



# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **10th Grade** | Unit 3

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# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY 1003

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# THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

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## Introduction

The term *medieval* refers to anything that is concerned with the Middle Ages. The name *Middle Ages* was given by Renaissance men to describe the years from the fall of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the Renaissance. At that time the term *Middle Ages* was meant as an insult, as a reference to a time of ignorance, a sort of “Dark Ages” that immediately preceded the Renaissance. Later historians, scholars, and archaeologists have proved these men wrong. The term *Middle Ages*, or *medieval period*, remains; but it now stands for a time rich in art, culture, architecture, and history.

History is a record of people and events from the past, a record of the life of humanity on earth. Because history is a record of man, it cannot be separated into neat categories as you would divide a pie into eight perfectly even segments. The history of man is much more complex.

Nothing that happens affects only itself. Every event, every person fits into a complex pattern of events which form the large picture of the history of the world. Certain major events, certain important people stand out; but these men and events are linked to the rest of mankind and to the historical setting in which they lived.

Historians try to divide history into neat, well-defined periods of time. They will divide world history, for example, into the Ancient World, the Classical World, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and so on, until they reach the present day. Few of them, however, will agree on the precise dates for the beginning and the end of any of these time periods. The reason for this lack of agreement is the nature of life itself: Nothing happens all at once. Life does not stop on December 31 of one year, and begin all over in a different manner on January 1 of the next. The resolutions or decisions that are made may eventually change the way of life, but nothing happens with the mere turning of a calendar page.

How, then, are the Middle Ages set off in time? The Renaissance scholars would say that they begin with the fall of the Roman Empire and end with the beginnings of the Renaissance. This definition is perhaps still the best one. However, historians disagree on the precise date of the fall of the Western Empire, some will date the fall about the year A.D. 376 when the barbarians began a serious move into Roman territory. Others will say that the Western Empire continued a gradual decline until around the year A.D. 800. Many others will propose key dates in between these two. In this LIFEPAC® you will compromise and speak of the beginning of the Middle Ages as about the year A.D. 500.

The same problem arises with the closing dates. The Renaissance began anywhere from the mid-1200s to the 1400s, depending on the country. The full changes in society, government, and the church that led to the mental attitude and political climate of the Renaissance did not occur in an instant. In this LIFEPAC you will consider the close of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance to be just before 1500. Thus we will consider the dates of the Middle Ages to be 500 to 1500.

## Objectives

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAAC. When you have finished this LIFEPAAC, you should be able to:

1. Explain why dates for the beginning and end of the Middle Ages cannot be clearly established.
2. Identify the barbarian invaders.
3. Explain the changes brought to Europe by the Germanic barbarians.
4. Describe the Germanic ideas of government and law and their influence on future systems of government and law.
5. Explain the role of the Eastern Empire in the sixth century.
6. Identify some of the early church fathers and Christian writers and missionaries.
7. Explain the Arab invasions and the rise of Islam.
8. Explain why Charlemagne and Alfred the Great were the best leaders of their time.
9. Describe the effects of Charlemagne and Alfred's attempts to renew and preserve learning.
10. Trace the beginnings of modern European countries.
11. Identify the effects of the Viking invasions.
12. Explain the state of the Byzantine Empire, and the Islamic Empire at this time.
13. Describe the role of the church, and the developments that led to the break between the eastern and Roman sections of the church.
14. Explain feudalism, manorialism, chivalry and the rise of the town.
15. Describe the overall effects of the re-establishment of trade in Europe.
16. Explain why strong monarchies developed in France and England, but did not develop in Germany or Italy.
17. Identify the role of the Roman Church, and the church-state problems that led to the loss of political power by the church.
18. Describe the decline of the Byzantine Empire and the rise of new eastern empires.

# 1. THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

The period of the Middle Ages can itself be divided into several eras. Some historians will speak of Early, High, and Late Middle Ages referring to the beginnings of the medieval world, to peak of medieval civilization, and to the decline of the medieval way of life that overlaps the start of the Renaissance. Again, not all historians will agree on the dates for each of these periods of time.

