



READING WORLD HISTORY

The Middle Ages: c.500 CE – c.1450 CE



Andrea Iverson



Reading World History 2

The Middle Ages: c. 500 CE – c.1450 CE

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Acquisitions Editor: Anne Taylor
Content Editor: Casey Malarcher
Copy Editor: Jenna Myers
Design: Highline Studio

The authors would like to acknowledge Tracey Blash and Dave Charlton for contributing material to this series.

<http://www.seed-learning.com>

ISBN: 979-8-88668-084-3

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024947074

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
28 27 26 25

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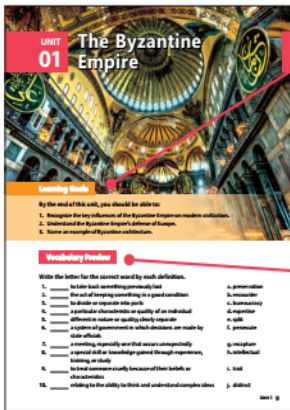
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Introduction

Reading World History is a reading skills series that takes the readers from the birth of ancient civilizations all the way to the modern world. Each book in this four-book series covers a distinct era of world history. The series aims to improve students' reading comprehension skills and expand their knowledge of vocabulary, while exposing them to interesting information about world history. Each of the two reading passages per unit is carefully controlled for vocabulary and is followed by reading comprehension questions. A feature of each unit is the critical thinking questions that follow the second reading passage. Students are encouraged to apply their own understanding and knowledge of the world to what they have read.



Learning Goals

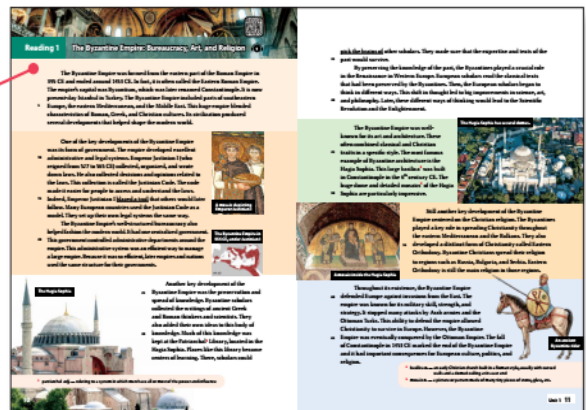
Each unit opens with a list of goals to direct readers in their learning. Students can brainstorm or discuss the answers based on their current knowledge and then check again after completing the unit.

Vocabulary Preview

Students are exposed to words that are featured in the unit. Students can match the definitions to the words alone or with a partner, then check with the whole class.

Reading 1

A double-page spread gives an overview of the unit's historical era or important events. Students can read individually, read along to an audio recording, or take turns reading sections with a partner.





Reading Comprehension 1

Eight multiple choice questions check students' understanding of the reading passage. Question types are labeled so students know what kind of information to look for or think about.

Five true or false questions further confirm students' comprehension of the passage.

Students can answer these individually or in small groups before checking with the whole class. For additional practice, students can create their own additional T/F statements, and then test each other.

Reading Comprehension 1

Read and choose the best answer.

1. **Match** Which of the following best describes the main idea of the passage?
 a. The religious culture of the Byzantine Empire
 b. The decline and fall of Constantinople
 c. The religious wars of the Byzantine Empire
 d. The Byzantine Empire's influence on modern civilization

2. **Match** The Byzantine Empire inherited the characteristics of which cultures?
 a. Persian, Greek, and Chinese
 b. Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Chinese
 c. Persian, Greek, and Hindu
 d. Greek, Chinese, and Persian

3. **Match** What can be inferred about Emperor Justinian I?
 a. He had strong religious beliefs, which he made clear in a code.
 b. He believed the city should be expanded to accommodate more citizens.
 c. He believed that justice for everyone through a legal system was essential.
 d. He felt that Persian, Greek, and Chinese cultures were inferior to Turkish culture.

4. **Match** As used in line 15, "blended" is closest in meaning to
 a. set a pattern for
 b. incorporated into
 c. moved quickly without stopping
 d. worked together to achieve

5. **Match** As used in line 18, "told the backbone of" is closest in meaning to
 a. contained a single part of
 b. defined after others
 c. provided the main support and structure
 d. specifically called for study

6. **Match** What can be inferred about the Hagia Sophia?
 a. It was responsible for the rise of Eastern Orthodoxy.
 b. It was important for both the local and global knowledge.
 c. It was known for its Resurrection in Western Europe.
 d. It was an early example of the Byzantine architectural style.

