

Rationale

This unit is for Social Studies 8 and is designed to follow units taught on the religions of the world. Students will already have familiarity with Christianity, which plays a central role in the narrative of the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the beginning of the Middle Ages in Western Europe and the beginnings of Byzantine civilization.

This unit is designed to transmit to the students an understanding of the significance of Roman Civilization, in its own right and the importance of the legacy of Roman civilization for contemporary Canada. The unit will approach this goal and theme by focusing on the issue of the Fall of the Western Roman Empire.

In learning about the Decline and Fall of the Western Roman Empire, students will come to an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the late Roman political, economic, and social systems. And how important religion and the military were to Late Roman Civilization. The question of the Fall of the Roman Empire will be approached for various angles, giving reasons for the military and political collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the continuity in the Eastern Roman Empire.

Students will be asked to formulate their own argument for why the Roman Empire fell and present it orally and in visual form at the end of the unit. This task will be a critical challenge for the students throughout the unit and students will be expected to integrate information learned from all lessons. It is hope that students will have a clear understanding of this particular issue and can comfortably explain why the Western Roman Empire declined and fell in the fifth century.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes to Be Addressed (Grade 8 PLOs):

- 1) Assess a variety of positions on a controversial issue
- 2) Interpret and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources
- 3) Clarify a problem, an issue or an inquiry
- 4) Identify factors that influence the decline of world civilizations
- 5) Plan, revise, and deliver an oral presentation
- 6) Locate and describe historical events on maps

Unit Goals

- 1) To transmit an appreciation for the richness, diversity and significance of Roman Civilization in its own right and to demonstrate in what ways Rome has influenced subsequent civilizations.
- 2) To give students a clear understanding of what is meant by the “Fall of the Roman Empire” – to clarify that only the western half of the Empire fell, and to give students a solid understanding of the historical narrative for the fall of Rome.
- 3) To have students research and argue for the best explanation to answer the questions – Why did the Roman Empire fall? To have students present their arguments both orally and visually.

Students will:

- 1) learn to interpret and compare primary and secondary sources
- 2) develop and deliver arguments for a controversial problem
- 3) learn to make connections and comparison between the past and the present

Lesson One “What Was Rome”

60 minutes

Lesson Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Become familiar with the basics of Roman Civilization.
- 2) Become familiar with the geography of the Mediterranean.
- 3) Compare the Roman Empire to modern states in the same territory.

Lesson Body: (60 minutes)

Hook (10 minutes)

Students will be asked to fill out a KWL for the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. They will be asked to independently fill out what they know about this topic, then share this with their neighbours. Students will also be asked to come up with at least one question for what they wonder about the Fall of Rome. There will be an in-class discussion about this topic.

Map Activity Introduction (10 min.)

Ask students if they can identify main geographical features on a wall map of the Roman Empire. Students will be asked to locate Rome, Ravenna, Italy, Britain, Gaul, Spain, Carthage, Egypt, Syria, Greece, Constantinople, and Germany

Fill in the Blank Sheet (20 minutes)

Students will receive an information package about the Roman Empire, giving a general overview of the history and character of Roman civilization. They will be asked to fill out an interpretive answer sheet based on this reading.

Map Assignment (20 minutes)

Students will be given a blank map of the Roman Empire. They will be asked to label all of the modern countries that can be found within the borders of the Roman Empire. They will also be asked to label at least 15 major modern cities that also are located in territory that was once part of the Roman Empire.

Closure

A few minutes before the end of class, the teacher will tell the students to finish all assignments that are not done for next class and that there will be a homework check the following class.

Lesson Two “The Fall of Rome”

60 minutes

Lesson Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Become familiar with the historical narrative of the fall of the Roman Empire.
- 2) Learn that there are different theories about why Rome fell and even if Rome fell.

Homework Check

The teacher will ask the students to hand in the question sheet and map from the previous lesson for marking.

Hook (20 minutes)

Video: *Ancient Rome*. Themes: Christianity, Diocletian, Constantine, Fall of Rome
Students will be given a question sheet to accompany the video and will be asked to fill in the answers while watching the movie. The movie will be followed by a short discussion about the themes presented.

Lecture (10 minutes)

The Fall of the Roman Empire: Review main themes, problems, dates, people, and events, such as Huns, Goths, Attila, Aetius, Diocletian, Constantine, Western Empire, Eastern Empire, Sacks of Rome 410, and 455, the conquest of Ravenna in 476 and the survival of the Eastern Empire.

Hand out and discuss critical challenge (30 min.)

Each student will receive a copy of the unit assessment, a critical challenge on “Why did the Roman Empire fall?” Each student will be asked to answer this question and present their answer orally and visually.

The teacher will first guide the class in a discussion about what it means for a civilization to fall. The class will brainstorm and try to define internal and external causes for the fall of a civilization.

The teacher will explain and model what are the possible answers to this question for Rome. Such as a weak military, Barbarians had better militaries, Rome had become internally weak due to social and political problems, and the division of the Roman Empire into two caused the collapse of the Western Empire. The teacher will show possible models for visual aids, and will encourage students to keep this assignment in mind while doing work in upcoming classes.

Closure

A few minutes before the end of class, the teacher will explain that in the coming classes, students should think carefully if Rome did in fact fall and if so, what were the main causes.

Lesson Three “Religious and Political Change”

60 minutes

Lesson Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Learn about the Christianization of the Late Roman Empire.
- 2) Become familiar with the causes for internal political instability within Rome.

Activity (25 minutes)

Each student is given a handout outlining the main reforms of the emperor’s Diocletian and Constantine. These cover the military, the economy, government, religion and building projects. The students are then asked to write two separate news paper articles, one written by a Christian and friend of Constantine, describing the reforms of Diocletian and one written by a Pagan and friend of Diocletian, describing the reforms of Constantine.

