

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The fall of the Roman Empire

## *A Century of Crisis*

Headline	Problem(s)	Suggested Reforms (How to fix problem)	Actual Reform
"The Bottom Has Fallen Out from Under Us"			
"Who do you pledge your loyalty too?"			
"Food Drive"			
"Attention Loyal Patriots of Rome"			

# Emperors Attempt Reforms

Diocletian

Constantine

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# The Western Empire Crumbles

370- 410 AD

444-452 AD

476

# The Fallen Times

## "A true look at Ancient Rome..."

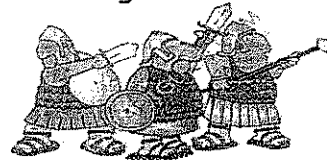
### The Bottom Has Fallen Out from Under Us

Well Rome, it is quite a sad moment for our economy now. Pirates have been seizing our ships in the Mediterranean and enemies on our boarders are willing to stop at nothing to harm our merchants. With an inability to get to our foreign trading partners or further expand our empire we have reached a new low for our resource supply. There is barely any gold or silver left in the entire Empire. We should be weary of whether or not the government will be able to continue printing the silver coins which have helped to make trade in our Empire most efficient.



### Who do you pledge your loyalty too?

There is a terrible problem in our nation. It seems as though the patriots have disappeared. Gone are the days where loyalty was pledged to the state. Instead men are loyal only to their commanders who engage in civil wars to obtain the right to the throne. We must not forget however that our Empire is under constant threat from foreign enemies. The government must do something to ensure the safety of our Empire, if not our city from the threat of foreign invasion.



### Food Drive

Please bring any food you can possibly spare during these difficult times to the public Forum. Your fellow Romans in the countryside are barely holding on. With overworked soil and destroyed farmland there are severe food shortages.



### Attention Loyal Patriots of Rome

Please do not forget there will be a meeting at the public Forum to discuss affairs of the State.

Please make every effort to attend; our future is at stake if we do not increase our attendance!



## Different Perspectives: Using Primary and Secondary Sources

### The Fall of the Roman Empire

In the fifth century, historians and others have argued over the empire's fall. They have attributed it to a variety of causes, coming both from within and outside the empire. The following excerpts are examples of the differing opinions.

#### A SECONDARY SOURCE

##### Edward Gibbon

In 1789, Gibbon published *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. In this passage, he explains that a major cause of the fall was that the empire was just too large.

The decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness. Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; and, as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial supports, the stupendous fabric tottered to the pressure of its own weight. The story of its ruin is simple and obvious; and instead of inquiring how the Roman Empire was destroyed, we should rather be enquiring how it had subsisted so long.

#### B SECONDARY SOURCE

##### Arther Ferrill

In his book *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (1986), Arther Ferrill argues that the fall of Rome was a military collapse.

In fact the Roman Empire of the West did fall. Not every aspect of the life of Roman subjects was changed by that, but the fall of Rome as a political entity was one of the major events of the history of Western man. It will simply not do to call that fall a myth or to ignore its historical significance merely by focusing on those aspects of Roman life that survived the fall in one form or another. At the opening of the fifth century a massive army, perhaps more than 200,000 strong, stood at the service of the Western emperor and his generals. The destruction of Roman military power in the fifth century was the obvious cause of the collapse of Roman government in the West.

#### C SECONDARY SOURCE

##### Finley Hooper

In this passage from his *Roman Realities* (1967), Hooper argues against the idea of a "fall."

The year was 476. For those who demand to know the date Rome fell, that is it. Others will realize that the fall of Rome was not an event but a process. Or, to put it another way, there was no fall at all—ancient Roman civilization simply became something else, which is called medieval. [It evolved into another civilization, the civilization of the Middle Ages.]

#### D PRIMARY SOURCE

##### St. Jerome

This early Church leader did not live to see the empire's end, but he vividly describes his feelings after a major event in Rome's decline—the attack and plunder of the city by Visigoths in 410.

It is the end of the world . . . Words fail me. My sobs break in . . . The city which took captive the whole world has itself been captured.

#### Document-Based QUESTIONS

1. Compare the reasons for the fall of Rome given in Sources A and B. How might they be considered similar?
2. What became of Rome according to Source C? Do you agree or disagree with that conclusion?
3. Source D is different from the other sources. How?