7. **Match** How did the Byzantine Empire impact the Renaissance?
 a. Renaissance scholars in Europe learned how to preserve books from the Byzantines.
 b. The Byzantines introduced a unique art and architectural style to Western Europe.
 c. The Byzantines taught Western Europeans that legal systems are not perfect.
 d. Renaissance scholars developed new ideas from texts preserved by the Byzantines.

8. **Match** What was a key reason for the Byzantine Empire's fall?
 a. Byzantine technology was too weak to use
 b. The construction of the Hagia Sophia
 c. An invasion by the Turks
 d. The military force of the Ottoman Turks

9. **Match** Check T for true or F for false.
 1. The history of the Byzantine Empire was largely influenced by the Roman Empire. T F
 2. Constantinople is the original name of the capital of the Byzantine Empire. T F
 3. Justinian believed that a comprehensive legal system was essential. T F
 4. Justinian's Code was a collection of laws that were passed down by the Byzantines. T F
 5. The Byzantine Empire began to decline in the 11th century. T F

Reading 2 The Byzantine Empire and the Crusades

Read and choose the best answer.

1. **Match** Which of the following best describes the main idea of the passage?
 a. How the relationship between Islam, Christianity, and Pope Urban II led to the Crusades
 b. How a series of religious wars impacted world history
 c. Why Byzantine soldiers did not fight the Crusades
 d. The role of Christianity in Europe through the efforts of Crusades from Europe

2. **Match** What were the main objectives of the Crusades?
 a. To build holy sanctuaries with modern culture
 b. To take back Jerusalem and other cities from Muslim control
 c. To spread Christianity to the Middle East
 d. To establish a permanent colony in the Middle East

3. **Match** What was the outcome of the Fourth Crusade for the Byzantine Empire?
 a. It brought the empire's defenses.
 b. It left the empire with weak, regular troops.
 c. It led to a permanent alliance with the Crusades.
 d. It resulted in the long-term of the Byzantine Golden Age.

4. **Match** As used in line 20, "tougher in the middle" is closest in meaning to
 a. being more stable in the area of stability
 b. deterioration of the middle
 c. continued and unaffected by the middle
 d. affected negatively by both sides of the conflict

5. **Match** What can be inferred about the Crusades?
 a. The Crusades did not have the support of the Catholic Church because of their motives.
 b. The Crusades did not achieve their intended goals but contributed to the East-West divide.
 c. The Renaissance resulted in the resurgence of the Crusades and led to the fall of the Byzantine Empire.
 d. The Byzantine Empire did not support the Crusades and found them harmful.

Critical Thinking

Choose one and discuss it with your classmates.

1. Why were many men fought for control of Constantinople? What makes this city so important?

2. Are the Crusades usually thought of as a positive or a negative event? Why?

Reading 2

A second, shorter reading passage focuses on a specific aspect of history related to the main passage. Topics in this section may include information about historical persons, wars or battles, inventions, or other events.

Students can read individually, read along to an audio recording, or take turns reading sections in small groups.

Critical Thinking

These two questions are designed to encourage students to apply their own knowledge and experiences as they think beyond the content of the unit.

Reading Comprehension 2

The second reading passage is followed by 5 multiple choice reading comprehension questions to check students' understanding.



Reading Extension

Each unit ends with an activity designed to extend or consolidate the content of the unit. Examples of activities include reading passages, summary completion, matching information, and ordering information in chronological order.

Students can answer these individually or with a partner checking with the whole class.



World History Timeline

A timeline highlighting key people and events from each book puts the information in the series into context. This timeline assists students in developing their knowledge of the global historical events that are important to know.



UNIT 01

The Byzantine Empire

Learning Goals











By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Recognize the key influences of the Byzantine Empire on modern civilization.
2. Understand the Byzantine Empire's defense of Europe.
3. Name an example of Byzantine architecture.

Vocabulary Preview

Write the letter for the correct word by each definition.