In-Class Discussion (15 minutes)

Students will be given a list of Western Roman emperors alive in the fourth and fifth centuries. The list describes why these emperors left power, if they died naturally, were executed or were forced from power. The children will be asked to discuss in groups or pairs if the government seemed less stable just before it fell. Then there will be a class discussion about this issue.

Activity (20 minutes)

The students are given a handout describing the life of the last Western Roman Emperor. In 475 AD, he Romulus Augustus decided to send the crown of the Western Emperor to the Eastern Emperor in Constantinople. Romulus was forced from power one year later by the Goths. The assignment will for the student to write a letter, as the Emperor Romulus, in 475 AD, describing why he decided to send the crown to Constantinople.

Closure

A few minutes before the end of class, the teacher will remind the students to have both assignments handed out today finished for next class, as there will be a homework check the next class.

Lesson Four Rome “Late Roman Society and Economy”

60 minutes

Lesson Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Learn the major geographic feature of Western Europe and the Mediterranean region.
- 2) Become familiar with the general characteristics of the late Roman economy.
- 3) Study various social pressures evident in the late Roman period.

Homework Check

The teacher will collect both assignments done last class and look over them as part of a homework check.

Hook (25 minutes)

Mapping Activity. Each student will be given a blank map of the Roman Empire, which will be used throughout the class. The first task will be to outline the borders of the 4th century Roman Empire (Rhine and Danube Rivers, Sahara Desert, Syrian Desert, Hadrian’s Wall and the Armenian highlands). Students will then be asked to label the 10 main cities of the Roman Empire (Constantinople, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Carthage, Smyrna, Thessalonica, Ravenna, Milan). Students will be asked to locate, name and label the main mountain ranges and deserts near the Roman Empire.

Activity (35 minutes)

Students will receive a handout describing the main aspects of Roman society and lifestyle. They will be asked to read it over and answer a series of critical questions based on the readings. The questions will concentrate on how the 4th century reforms and invasions would affect Roman society.

Closure

Each student will be given a handout describing one of four barbarian tribes: Huns, Vandals, Visigoths, and Ostrogoths. The students will be asked to read their handout for next class and to research more about their nation on the internet at home.

Students will also be reminded to have the activities done in the class completed for the following class, as there will be a homework check.

Lesson Five (Double Block) “Roman at War”

100 minutes

Lesson Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Learn about the characteristics of the Roman army.
- 2) Become familiar with the various people who conquered Rome.
- 3) Learn the military history of the Fall of Rome.

Homework Check

The teacher will collect homework done in the previous class, and will go over it in class, while students are working.

Hook (5-10 minutes)

Video: *Gladiator* – 5-10 minutes: movie clip to demonstrate what the Roman army and an ancient battle looked like. The clip will be followed by a brief discussion of what is the army and war all about.

Lecture (10-15 minutes)

The teacher will give a general description of what the Roman army consisted of: The Legion size, and strength, the army reforms in the Late period meant that more soldiers were mercenaries. Have an in-class discussion; if you were a mercenary, would you fight the same as if you were Roman?

Handout (5 minutes)

Teacher will distribute a handout showing the military history of the invasion and fall of the Western Roman Empire. The class will go over the handout together.

Activity (40 minutes)

The class will be put into groups: Vandals, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, and Huns, based on the handout that they received in the previous class. In the groups, the students will have to answer a series of questions about their own tribe. The answers must be detailed. Once the class all has completed answering the questions, the groups will be combined, and the students will talk to one another about their own tribe. The objective of the discussion will be to persuade the other students that their tribe was the tribe that destroyed the Roman Empire. They have to convince the others will lists of achievements and victories of their own particular tribe.

Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Guided class discussion about why did Rome fall, what were the military causes, why was the Roman military beaten. In this discussion, the class as a whole will go over the different arguments why the Huns, Vandals, Visigoths and Ostrogoths were each responsible for the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Closure (15 minutes)

The teacher will return all of the homework done thus far for the unit and will remind students about the unit project and that these pieces of homework contain useful information for the unit project.

With the remainder of the class time, students will be able to organize the information that they have accumulated so far for their final presentation. Students will be encouraged to ask questions for more information and suggestions for what to do for the visual aid.

Lesson Six (Double Block) “Legacy of Rome”

100 minutes

Lesson Objectives: Students will....

- 1) Become familiar with the theory that Rome never fell after all.
- 2) Learn areas of continuity from Rome to modern times.
- 3) Learn detail about the Eastern Roman Empire.

Hook (20 minutes):

Video – *Byzantium: the Lost Empire*: This video looks at the theme of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire from the perspective of the Eastern Empire. It calls into question the whole idea that Rome fell at all.

Students will be given a question sheet to go along with the video. After the video there will be a short discussion about the theory that Rome never fell.

Activity (30 minutes)

Students will receive a sheet of Latin words and Roman concepts. They will then be asked to think of contemporary Canadian equivalents of each of the items on the sheet. For Roman ideas that do not have an equivalent, students will be asked, what modern thing replaced the Roman idea.

Lecture (10 minutes)

The teacher will give a brief summary of the Byzantine attempt to recreate the Roman Empire, and that in part it was successful. They will cover the Byzantine reconquest of Italy, North Africa and Spain in the sixth century, and the fact that these territories remained in part Roman for several centuries. This will be followed by a discussion about this topic.

Activity (35 minutes)

Students will be asked to write a reflection on all of the themes that have been covered in the course thus far. This will be done to tie together all of the themes that have been studied. They will be asked to answer the following questions:

Did the reforms of either Diocletian or Constantine cause the fall of Rome? Explain...

Did the creation of a New Rome at Constantinople lead to Rome’s fall? Explain...

Did internal weaknesses lead to Rome’s fall? Explain....

Which barbarian tribe was most responsible for the fall of Rome? Explain...

