life. In 1485, with very few other options available to him, Erasmus entered a monastery. He stayed for seven years, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1492.

Life in a monastery, however, did not suit the young Erasmus, and he was glad to gain a position as the secretary to an important bishop. In an early work of this time, he criticized what he saw as the dry study of medieval theology. He wrote that “all sound [solid] learning is secular learning.”

Erasmus soon tired of life at the bishop’s court and went to study theology at the University of Paris in 1495. He became bored and longed for more freedom to pursue his own interests and growing humanist values. He went to England in 1499, where he became friends with Thomas More, the great English scholar.

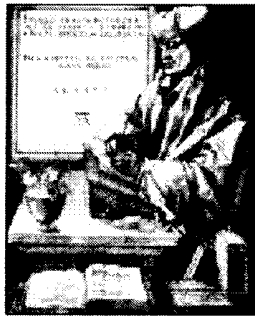
Erasmus became a sharp critic of many aspects of society. He proposed that people study the Bible on their own and adopt its

teachings as their own guiding values. By recommending this, he went against the ideas of the Catholic Church, which taught that the Church itself was the only resource for learning about Christianity. In his work *Praise of Folly* (1509), Erasmus used humor to expose the immoral behavior of many of his time, including the clergy.

Erasmus may be best known for his ideas on education. He believed that a sound education in classical literature and Christian writings would create better people and a better society.

Erasmus shared many ideas, such as the importance of free will and the need for reform in the Church, with the emerging Protestant leaders such as Martin Luther. However, unlike later reformers, Erasmus did not want to break away from the Church.

Perhaps Erasmus’s greatest role was as a mediator between Catholics and Lutherans. Almost alone in his time, he held moderate views, while others on the two sides engaged in fierce debates over theology. Erasmus died in 1536 in Basel, Switzerland.



Engraving of Erasmus, by Albrecht Dürer

### Questions to Think About

1. Why did Erasmus enter a monastery?
2. What did Erasmus think about people reading the Bible on their own?
3. **Summarize** How was Erasmus critical of the Church?
4. **Make Comparisons** Compare Erasmus’s role in the sixteenth century to the role of a specific social critic, reformer, or educator of today. How are they similar in their beliefs, methods, or effects on society?