In this section you will study the barbarian invasions which changed not only the empire, but the political and economic face of most of Europe and Asia, as well as parts of Africa and the Middle East. You will study the role of the Christian church at this time as well as the rise of a new religious leader, Muhammad, whose followers invaded Africa and parts of Europe. In studying all of these, you will cover about four hundred years of history from the late fourth century to the eighth century.

## Section Objectives

**Review these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Explain why dates for the beginning and end of the Middle Ages cannot be clearly established.
2. Identify the barbarian invaders.
3. Explain the changes brought to Europe by the Germanic barbarians.
4. Describe the Germanic ideas of government and law and their influence on future systems of government and law.
5. Explain the role of the Eastern Empire in the sixth century.
6. Identify some of the early church fathers and Christian writers and missionaries.
7. Explain the Arab invasions and the rise of Islam.

## Vocabulary

**Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.**

**caliph**  
**infidel**  
**Sunnites**

**comitatus**  
**nomad**  
**synods**

**compensation**  
**Shiites**  
**witan**

**Note:** All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAK appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

## BARBARIAN TRIBES

### Tribes near the Atlantic

Celts, Gauls

### Eastern European Tribes

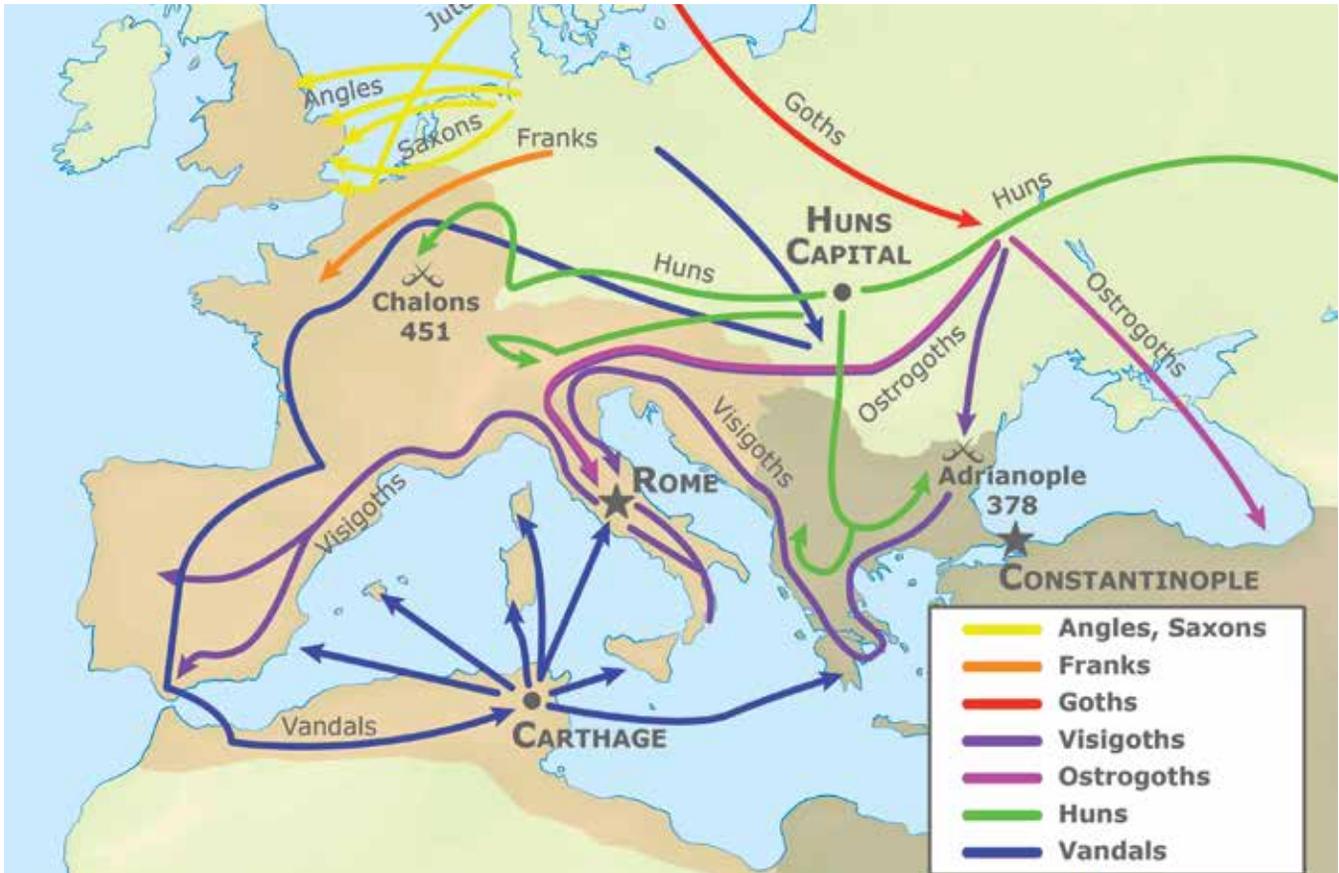
Slavs

### Asiatic Tribes

Huns, Magyars, Mongols, Bulgars

### Germanic Tribes

Angles, Saxons, Sueves, Alemanni, Franks, Goths—[Ostrogoths (East Goths), Visigoths (West Goths)], Vandals, Lombards, Burgundians



| Major Barbarian Invasions Second to Sixth Centuries

## BARBARIAN INVASIONS

Part of the decline of the Western Roman Empire was due to the vast numbers of barbarians migrating from one section of Europe and Asia to another. Some of these same barbarians had been hired by Rome as mercenary soldiers to keep order in the provinces. To understand the barbarian invasions and the lasting effect that they had on the formation of Europe, it is necessary to learn just who these barbarians were and why they moved across Europe as they did.

The word barbarian, *barbarus* in Latin, was used by the Romans to describe all the tribes outside the boundaries of the empire. These uncivilized tribes were generally **nomadic** peoples. A list and a brief look at of some of the major barbarian tribes may help to put this broad group of humanity into perspective.