Did the survival of the Eastern Empire mean that Rome never really fell? Explain...

Closure

The teacher will remind students that they have a unit project, and will ask them to consider the information that they learned in this class while preparing. The teacher will then say that the next class is a prep block and that students should bring material to class to work on their visual aid in class if they want.

Lesson Seven “Preparation Block”

60 minutes

Lesson Objective: Students will...

1) Begin to prepare their final argument for why Rome fell.

Activity (60 minutes)

Students will be given an information package with quotes from primary sources and secondary supporting three different theories for why Rome fell. The students will be asked to use the information found in this package, along with the information contained in previous assignments to come up with their own answer for the question of Why did Rome fall? They will be encouraged to do independent research as well. The class time will be given to work on their oral and written presentations.

Information stations set up with books and handouts

- 1) Military explanation – weaker army – barbarians were militarily tougher
- 2) Political, Social and Religious changes – Splitting the Empire and rise of Christianity
- 3) The Roman Empire never Fell, Just moved East

Provide materials for the visual aid / give sources / books to help in making a visual aid.

Closure

The teacher will go around and will check to see what work students have done in class to ensure that some work had been accomplished in class. Students will then be reminded of presentations in the next class and to bring their visual aids and oral presentations to class.

Lesson Eight “Presentations”

60 minutes

Lesson Objective: Students will...

- 1) Make oral and visual presentations of their argument for why Rome fell.

Activity (60 minutes)

Students will present their projects and listen to their peers make presentations. The evaluation process will be done in three manners:

Self-evaluation of the presentation and visual aid

Peer evaluation of presentation and visual aid

Teacher evaluation of presentation and visual aid

RUBRIC	1 Not Yet Within Expectations	2 Minimally Meets Expectations	3 Fully Meets Expectations	4 Exceeds Expectations
Demonstrates Clear Understanding of Various Aspects of the Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Not Provide Relevant Information • Does Not Give any Reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several Inaccuracies or Omissions in Description • Does not Give more than 1 reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately Describes Topic Lists Key Events, Themes and People • Give Several Reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates Knowledge by Connecting Different Themes, Events, and People • Gives 4+ Reasons
Presents a Reasonable And well-Organized Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusing or self-contradictory • Detail is illogical, off topic, or inappropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambiguous or Goes Somewhat Off Topic • Needs More Details • Plausible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and Provides Relevant Information • Logical and Supportable • Believable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very clear and Focused • Logical and Well Supported with Evidence • Persuasive
Provides Sufficient Evidence to Support the Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant Evidence • Cannot Support argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has only 1 or 2 points • Use no more than 1 source • May not support argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides several Valid points • Uses Different forms of Evidence • Evidence is All Relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Ample Evidence • Uses Many Different sources • Evidence all point to the Conclusion
Visual Aid is Neat and and Supports the Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Untidy • Shows little Effort • Off Topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not very Neat • May demonstrate lack of effort • May Not Support Argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neat • Demonstrates Effort • Clear Focus on Theme and Aids Argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Creative • Shows extra Effort • Effectively Supports Theme • Effectively and Persuasively Supports Argument

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Summative Assignment for Unit on the Fall of the Western Roman Empire.

Learning Outcomes to Be Addressed (Grade 8 PLOs):

- 7) Assess a variety of positions on a controversial issue
- 8) Interpret and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources
- 9) Clarify a problem, an issue or an inquiry
- 10) Identify factors that influence the decline of world civilizations
- 11) Plan, revise, and deliver an oral presentation

This assignment will conclude a two or three week unit in a Social Studies 8 Class on the theme of the Fall of the Western Roman Empire. Prior to this assignment, students will have classes analyzing different aspects of this topic, and different possible answers. They include for instance, the weakening of the Roman military, increased pressure posed by nomads north of the Empire, social change in the Empire due to the rise of Christianity, political changes resulting from the 4th century division of the Empire into two entities, and localized political, social and economic reasons.

Students will receive the instruction sheet several days before the presentation and will be given in class time to prepare their presentation and work on their visual aid. The teacher will explain the assignment in detail and hand out the assignment to each student. The assignment is to be done individually.

The Fall of the Western Roman Empire- Internal or External Causes Oral Presentation

Assignment:

For this unit, you have to imagine that you are the world's best historian of the Roman Empire and that you will have to explain to other historians in a conference the final answer to the question "Why did the Roman Empire fall?"

Your objective is to provide a fair but well supported explanation of whether or not the Roman Empire fell and if indeed it did fall, why the Roman Empire fell. Consider both internal and external causes for the Fall of Rome that we have learned about in class, choose what you think is the best explanation. You are encouraged to use details found in your homework and assignments to support your opinion. I can also provide you with a list of library books and web sites that can help you prepare for your presentation.

This is to be done orally with the help of a visual aid, such as a poster. Your visual aid should clearly show what you are talking about in visual form. Your presentation is to last for approximately 3 to 5 minutes.

Criteria:

Your poster and oral presentation will be evaluated on the same criteria, which focus on the your analysis of the material we have covered and how you support your ideas. Please refer to the Rubric on the back of this sheet.

- 1) Demonstrates Clear Understanding of Various Aspects of the Issue
- 2) Presents a Reasonable and Well-Organized Argument
- 3) Provides Sufficient Evidence to Support their Argument
- 4) The Visual Aid is neat and Supports the Argument

Sources:**Books:**

Beers, Burton F. *Patterns of Civilization*. Volume 1. Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1984.

Connolly, Peter. *The Cavalryman*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Connolly, Peter. *The Legionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Cranny, Michael. *Pathways Civilizations Through Time*. Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1997.

Ganeri, Anita. *How Would You Survive As An Ancient Roman?* Toronto: Franklin Watts, 1995.

