

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Come to Constantinople!

THE BIG PICTURE: After the fall of the Western Roman Empire in A.D. 476, the center of the Roman Empire shifted to the East, to a city called **Constantinople** (previously known as **Byzantium**, now known as **Istanbul**). Yikes, that's a lot of name-changing!

Imagine you are a Roman citizen during this time. It's your job to convince your fellow Romans that the Empire continues...in the East. **Make a flyer, poster, Google slideshow, or another form of advertisement to sell your fellow Romans on the idea of the NEW center of the Roman Empire: Constantinople!** Use wording, artwork, graphics, etc. to be as convincing as possible. (See the sample flyer for ideas!)

The most effective advertising takes the intended audience into consideration, so as you plan your ad, think about what would have been important to Roman citizens. Be sure to appeal to the average Roman citizen and his/her PUSH and PULL reasons for why Constantinople is the best choice for the new center of the Empire.

“PULL” reasons, or things that might pull them toward Constantinople: What did Constantinople have to offer that would PULL Roman citizens toward the East?

“PUSH” reasons: Why would Roman citizens have wanted to leave the Western part of the Roman Empire? What was happening there that might have PUSHED them away from the West? What would they have wanted to preserve, maintain, or protect?

Try to make your advertisement contain BOTH kinds of reasons. To help you organize your ideas and help you compare/contrast the two locations beforehand, consider filling in as much of this chart as you can, and use the ideas in your advertisement. What was it like in each place at this time? The first one has been done as an example.

A.D. 476	Western Roman Empire (Centered in Rome / Italy)	Eastern Roman Empire (Centered in Constantinople / now Istanbul)
Trade/Economy/taxation	<i>Taxes were very high because so many soldiers were needed to try to protect the empire's borders. The economy suffered as invaders attacked and disrupted trade and supply routes.</i>	<i>Even though invaders also threatened the Eastern part of the Empire, fewer soldiers were needed and taxes were lower as a result. Trade routes remained open and the economy was stronger.</i>
Social issues		

Safety/the military		
Leadership/government/politics		
Infrastructure (buildings, water systems, roads, etc.)		
Food, other resources		
Education, the arts, religion		

MORE HELP: If you are not using the National Geographic curriculum, feel free to research and use any resources you have. If you are using **National Geographic**, you might **check these pages in particular for more information:**

p.17 has a map, Roman trade at its height (same map as in the slideshow from class)

p.33 has a summary of the internal factors of the decline of the Western Roman Empire

p. 34 describes how the center shifted from west to east

p. 37 compares conditions in West vs. East. It ends with these great questions: Did the Western Roman Empire fall because of internal failings? Was it brought down by external forces? Or was it simply transformed into something new?