**The Germanic Tribes.** In the history of Rome, the Germanic tribes caused the most difficulty. Rome tried several times to conquer the tribes beyond the Danube frontier. Often in battles such as the one of Teutoburg Forest in A.D. 9, Roman legions were soundly defeated.

Times of peace between the Germanic tribes and Rome led to cultural intermingling and to gradual movement of small groups of Germans into the empire, to hunt, to farm, or to settle. This gradual migration combined with the large numbers of Germanic soldiers in the Roman army led to a full-scale invasion in the fourth century.

The invasion was the result of another massive migration of people. The Huns in Asia began to move toward the West, fiercely attacking all the

tribes in their path. They crossed the Volga River and attacked the Ostrogoths and conquered Ostrogoth territory in Eastern Europe. In the year 376 the Visigoths and the few remaining Ostrogoths asked for and received permission to enter the empire and to settle under its protection. When broken promises led to a landless, starving people, the Visigoths struck back at Rome. In 378, they defeated the Romans and killed the emperor, Valens, in a battle at Adrianople. This battle left the empire defenseless long enough for further Germanic tribes such as the Franks, the Vandals, and the Burgundians to migrate into empire territory.

Theodosius I made peace with the Visigoths and they became Roman allies in 382. They kept the peace until the death of Theodosius in 395. In 395 they proclaimed Alaric their king and after years of strife took and sacked Rome in 410. The Visigoths then went on to conquer southern Gaul (modern France) in 412 and the Vandals on the Iberian peninsula (modern Spain) in 415. The kingdom of the Visigoths endured until the conquest of Gaul in 507 by the Franks from the north. The remaining kingdom fell to the Arabs from the south in the eighth century.

The Romans and the Germanic tribes joined forces briefly in the fifth century to fight a common enemy, the Huns. Attila, a young Hun, had spurred the Huns to action after an interim of peace. Attila was called “The Scourge of God” because he brutally killed and pillaged wherever he went. He and his men threatened both Romans and Germans by his raids into Gaul and Italy. In the year 451 Attila was defeated by an army of Romans and Germans from different tribes. Attila’s death in 453 scattered the Huns.