Killingray, Margaret. *Constantine*. St. Paul's: Greenhaven Press, 1980.

Leonard, Angela & Mason, James. *The Roman Empire Teacher's Manual*. Mississauga, Copp Clark, 1995.

Mason, James. *The Roman Empire*. Burnt Mill, Essex: Longman, 1991.

Norwich, John Julius. *Byzantium The Early Centuries*. Toronto: Penguin Books, 1990.

Videos:

Ancient Rome Volume IV: The Enduring Legacy. The History Channel, 1998.

Byzantium the Lost Empire. John Romer, 1997.

Gladiator. Dream Works, 2000.

The Rome Empire

Rome is a city in central Italy and beginning in ancient times, the Romans, of the inhabitants of Rome gradually conquered Italy and all of the other lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The success of Rome was due to the power of their army and that they were builders, encouraging trade and building roads. The Romans introduced their language, Latin, as the common language of their Empire. But many other languages and cultures lived in the growing Roman Empire, Greek was the language used among the educated people. Romans traditionally worshipped many different gods, for centuries Rome was a Republic, governed by a Senate, but this changed in the time of Julius Caesar and his nephews and successor Augustus.

After Julius Caesar was assassinated, there was a civil war, which was won by Augustus. In a battle At Actium in 31 BC Augustus defeated Antony and Cleopatra and united the empire. He became the first Roman Emperor (*imperator*), which means commander in Latin. Augustus began a period of peace that lasted 200 years, known as the *Pax Romana*, which was a period of great cultural and artistic achievement. During this time the Roman Empire was the largest it would ever be.

The blessings of peace were great for the empire. The extensive system of Roman roads made transportation easier than it was again to be until the development of railroads. A postal service was developed closely tied in with the organization of the army. Commerce and industry were greatly developed, particularly by sea, over which grain ships carried food for Rome and the West from the ports of northern Africa. The Roman Empire became under Augustus one great nation. The enlarged view of the world made a great impression on Rome, where literary and artistic interests were of importance, although nearly always tending to imitation of Greece and of the East.

After Augustus, several of the emperors were not as successful: Caligula, who followed, was a cruel tyrant AD 37-AD 41; he was succeeded by Claudius I AD 41-AD 54, who was dominated by his wives, but during his rule half of Britain was conquered AD 43. His stepson Nero AD 54-AD 68 was an unparalleled tyrant. In his reign occurred the great fire of Rome AD 64, attributed to Nero, which burnt everything.

At that time an entirely new element, Christianity, made itself felt in Rome. On Nero's orders a barbarous persecution took place in which many Christians died, among them St. Peter and St. Paul. Throughout the Roman Empire the Christians expanded steadily for the next centuries. Their conflict with the empire, which brought on them continual persecution, was chiefly a result of the Christian refusal to offer divine honors to the emperors. But Christianity penetrated the army and the royal household in spite of the constant danger of detection and persecution. There were many periods in the first three centuries when Christians worshiped openly, even in Rome, where the catacombs housed not only graves but also churches.

Later successful emperors were Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. Hadrian built his wall in Britain (Hadrian's Wall) to hold back the barbarians who constantly threatened Rome. He also reorganized the senate and the army. Roman armies were then seldom seen far from the boundaries of the empire, and life continued throughout the Roman world in peace and quiet. Italy was sinking into a purely provincial state, although many emperors made attempts to make it a special country. Marcus Aurelius (161-180) ruled in what is commonly called the Golden Age of the empire.

The Empire Declines

The decline of the empire began with Marcus Aurelius' son Commodus (180-192). In this age, soldiers controlled the rise and fall of emperors. The crisis was finally ended in 284, when Diocletian was made emperor by the army. He was a reformer of government and of the social order, but only one of his efforts was successful. This was the division of the empire into four political sections, two eastern and two western.

The division of East and West was resumed after the death (337) of Constantine I, who moved the capital to Byzantium, renamed Constantinople. By the Edict of Milan (313), Constantine granted universal religious tolerance, thus placing Christianity on the same footing as the other religions. After the death (395) of Theodosius I the empire was permanently divided into a mostly Greek speaking Eastern Empire, also known as the Byzantine Empire and the mostly Latin speaking Western Empire, and the city of Rome rapidly lost its political importance.

Decline, once it began, came quickly, however. Ravenna replaced the city of Rome as the capital of the West; as it was easier to coordinate the defence of the Empire from further north. The West sank into anarchy, and Italy was ravaged by invaders. Rome in was sacked 410 by the Visigoths, and conquered in 455 by the Vandals. Rome was also invaded by the Huns, led by Attila. In 476 the last emperor of the West, appropriately called Romulus Augustulus, was deposed by the Ostrogoths under Odoacer ; this date is commonly accepted as the end of the West Roman Empire.

The fall of Rome marked no abrupt ending of an era, for the barbarians that filled the gap left by the disappearance of the old order were quick in accepting and adapting what vital elements remained of it. The survival of the East Roman Empire, or Byzantine Empire for nearly 1000 more years, until it too was destroyed in 1453, showed how much vitality was left in the imperial ideal. One of the strengths of the Byzantine Empire was the massive city walls, which surrounded Constantinople.

Questions – Roman Empire

- 1) Where did the Roman Empire begin? Why were the Romans so successful in making an Empire?

- 2) What language did the Romans Speak? Who was the first emperor of the Roman Empire?

- 3) What was the *Pax Romana*? What was the Roman Empire like in the time of peace?

- 4) What did the Emperor Nero do to the Christians of Rome?

- 5) What reforms did Diocletian and Constantine I initiate?

- 6) Who captured the city of Rome? When? Who destroyed the Western Roman Empire? When?

- 7) What was the Byzantine Empire? How long did the Byzantine Empire survive?

