

Decline of the Roman Empire

► Gathering the Facts

1. Turn to pages 40–41 in the Atlas. Read the introduction. Then look at picture A and read its caption. Use the information to answer the following questions.

a. What created disorder within the Roman Empire? _____ , _____ , and _____

b. Where did the barbarians who invaded the Roman Empire come from?

c. Who was the last major emperor to rule a united Roman Empire?

What is he known as? _____

d. What happened to the Roman Empire in 395?

e. Which Empire still thrived after 476? _____

► Time and Change

2. Use map B, "Roman Empire Splits Apart," to sequence the events below in chronological order. Write 1 next to the event that occurred first and 5 next to the event that occurred last.

Event

Ranking

a. Constantinople becomes the Roman capital.

b. Plague reaches Roman Empire.

c. Roman Empire becomes divided.

d. Palmyra gains temporary independence.

e. Gaul's temporary independence ends.

► Links Far and Near

3. Read the history question, "What is a barbarian?" How has the meaning of the word barbarian changed?

► People and Cultures

4. Look at picture C and read its caption. Also look at map E, "Barbarian Invasions and Migrations." Use the information to answer the following questions.
- a. When did the Huns begin to migrate west? _____
Where were they from? _____
 - b. The Huns migrated into the territory of which two barbarian groups?
_____ and _____
 - c. Into what region of the Eastern Empire did the Huns migrate in 395?

 - d. Which barbarian groups entered the Western Roman Empire through Germany?
_____, _____, and _____
 - e. Which barbarian group ended up in Britain? _____
 - f. Which barbarian group invaded North Africa and then Italy? _____
 - g. Which two barbarian groups attacked Rome at different times?
_____ and _____
 - h. When did the barbarian invasions of the Western Empire end? _____

► Places, Regions, and Landscapes

5. Look at chart D, "Top 10 Cities, 500 A.D." Rank the cities below from largest to smallest, with 1 being the largest and 10 the being the smallest. Then use map B, "Roman Empire Splits Apart," to circle the cities that were part of the Roman Empire.
- a. Nanjing _____
 - b. Rome _____
 - c. Carthage _____
 - d. Alexandria _____
 - e. Luoyang _____
 - f. Constantinople _____
 - g. Ctesiphon _____
 - h. Teotihuacan _____
 - i. Changan _____
 - j. Antioch _____

Decline of the Roman Empire

Corrupt rulers and constant wars weakened the Roman Empire. By the end of the 400s, only the eastern half of the Empire had survived.