Germanic kingdoms were being established in nearly all of the Western European empire. In Britain (England), the Angles and the Saxons had begun to invade the island as soon as Rome left it in 450, establishing small loosely organized kingdoms. Odoacer (or Odovacer), a commander in the Roman army, was hoping for a kingdom of his own. This Germanic mercenary

added Rome to the list of Germanic Kingdoms when he deposed the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus, in 476, and became the first Germanic ruler of Rome.

Freed from the wars with the Huns by the death of Attila, the Ostrogoths established a settlement in the empire. They elected Theodoric their king and began to push eastward. The eastern Emperor however, fearing battles with the Ostrogoths, urged Theodoric to move into Italy and to depose Odoacer. This deposition was accomplished in 493, with Odoacer and Theodoric officially sharing power. However, before long, Theodoric had Odoacer and his son murdered, and Theodoric the Ostrogoth became both king of the Goths and of Italy. His rule was peaceful and he brought prosperity to his kingdom and its capital, Ravenna, Italy. This peace lasted until the emperor Justinian reconquered Italy for a short time in the sixth century.

The Vandals migrated perhaps the farthest of all tribes. They came from the areas of modern Hungary and Romania where they had stopped in the third century. They began to migrate westward in the fifth century and managed to move through Gaul into Spain by the year 409. When Spain was conquered by the Visigoths, the Vandals moved into southern Spain. From Spain they moved into Northern Africa led by Gaiseric, capturing all of the Roman territory in Africa by 439. In 455 they raided and sacked Rome. The Vandal kingdom in North Africa was built around control of Mediterranean trade. Since the Vandals were Arian Christians, they persecuted any Christians who were not Arians. The North African Vandal kingdom was destroyed in 533 by the Byzantine army of the Eastern Empire.

**Germanic kingdoms.** The Germanic kingdoms have several similarities. Great warriors were chosen as kings. Many took titles, such as *Caesar* or *Augustus*, reminiscent of Roman rulers. Most had a pagan background, but had become allied to the Christians, especially the Christian bishops who had both political and religious power after



| Barbarian Kingdoms about A.D. 528

the fall of Rome. Many were Arian Christians, believers in the Arian heresy.

The kings ruled their people and surrounded themselves with a group of warriors known as the **witan** in Germanic languages, or the **comitatus** in Latin. Being a member of the *comitatus* meant swearing complete loyalty to the king in everything. In return for this loyalty, the king would provide for the needs of the members, including paying their debts or legal fines. At times, kings would give land to the best warriors so that these warriors could support some of the costs of war.

The system of law and justice in these Germanic kingdoms was predominately ancient tribal law

with some elements of the Roman legal system. Tribal justice treated all crimes as disputes between individuals. Three methods of resolution were used depending on the type of crime involved. The first method was **compensation**. If a man, for example, killed another man, the dead man's family could demand compensation for the crime. The killer would have to pay the price determined by law. The family may also decide to kill the murderer, but generally disputes were settled by compensation. The second method was trial by ordeal or by personal combat. In this case, the person accused of a crime could prove his innocence by enduring a painful test or by defeating an opponent in combat. The third method was the swearing of

a solemn oath. The accused man would swear solemnly that he was innocent and would usually bring friends called “oath-helpers” to attest to his honesty.

Three Germanic kingdoms influenced the development of early Europe more than others. These three kingdoms were the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy, the Frankish kingdom in Gaul, and the Anglo-Saxon kingdom in England.

**Ostrogothic kingdom.** When Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, deposed Odoacer and established his kingdom, he set up his capital in Ravenna. He modeled his capital after Constantinople and built many public buildings. Theodoric also attracted scholars like the philosopher Boethius and the historian Cassiodorus to his court.

Theodoric was not the typical Germanic king. His life in the East and his fondness for Roman customs made his reign more Roman than Germanic. Theodoric’s officials were given Roman titles. Roman laws were preserved and enforced. Germanic military power and systems, however, were preserved.