Diocletian	284-305	natural death
Constantius I	305-306	natural death
Constantine the Great	306-337	natural death
Maxentius	308-312	killed in action
Maximian	306-308	captured, suicide
Maximus Daia	310-313	natural death
Constantine II	337-340	killed in action
Constans	337-350	murdered by courtiers
Magnentius	350-353	suicide
Constantius II	337-361	natural death
Julian the Apostate	360-363	killed in action
Jovian	363-364	natural death
Valentinian I	364-375	natural death
Gratian	367-383	murdered
Valentinian II	375-392	murdered by his general
Magnus Maximus	383-388	executed
Honorius	393-423	natural death
Johannes	423-425	executed by East Romans
Valentinian III	425-455	murdered by Maximus
Maximus	455	executed by soldiers
Avitus	455-456	unknown
Majorian	457-461	murdered by officers
Libius Severus	461-465	murdered by officers
Anthemius	467-472	murdered by officers
Olybrius	472	Natural Death
Glycerius	473-474	forced to resign by J. Nepos
Julius Nepos	474-475	forced to resign by Oretses
Romulus Augustulus	475-476	forced to resign by Goths

DIOCLETIAN – THE REFORMING EMPEROR

Military Reforms

As emperor, Diocletian was faced with many problems. His most immediate concerns were to bring the armies back under control and to make the frontiers once again secure from invasion. Diocletian was able to bring the army back under control by making several changes. He divided the army itself into so-called "border troops," actually an ineffective citizen militia, and "palace troops," the real field army, which often was led by the emperor in person.

Once the army was under control, Diocletian could turn his attention to other problems. The borders were restored and strengthened. In the early years of his reign, Diocletian and his subordinates were able to defeat foreign enemies such as Alamanni, Sarmatians, Saracens, Franks, and Persians, and to put down rebellions in Britain and Egypt. The eastern frontier was actually expanded.

Government Reforms

Diocletian transformed the emperorship into an out-and-out oriental monarchy. Access to him became restricted. Diocletian also concluded that the empire was too large and complex to be ruled by only a single emperor. Therefore, in order to provide an imperial presence throughout the empire, he introduced the "Tetrarchy," or "Rule by Four" two Emperors (each called Caesar) and two vice-emperors (each called Augustus). The tetrarchy allowed for choosing new emperors. According to Diocletian's plan, the successor of each Augustus would be the respective Caesar, who then would name a new Caesar. Initially, the Tetrarchy operated smoothly and effectively.

Economic Reforms

Another problem was the economy, which was in an especially sorry state. The coinage had become virtually worthless. Diocletian's attempt to reissue good gold and silver coins failed because there simply was not enough gold and silver available to restore confidence in the currency. A "Maximum Price Edict" issued in 301, intended to reduce price increases, led to corruption.

In order to assure the long term survival of the empire, Diocletian identified certain occupations which he felt were essential. They included such occupations as soldiers, bakers, politicians, and farmers. These jobs became hereditary. Diocletian also restricted the power of senators.

Religious Reforms

Diocletian, a religious pagan, in 303 issued a series of four increasingly harsh decrees designed to compel Christians to take part in the imperial religion, the traditional means by which allegiance was pledged to the empire. This began the so-called "Great Persecution."

CONSTANTINE – THE BUILDER AND REFORMER

Religious Reforms

Upon coming to power Constantine unilaterally ended all persecution of Christians in his territories, even providing for restitution. Constantine then in 312 before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge had a dream telling him to place the sign of Christ on his soldier's shields. He then, wanting to unite Christians, who were arguing about theology, ordered them to meet together in the city of Nicaea in 325, to come on an agreement for what Christians believe.

Building Projects

Constantine built many buildings in the city of Rome. He built churches, government buildings, a large bathhouse, and many other new buildings in the city. His mother, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, encouraged him to build many churches there.

New Rome

Constantine decided to build a new capital city for the Empire in the ancient Greek city of Byzantium, completed in 330 AD. The New Rome was known as Constantinople, or "Constantine's City". The new capital enjoyed a most favorable location having easy access to the eastern borders, and it lay on the richest trade routes. Constantine built three major churches in Constantinople, Hagia Sophia (Holy Wisdom), Hagia Eirene (Holy Peace) and the Church of the Holy Apostles, where he was buried. The New Rome was a Christian capital.

Activity – The Crown of the Western Roman Emperor

The year is 476 AD, you are the Western Roman Emperor Romulus Augustulus, most of your empire is now controlled by barbarians. You no longer even control the city of Rome and you live in the small northern Italian city of Ravenna. You have heard reports that another large army of Ostrogoths led by Odoacer is moving towards you. You have very few soldiers but in the East, there is a powerful Roman Emperor Zeno. You decide to give up your power and send the crown of the Western Emperor to Zeno in the East. Write a letter describing to Zeno why you are sending him your crown.

Social Status

Nobility was not simply bestowed upon an individual. It was inherited by being born into a good family. 'Three fathers' was the duration required to establish a man's noble status. Wealthier Romans were able to eat a more varied diet, including meat and fish on a regular basis. Richer Romans also often had villas in the countryside where they could rest away from the cities. Poorer people tended to eat only grains, which were inexpensive. Often poorer Romans had to struggle just to survive.

Family

In the Roman world, the family would include everyone within a certain household. the father of the family, the wife, the children and the slaves of the household. In families people were subject to their fathers and grandfathers. Large families, both rich and poor, preferred together in the same house. In many households it would be the wife who would oversee the slaves. Women would receive visitors, visit other households, and go shopping. Women knew how to play music, to dance and sing.

Markets

With the Forum being the center of Roman life the shops obviously clung to as closely as they could. And so the streets leading from the Forum boasted many shops. Some areas would have spice shops, others shoe shops, book shops and luxury goods. There were also huge food markets. There were also markets for poorer people, selling foods more suited to those with limited money, like simple vegetables and chickens.