- | | |
|---|-----------------|
|  1. _____ to take back something previously lost | a. preservation |
|  2. _____ the act of keeping something in a good condition | b. encounter |
|  3. _____ to divide or separate into parts | c. bureaucracy |
|  4. _____ a particular characteristic or quality of an individual | d. expertise |
|  5. _____ different in nature or quality; clearly separate | e. split |
|  6. _____ a system of government in which decisions are made by state officials | f. persecute |
|  7. _____ a meeting, especially one that occurs unexpectedly | g. recapture |
|  8. _____ a special skill or knowledge gained through experience, training, or study | h. intellectual |
|  9. _____ to treat someone cruelly because of their beliefs or characteristics | i. trait |
|  10. _____ relating to the ability to think and understand complex ideas | j. distinct |

Reading 1

The Byzantine Empire: Bureaucracy, Art, and Religion



The Byzantine Empire was formed from the eastern part of the Roman Empire in 395 CE and ended around 1453 CE. In fact, it is often called the Eastern Roman Empire. The empire's capital was Byzantium, which was later renamed Constantinople. It is now present-day Istanbul in Turkey. The Byzantine Empire included parts of southeastern Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and the Middle East. This huge empire blended characteristics of Roman, Greek, and Christian cultures. Its civilization produced several developments that helped shape the modern world.

One of the key developments of the Byzantine Empire was its form of government. The empire developed excellent administrative and legal systems. Emperor Justinian I (who reigned from 527 to 565 CE) collected, organized, and wrote down laws. He also collected decisions and opinions related to the laws. This collection is called the Justinian Code. The code made it easier for people to access and understand the laws. Indeed, Emperor Justinian I blazed a trail that others would later follow. Many European countries used the Justinian Code as a model. They set up their own legal systems the same way.

The Byzantine Empire's well-structured bureaucracy also helped fashion the modern world. It had one centralized government. This government controlled administrative departments around the empire. This administrative system was an efficient way to manage a large empire. Because it was so efficient, later empires and nations used the same structure for their governments.



A mosaic depicting Emperor Justinian I



The Byzantine Empire in 555 CE, under Justinian I

555 AD

The Hagia Sophia



Another key development of the Byzantine Empire was the preservation and spread of knowledge. Byzantine scholars collected the writings of ancient Greek and Roman thinkers and scientists. They also added their own ideas to this body of knowledge. Much of this knowledge was kept at the Patriarchal¹ Library, located in the Hagia Sophia. Places like this library became centers of learning. There, scholars could

¹ patriarchal *adj.* — relating to a system in which men have all or most of the power and influence



pick the brains of other scholars. They made sure that the expertise and texts of the past would survive.

By preserving the knowledge of the past, the Byzantines played a crucial role in the Renaissance in Western Europe. European scholars read the classical texts that had been preserved by the Byzantines. Then, the European scholars began to think in different ways. This shift in thought led to big improvements in science, art, and philosophy. Later, these different ways of thinking would lead to the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment.

The Byzantine Empire was well-known for its art and architecture. These often combined classical and Christian traits in a specific style. The most famous example of Byzantine architecture is the Hagia Sophia. This large basilica² was built in Constantinople in the 6th century CE. The huge dome and detailed mosaics³ of the Hagia Sophia are particularly impressive.

The Hagia Sophia has several domes.



A mosaic inside the Hagia Sophia

Still another key development of the Byzantine Empire centered on the Christian religion. The Byzantines played a key role in spreading Christianity throughout the eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans. They also developed a distinct form of Christianity called Eastern Orthodoxy. Byzantine Christians spread their religion to regions such as Russia, Bulgaria, and Serbia. Eastern Orthodoxy is still the main religion in those regions.

Throughout its existence, the Byzantine Empire defended Europe against invasions from the East. The empire was known for its military skill, strength, and strategy. It stopped many attacks by Arab armies and the Ottoman Turks. This ability to defend the empire allowed Christianity to survive in Europe. However, the Byzantine Empire was eventually conquered by the Ottoman Empire. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 CE marked the end of the Byzantine Empire and it had important consequences for European culture, politics, and religion.



An ancient Byzantine rider

² basilica *n.* — an early Christian church built in a Roman style, usually with curved walls and a domed ceiling at its east end

³ mosaic *n.* — a picture or pattern made of many tiny pieces of stone, glass, etc.