**The Frankish kingdom.** The Franks had not been as greatly influenced by the Romans as the Ostrogoths had been. The Frankish leader, Clovis, who ruled from 481 to 511, established a Frankish kingdom in what is now modern France. He was most likely converted to Christianity when he defeated the Alemanni in 496, just three years after he married a Christian princess. Clovis imitated Roman customs and called himself “Augustus.” He also tried to establish a landed nobility like that of Rome, hoping that his warriors would become refined.

Clovis considered himself a champion of Christianity and fought the pagan tribes and the heretics. He is credited with establishing Catholicism in Western Europe. Clovis was the first German king to become a Roman Catholic. The other Germanic kings were Arian Christians. Clovis used this religious difference as a reason to attack the Arian Visigoths and the other Arian tribes. Clovis also tried to establish a written law

and a stable government. After Clovis’ death power struggles threatened the kingdom, but the close band of warriors and bishops managed to keep the kingdom whole for at least fifty years.

**Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.** After the Romans left Britain, several Germanic and Celtic tribes tried to conquer Britain. The Angles, Saxons, Frisians, and Jutes captured most of southeastern Britain. The Celts, Picts, Scots, and Welsh held the north and west. During this period the legends about King Arthur, noble leader of the Britons, began.

A culture was beginning to take shape from the Romans who remained in Britain, from the Germanic and Celtic invaders, and from the early Christian missionaries. An insight into the culture that had developed by the seventh century was gained when archaeologists uncovered a burial ship at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk, England, in 1939. The ship dates to sometime between 650 and 670 and is believed to be the burial ship of either King Anna or King Aethelhere. The ship was a memorial to a great man and contained many treasures both Christian and pagan, indicating that the man being honored was a Christian. Many of the weapons, helmets, and artifacts found at Sutton Hoo resemble those described in the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*.

Early Anglo-Saxon England was composed of native Britons, of Angles and Saxons who first came to Britain in the fifth century by invitation of Vortigern, the British king. Vortigern needed the military to defeat the Picts and Scots who were invading from the north. The Anglo-Saxons did aid him, but they had no intentions of leaving Britain. Later, a tribe called the Jutes, invaded Britain. By the late sixth century, England was divided into Kent (Jutes), Sussex and Wessex (Saxons), East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria (Angles).

These individual kingdoms were styled after the Germanic customs. The *comitatus* relationship and the virtues of the good Germanic king are frequent themes in Anglo-Saxon poetry of this time.



**Complete the following statements.**

- 1.1 Three influential Germanic kingdoms were a. \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ , and c. \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.2 The *Scourge of God* was the name given to \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.3 The three methods of determining guilt or innocence in the Germanic system were  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ , b. \_\_\_\_\_ , and  
c. \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.4 Many of the Germanic tribes were \_\_\_\_\_ Christians.

**Match the following items.**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1.5 _____ Clovis      | a. Asiatic tribe                        |
| 1.6 _____ Vortigern   | b. king of Ostrogoths                   |
| 1.7 _____ Valens      | c. Vandal leader                        |
| 1.8 _____ Alaric      | d. established Frankish kingdom         |
| 1.9 _____ Theodoric   | e. deposed Roman emperor in 476         |
| 1.10 _____ Gaiseric   | f. eastern European tribe               |
| 1.11 _____ Odoacer    | g. king of the Visigoths                |
| 1.12 _____ Theodosius | h. Roman emperor killed by Visigoths    |
| 1.13 _____ Slavs      | i. invited Angles and Saxons to England |
| 1.14 _____ Huns       | j. <i>The Scourge of God</i>            |
|                       | k. made peace with the Visigoths        |

**Answer the following question.**

- 1.15 How do the three Germanic kingdoms described differ from each other? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



| Eastern Roman Empire of Justinian A.D. 562

## EASTERN EMPIRE

During this time of invasion in the West, the Eastern Empire prospered. The location of the capital, Constantinople, on the major trade and shipping routes made it economically prosperous. A well trained army, an effective diplomatic policy, and people united by religion and culture kept the empire politically and culturally sound.

In the sixth century, the Emperor Justinian the Great, who ruled from 527 to 565, tried to regain much of the old Roman Empire. His general, Belisarius, reconquered all of North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and southern Spain.