Food

The Romans had no coffee, tea, sugar, liqueurs, truffles, potatoes, French beans, or even tomatoes. As the Romans had no sugar, sweets were made with honey or grape-juice. They ate bread, olives, olive oil, beans, lentils, chick peas, lettuces, cabbages and leeks. The available fruits at first were apples, pears, wild cherries, plums, grapes, walnuts, almonds and chestnuts. Also dates, imported from north Africa, and apricots from Armenia were widely available. The beverage of the Roman world was wine. The best wines came from central Italy. Most people were unable to eat meat very often, but the meat that was available was pork, fish and chicken.

Work

Working men would usually get up early and work a six hour day. Many workers, traders and businessmen of the city would work all morning, adding to the wild hustle and bustle of the their town or city. Trade of all sorts naturally centered around cities. From simple labourers who unloaded the ships, to bureaucrats who checked the arriving goods, wholesale tradesmen and warehouse managers. The construction industry would also require enormous numbers. Architects and engineers, surveyors, foremen, sculptors, stonemasons, carpenters, bricklayers and simple day labourers. All these were necessary

to build not merely grand monuments, but also the apartment blocks to house the masses, or the residences of the rich. And so many of the other 'academic' jobs such as architecture, medicine, surgery, dentistry, teaching and agricultural management were usually done by freedmen.

Leisure

After work, Romans headed for the forum or the markets, perhaps to read the daily news which would be hung up in public places. Or else he might take an early bath. The women just as much as the men would head for the public bath houses. Bathing was a social affair. Even the rich, who might have their own bathhouses, would hardly do so alone, but invite friends to join them. It was the way the Roman working day came to a close, before one would finally retire for dinner.

Slavery

The Roman economy was heavily dependent on the widespread existence of slave labour. Slaves laboured in the mines and in the empire's many farms and potteries. Most of the government workers were slaves. Literate slaves served as teachers, librarians, artists and entertainers and even as doctors. In the private houses of Rome, it was slaves who were the servants of their Roman masters, watching over their private lives. In the latter centuries of the Roman empire, slavery began gradually to decrease in importance, as the rise of Christianity demanded more benevolence, and - no less importantly - the supply of slaves began to dwindle. The children of slaves would be born as slaves. Slave who ran away would face branding or possibly even death. The treatment of slaves was totally in the hands of the owner, and usually varied according to their abilities.

3) Knowing that most of the food items listed have to be imported into a city, what would happen to the population of a city in a time of war? Would merchants be able to travel freely when raiders were operating freely in the countryside?

4) Did Constantine make a good decision to move the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople? Why or why not?

HUNS

The Huns came from western China, where they were known as the Xiongnu. They lived in China during the Han Dynasty (200-1 BC). Then they seem to have decided to leave China and look for a better place to live. They divided into two groups, a small group and a big group. The small group went south, towards India. But the main group went north-west to Siberia. These Xiongnu, or Huns, gradually crossed Russia. Like the Persians and the Parthians before them, they may have been driven to move on by bad weather in Siberia, which left them without enough grass for their cows to eat. By 350 AD the Huns were already crossing the steppes toward Europe, pushing the Scythians before them. Various Germanic groups, like the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths, were in turn pushed by the Scythians, and tried to get into the Roman Empire where they might find safety. By 378 AD, for example, the Visigoths were desperate enough to fight and win the battle of Adrianople, which moved them into the Roman Empire.

By the early 400's AD, the Huns had learned something about Roman ways, and had a very strong king named Attila. They invaded the weakened Roman Empire, and threatened much of France (Gaul).

But a great Roman general, Aetius (ah-AY-shuss), made an alliance with the Visigoths who were now living in southern France, and together they beat the Huns in a big battle in 451 AD.

Soon afterwards Attila died, and his three sons split his empire between them. The Huns never again became a strong force, and were gradually assimilated into the Germans and the Slavs.

Visigoths

The Visigoths, like other German peoples, were originally Indo-European. Their language, Gothic, was closely related to German. We first hear of them when they are living in Poland around 100 BC. Soon after that, some of them, along with their relatives the Ostrogoths, seem to have decided to migrate to the south, very gradually and slowly. Probably bad weather at home made it impossible to feed everyone, and so some people left looking for food. They slowly moved south through Slovakia, but stopped when they came up against the Roman Empire, because they could not beat the Roman army. The Visigoths settled along the north side of the Danube river, took up farming and trading with the Romans, and lived there more or less peacefully for several hundred years, until in the 300's AD they began to be pushed southward by new invaders, the Huns.

The Visigoths established a kingdom for themselves within the collapsing Roman Empire in 418 AD. They took over most of south-western France (Aquitaine), a very fertile area which had been thickly settled by the Romans. The Visigoths at first acted more or less as representatives of the Roman government, keeping order for Rome in Aquitaine, but as time went on and Rome got weaker, the Visigoths began to act more on their own account. When the Vandals left Spain for Africa in 429 AD, the Visigoths began to take over Spain as well. They were better administrators than the Vandals had been.

In 509 AD catastrophe struck the Visigothic kingdom in southern France (which is known as the Kingdom of Toulouse). The Franks, who had taken over northern France, made an effort to break through to the Mediterranean under their young king Clovis. One reason that the Visigoths and the Franks did not get along was that the Visigoths were Arian Christians while the Franks were Catholics.

After a big battle at Vouillé, the Franks won, and the Visigoths lost, and their king was killed. The Franks took over most of southern France, and most of the Visigoths moved to Spain, where they founded a new capital city at Toledo (so this kingdom is known as the Kingdom of Toledo).

In Spain the Visigoths fell under the control of the Ostrogoths, because the Visigoths' new king, Amalaric, was only a baby, and his powerful grandfather, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, offered to act as regent for him (to rule for Amalaric until he grew up).