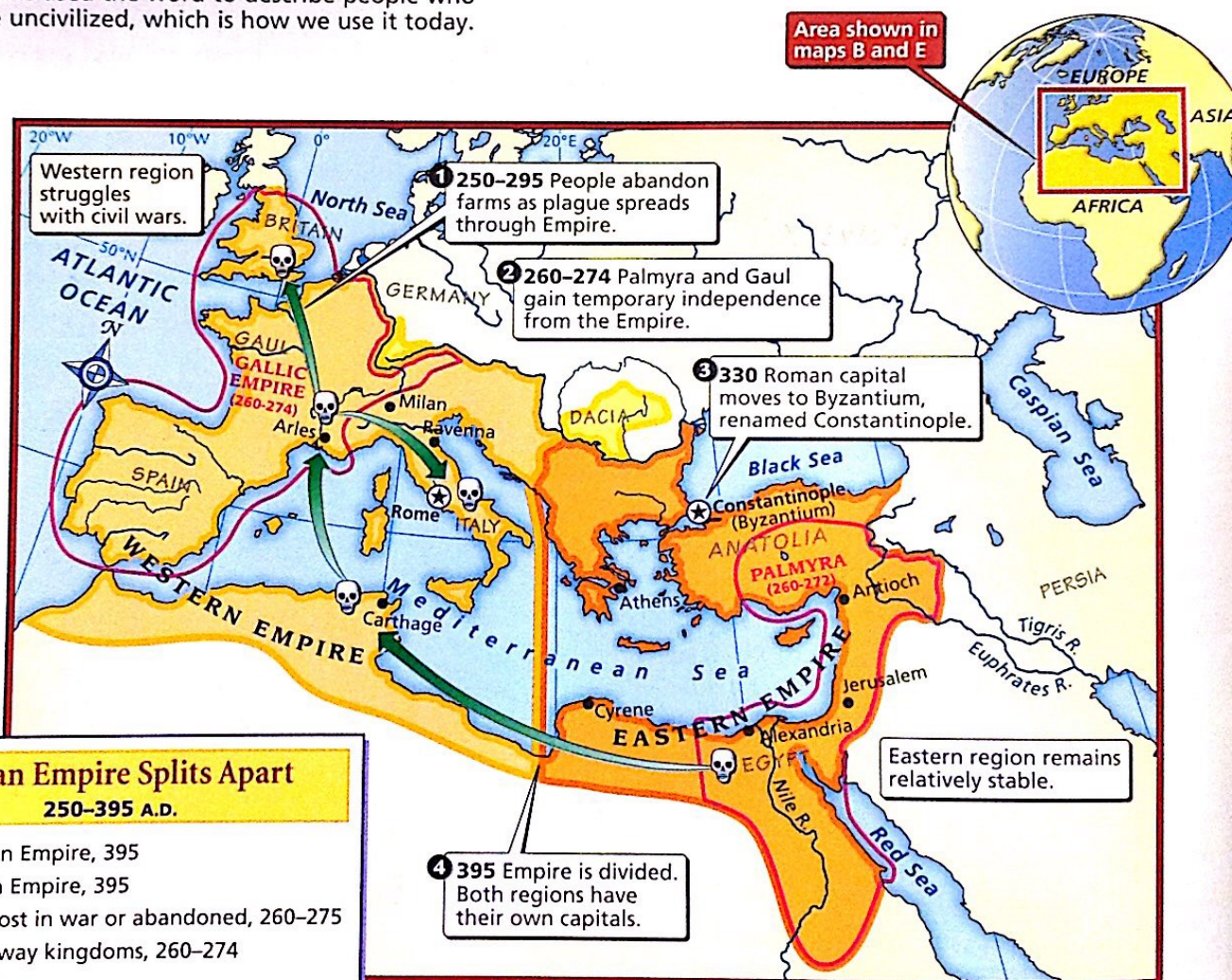
- Civil wars, disease, and famine created disorder throughout the Empire.
- At the same time, migrating barbarians from Europe and Asia invaded the Empire. They claimed land for their own kingdoms.
- In 395 Roman territory was divided into the Western Empire and the Eastern Empire.
- By 476 the western lands were no longer under Roman control. The Eastern Empire continued to thrive.

What is a barbarian?

The word **barbarian** comes from a Greek insult to non-Greek speakers. To the Greeks, other languages were just "bar-bar," or nonsense. The Romans used the word to describe people who were uncivilized, which is how we use it today.



A Constantine, shown here being baptized, is known as the first Christian emperor. He was the last major emperor to rule the united Roman Empire.



B Because the Empire was too large to govern effectively, it was divided into western and eastern regions. Each region was led by its own emperor. The Empire was never reunited.