Justinian is perhaps most famous for his codification of Roman law. This sorting out and collecting of Roman laws was called the *Corpus*

*Juris Civilis*. After Justinian's death in 565, the empire was under attack from all sides. The Germanic tribes as well as the Asiatic tribes and the Slavs began to eat away the empire of Justinian. The Lombards regained territory in the north of Italy in 568. The Visigoths reconquered Spain. The Avars from Asia and the Slavs constantly attacked from the Balkans. The Persians began to invade Palestine, Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia.

Two strong emperors, Heraclius I (610-641) and Leo III (ruled 717-741), regained part of the territory and strength of Justinian's empire. After Leo III and his successors, his son and grandson, the empire, now called the Byzantine Empire, began to decline once more.



### Complete the following sentences.

- 1.16 The emperor who codified Roman law in the *Corpus Juris Civilis* was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.17 Another name for the Eastern Empire was the \_\_\_\_\_ Empire.
- 1.18 Justinian's successful general was \_\_\_\_\_.

## THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The fourth through the eighth centuries saw some of the great church fathers, the beginnings of Western monasticism, and the spread of Christianity.

**Church fathers.** Some of the greatest church-fathers lived at a time when the empire was declining and the invasions were rampant. Four of these men are sometimes called “Doctors” of the Church. These four men were Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory the Great. Ambrose (340-397) was a Roman chosen to be bishop of Milan. He was a statesman and a writer. His hymns, sermons, and religious writings were a blend of Christian and classical ideas.

Jerome (340-420) has already been mentioned as the monk who translated the Bible into Latin at the Pope's request. Augustine (354-430) is perhaps the most famous church father. He became a Christian, studied under Ambrose, and wrote many works that have influenced Christians, especially the *Confessions*, *The City of God*, and a work *Concerning the Trinity*. Gregory the Great (540-604) was an important Roman official when he decided to become a monk in 574. He became Pope in 590 and, as such, was responsible for the spread and control of Christianity in Britain, Gaul, North Africa, Spain, and Italy.

Other important Christians lived at this time. One was the historian Cassiodorus (490-583) whose textbooks in the arts and the sciences were used throughout the Middle Ages. Another was the philosopher Boethius (480-524) who summarized the classics and who

wrote about Christian faith. While Boethius was imprisoned by Theodoric, he wrote his most famous work, the *Consolation of Philosophy*, a popular work throughout the Middle Ages. Gregory of Tours (538-593) and Isidore of Seville (560-636) were also important. Gregory's *History of the Franks* and Isidore's *Etymologie's* give insight into the people and thought of the sixth and seventh century.

**Monasteries.** In the sixth century, Benedict, a hermit who had several followers, established a monastery in Italy at Monte Cassino. His Benedictine Rule, based simply on work and prayer, was followed by the monks who took the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. This rule became the basis for European monasteries. Benedictine monasteries spread throughout Europe. They served as hospitals, farms, or centers of learning where Greek, Roman, and Christian classics were preserved.

The monks were also the main force in the missionary movement. They helped to convert and to civilize the barbarians. Perhaps the most famous of these missionaries is Patrick who was born in Britain in 389 and who traveled to Ireland. Another important missionary was Augustine, a Roman monk who was sent to Anglo-Saxon England by Pope Gregory in 596.

Anglo-Saxon England had Celtic, Monastic, Gallican, and Roman influences in its Christian tradition by the late sixth and the early seventh centuries. Kent was converted to Roman Catholicism in 597 by Augustine of Canterbury. Northumbria was converted in 627 by Paulinus and followed Irish Christian customs.



- 1.019** The archaeological find that gave scholars an insight into early Anglo-Saxon culture was \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.020** The British king who asked for aid from the Angles and Saxons in the fifth century was \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 1.021** The Eastern Empire became known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Empire.
- 1.022** The establishment of Catholicism in Western Europe is credited to \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Answer the following questions** (each answer, 5 points).

- 1.023** What did most Germanic kingdoms have in common? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.024** What did Clovis accomplish? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.025** What epic poem describes many of the treasures found at Sutton Hoo? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

79 99	<b>SCORE</b> _____	<b>TEACHER</b> _____	initials	date
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