Then soon after Amalaric grew up he was killed, and there was soon a civil war between two men who wanted to be king, Athanagild and Agila. Athanagild, who was losing, asked the Roman Emperor Justinian to help him, and Justinian sent troops right away, who put Athanagild on the throne and killed Agila. But when Athanagild thanked the Romans and said they could go home now, the Romans said no, they were going to stay. For the next seventy years and more, the Visigoths were almost always fighting to try to get the Romans out of Spain.

OSTROGOTHS

The Ostrogoths, like the Visigoths, were originally Indo-European. We first hear of them when they are living in Poland around 100 BC. Soon after that, some of them, along with their relatives the Visigoths, seem to have decided to migrate to the south, very gradually and slowly. Probably bad weather at home made it impossible to feed everyone, and so some people left looking for food. They slowly moved south through Slovakia, and settled along the north side of the Black Sea, to the east of the Visigoths. The Ostrogoths took up farming and trading with the Romans and the Parthians, and lived there more or less peacefully for several hundred years, until in the 300's AD they began to be pushed southward and westward by new invaders, the Huns.

By 476 AD, the Roman Emperors no longer had any practical power in the West. In that year, the last Roman Emperor in the West, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed, and a Hun named Odoacer took charge of what was left of the Western Empire (mainly Italy). Odoacer sent a message to the Roman Emperor in the East, Zeno, telling him that it was no longer necessary to have a Western emperor, thank you very much.

Zeno was not totally happy with this arrangement, and wanted to take back control of Italy. But he had no Roman troops free to go to Italy; they were all needed to defend Constantinople from the Sassanids. So Zeno sent the Arian Ostrogoths, under their king Theodoric, to take Italy back from Odoacer.

The Ostrogoths soon did get rid of Odoacer (and kill him), and then Theodoric effectively became king of Italy, although unlike Odoacer Theodoric was smart enough not to tell Zeno that!

Officially, Theodoric was Zeno's representative in Italy. But he did what he liked. Theodoric ruled a long time, and he did a good job. He even ruled Spain for a time, as regent for the baby king there. But after Theodoric died, his successors were not as strong rulers. Soon Justinian, the Roman Emperor in the East, decided to try to take Italy back again. Justinian first sent his general, Belisarius, to conquer Africa from the Vandals. When Belisarius won there, Justinian told him to reconquer Italy too. But it was harder to reconquer Italy. The Ostrogoths fought back. The Romans did eventually win, but only after twenty years of fighting in Italy had wrecked the farms and houses there.

VANDALS

The Vandals first entered the collapsing Roman Empire in the winter of 409 AD, when they crossed the frozen Rhine river with a group of Alans and Sueves. They were taking advantage of a rebellion within the Empire which kept the Romans from defending themselves well. The Vandals (with the Alans and Sueves) slowly travelled south through Gaul (France), looting and fighting as they went. When they reached the Pyrenees mountains that separate France from Spain, they were actually invited into Spain by one of the rebel leaders, in exchange for helping him with his rebellion.

After this rebellion failed, the Vandals were left on their own in Spain. They took over the southern part of Spain in about 411 AD. A Visigothic attack in 415 AD weakened them but did not destroy them.

By 429 AD the Vandals decided to move to Africa instead of Spain, and ferried all 80,000 of their people across the Straits of Gibraltar in boats. Under their king Gaiseric, the Vandals established a kingdom in Africa, which they used as a base for piracy around the Mediterranean for a hundred years. They set up an Arian church, minted their own coins, and had diplomatic relations with other Mediterranean kingdoms.

In 533, however, the Roman Emperor Justinian sent his general Belisarius to reconquer Africa for Rome. When Belisarius succeeded, that was the end of the Vandals.

Roman Science

Roman scientific achievements are mostly in the areas of medicine and engineering. The Romans invented a lot of new ways to mine for metals like silver and gold and lead. They developed water mills as well for grinding grain. And they were the first people to really use concrete for major building projects. The use of concrete helped them to develop the dome and the barrel vault and the cross vault. They used their vaults to build aqueducts to carry fresh water to towns, and they used their engineering skills to build sewage systems to keep their towns clean and healthy.

Roman Language

The two most common languages in the Roman Empire were Latin and Greek. In English, we still use the alphabet based on the Latin alphabet, in modern Greece, the alphabet is still based on the ancient Greek alphabet. In the world many languages are closely related to Latin, most notably: French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Romanian. English, although it is not derived from Latin, has borrowed many Latin words.

Roman Numerals

The Romans had a different set of numbers from what we use. The basic Roman numbers were:

I – 1 **V**-5 **X**-10 **L**-50 **C**-100 **D**-500 **M**-1000

Roman numerals changed in a different way from the numbers we use:

I = 1

II = 2

III = 3

IV = 4

VI = 6

VIII = 8

IX = 9

XIII = 13

XIV = 14

XVIII = 18

IXX = 19

XL = 50

Words with Latin Origins – Define each word; give modern examples if you can:

Aquatic-

Auditorium-

Coliseum-

Corporation-

Family-

Fort-

Lunatic-

Olive-

Religion-

Republic-

Science-

Senate-

Victory-

Roman Ideas – Define each word. What Replaces these Roman Ideas in Modern Canada?

Aqueduct-

Emperor-

Gladiator-

Legion-

Slave-

Find the Roman Ideas that Exist Today

- 1) A religion that existed in the Roman Empire and still exists today:

- 2) Languages based on Latin:

- 3) Main alphabets used in the Roman Empire. Which alphabet do we use?

- 4) Examples of technology that came from the Roman Empire.