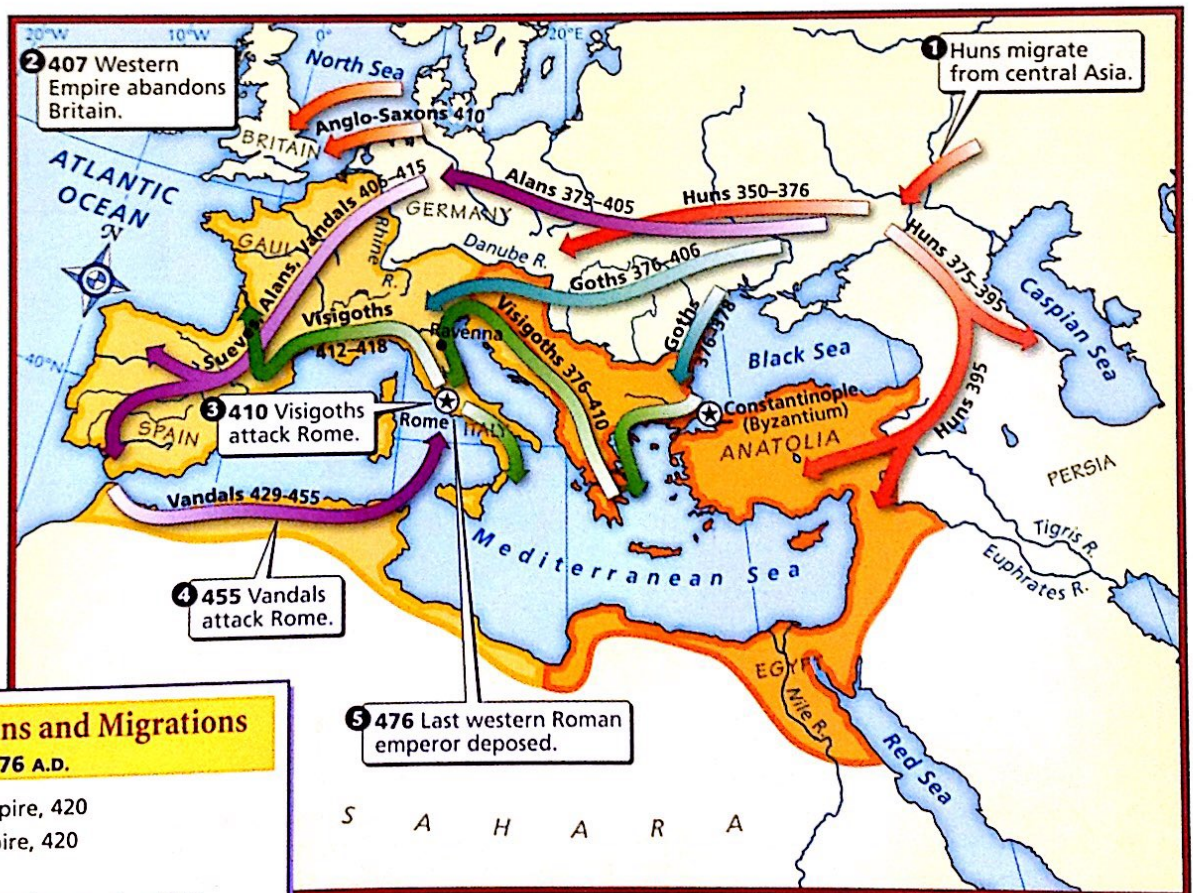
C The barbarian migrations were the greatest military challenge the Empire had ever faced. The Romans fought fiercely against the invaders.



Top 10 Cities, 500 A.D.

Rank	City (Modern Country)	Population
1	Constantinople (Turkey)	900,000
2	Ctesiphon (Iraq)	500,000
3	Luoyang (China)	300,000
4	Nanjing (China)	200,000
5	Antioch (Turkey)	200,000
6	Teotihuacan (Mexico)	175,000
7	Carthage (Tunisia)	150,000
8	Rome (Italy)	150,000
9	Alexandria (Egypt)	100,000
10	Changan (China)	100,000

D By 500 Constantinople had become one of the world's great cities.



Barbarian Invasions and Migrations

350–476 A.D.

- Western Empire, 420
- Eastern Empire, 420
- Capital
- Barbarian invasion or migration
- Culture region

0 400 800 miles
0 400 800 kilometers

E By 476 invaders had conquered most of the Western Roman Empire. The Eastern Roman Empire was stronger and better organized. It continued to resist invaders long after the Western Empire collapsed.