

Name: _____

**The Fall of Great Empires
Document Based Question**

Historical Context:

Throughout history empires such as the **Roman** and **Byzantine** faced various problems that led to their decline. The decline of these empires influenced changes in societies and regions.

Task: Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of global history, answer the questions that follow each document. Your answers to the questions will help you write your introduction and first body paragraph, in which you will be asked to:

Select one empire mentioned in the historical context and for **each**

- **Identify** and **describe** problems that lead to the empire's decline.
- Discuss the **effects** of these problems within the empire.
- Discuss how the decline of this empire **influenced changes** in a society and/or outside the empire.

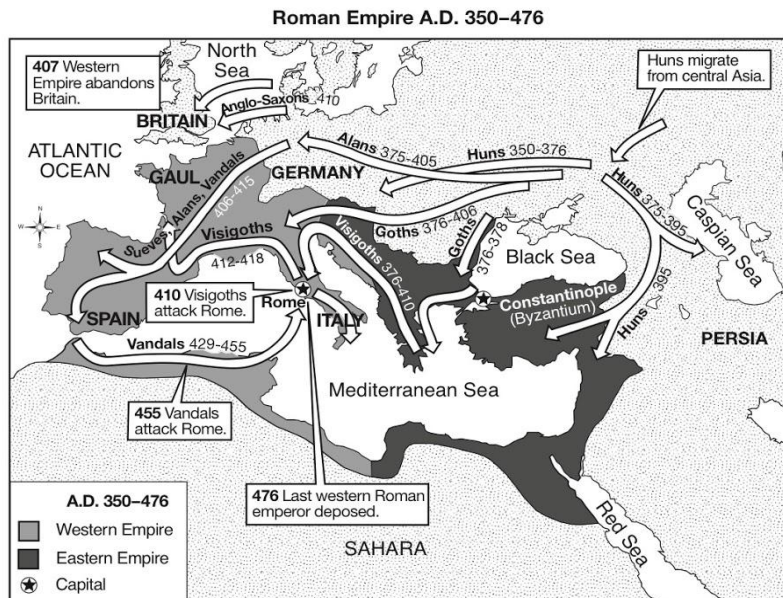
Chart Outline:

Thesis:

Part A
Short-Answer Questions

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.

Document 1



1 Based on the information shown on this map, state **one** problem that helped bring about the decline of the Roman Empire. [1]

Score

[Outside Information] Identify and describe problems within the Roman army from 350-476 AD.

Document 2

... By the middle of the second century Italy [within the Roman Empire] was in a state of decline. By the time of Diocletian, at the opening of the fourth century, decay was apparent throughout the empire. Commerce had largely disappeared owing to the lack of customers, to piracy on the seas, and to insecurity of the roads on land. Generally speaking, purchasing power at that time was confined to the public officials, to the army officers, and to the great landowners. Trade in the everyday objects of daily use had all but disappeared, but trade in luxuries prospered. The cities in the west, omitting the places where government centered, were usually in decline; their commercial and industrial classes had disappeared, the old traders having been replaced by the traveling eastern merchant, of whom the Syrian was the most notorious. Foreign trade was sharply curtailed. At various times the government attempted to prohibit the export of various commodities, among them wine, oil, grain, salt, arms, iron, and gold. With this curbing of exports there was also an effort made to control certain imports such as is evidenced by the state monopoly in silk. These two movements hampered commercial contracts outside the empire and all but killed what was left of foreign trade....

Source: Louis C. West, "The Economic Collapse of the Roman Empire," *The Classical Journal*, November 1932

2 According to Louis C. West, what were **two** economic problems the Roman Empire faced during its period of decline? [2]

(1) _____

_____ Score

(2) _____

_____ Score

[Outside Information] What do you know or remember about Emperor Diocletian?

Document 3

... As western Europe fell to the Germanic invasions, imperial power shifted to the Byzantine Empire, that is, the eastern part of the Roman Empire, with its capital at Constantinople. The eastern provinces of the former Roman Empire had always outnumbered those in the west. Its civilization was far older and it had larger cities, which were also more numerous than in the west...

Source: Steven Kreis, *The History Guide: Lectures on Ancient and Medieval European History*, Lecture 17, History Guide online

3 According to Steven Kreis, what was **one** change that resulted from the fall of the western half of the Roman Empire? [1]

Score

[Outside Information] What do you know or remember about Emperor Constantine?

[Outside Information] How did the political split of the Roman Empire affect religion?