- 5) Write 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 in Roman Numerals

Military Causes

Attacks in the West- Ammianus Marcellinus 360s AD Historian

At the beginning of his reign Valentinian visited the towns and cities on the Danube and the Rhine, then he went to Gaul, which was exposed to the attacks of the Alamanni... He also turned his attention to the Saxons, who had lately rebelled with extreme ferocity, making surprise attacks from every direction, and had penetrated into the inland districts. He destroyed them utterly and seized all the booty which the defeated were carrying off.

The Goths – Ammianus Marcellinus late 4th century Historian

A report spread through the nations of the Goths that a race of men had suddenly descended like a whirlwind from the lofty mountains and were ravaging and destroying everything in their path. The greater part of the population decided to flee and to seek a home far away from the barbarians... The emperor Valens sent several officers to bring these ferocious people and their wagons into our territory. The Goths obtained permission from the Emperor to cross the Danube and to cultivate some land.

Invasions- Ammianus Marcellinus 378 Historian

At this time, as if trumpets were sounding the war-notes throughout the whole Roman world, the most savage people raised themselves and poured across the nearest frontiers.

The Huns - late 4th c. Ammianus Marcellinus Historian

The people of the Huns exceed every degree of savagery... They eat roots of wild plants and the half-raw flesh of any kind of animal.

Constantine's Army – Zosimus, 5th c. Historian

Constantine carried out another measure which laid open to the barbarians the territory subject to the Romans. Constantine destroyed this security by withdrawing the bulk of the troops from the frontiers and posting them in cities, which did not need defence... He also softened the soldiers, who devoted themselves to theatres and luxury.

St. Jerome on Fall of Rome – 5th c. Priest

I was so distracted with the affairs of the western provinces, and especially with the catastrophe at Rome, that as I began to speak I could not find the proper words. For long I kept silent, knowing that this was the time for tears.

St. Jerome on the Capture of Rome – 5th c. Priest

She had been captured – the city by whom the whole world had once been taken captive. After that the brightest of the earthly lights went out, when truly, the very head of the Roman Empire was cut off, when to speak yet more truly, the whole world perished along with a single city.

Internal Causes

Diocletian's Price Controls – an edit placing maximum on prices 4th c.

Who is so hard and so devoid of human feeling that he has not noticed that in commerce immoderate prices are so widespread...aroused by this we have decreed that there be established a maximum price, so when the violence of high prices appears anywhere, greed can be checked by our law.

Diocletian Persecutes Christians – Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea 4th c.

Diocletian commanded that churches be levelled to the ground and the scriptures be burned...not long after he commanded all bishops of the churches to be thrown into prison and forced to worship the pagan gods. The first of the martyrs of Palestine was Procopius who was beheaded. In the course of the second year, the persecutions greatly increased.

Constantine on the Need for Christian Unity- 4th c.

I will confess that I consider it absolutely contrary to divine law that we should overlook such quarrels... For I shall really and fully able to feel secure only when I see all venerating the most holy God with harmonious brotherhood of worship.

Taxation in the Roman Empire - Salvian 44AD Monk

In what respects can our taxes be preferred to those of the Goths and Vandals, or even compared with them? And first, to speak of affection and mutual charity but almost all barbarians, at least those who are of one race and kin, love each other, while the Romans persecute each other.

Sidonius Apollinaris - 454 AD Aristocrat from Gaul

All property he covets he makes a show of buying, but he never thinks of paying, nor does he trouble to furnish himself with deeds, knowing it hopeless to prove a title... His actions are filling the woods with dangerous fugitives from the estates, the churches with scoundrels, the prisons with holy men. He cries the Goths up and the Romans down... Our people are at the last gasp; freedom is almost dead.

Religious Change weakened Rome – Edward Gibbon 18th century Historian

As the happiness of a future life is the great object of religion, we may hear, without surprise or scandal, that the introduction, or at least the abuse, of Christianity had some influence on the decline and fall of the Roman empire. The clergy successfully preached the doctrines of patience and the active virtues of society were discouraged; and the last remains of the military spirit were buried.

Rome Never Fell

Constantine Builds a New Rome – Sozomen 450 AD Historian

The Emperor Constantine greatly improved Byzantium, and made it equal to Rome in power and influence; for when he had settled his empire as he was minded, and had freed himself from foreign foes, he resolved on founding a city which should be called by his own name, and should equal in fame even Rome. He populated it with men of rank and their families, whom he summoned from Rome and from other countries... He named it *Constantinople* and *New Rome*.

East Roman Reconquest of North Africa – Procopius 534AD Historian

Belisarius, upon reaching Constantinople with the last king of the Vandals, captured by and Vandals as prisoners, was counted worthy to receive such honours, as in former times were assigned to those generals of the Romans who had won the greatest and most noteworthy victories. And a period of about six hundred years had now passed since anyone had attained these honours... For he displayed the spoils and slaves from the war in the midst of the city and led a procession which the Romans call a "triumph,"... until he reached the place where the imperial throne is.

Disease in Constantinople – Procopius 542 AD - Historian

In Constantinople which was the capital over the whole Roman Empire every man was wearing much clothing and remaining quietly at home. This was done because there was disease in the Roman Empire at large as well as in Byzantium. And it fell also upon the land of the Persians and visited all the other barbarians besides.

Byzantines learn how to grow silk – Procopius 550AD Historian

About the same time there came from India certain monks; and when they had satisfied Emperor Justinian that the Romans no longer should buy silk from the Persians... or from any other people whatsoever... They brought eggs to Constantinople and... changed them by metamorphosis into worms which feed on the leaves of mulberry. Thus began the art of making silk from that time on in the Roman Empire.

Travelling in Byzantine (E. Roman) Italy – Huneberc 8th c. English Pilgrim

At this point they went on board a ship and crossed over the sea to Naples, where they left the ship in which they had sailed and stayed for two weeks. These cities belong to the Romans: they are in the territory of Benevento, but owe allegiance to the Romans.