A. Drawing Conclusions   As you read about the history of Constantinople, the leading city of the Byzantine Empire, take notes to answer questions about the time line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>527</td>
<td>Justinian becomes ruler of the eastern empire.</td>
<td>1. What did Justinian accomplish during his reign?</td>
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<tr>
<td>537</td>
<td>Justinian completes building the Hagia Sophia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>542</td>
<td>Deadly plague sweeps through Constantinople.</td>
<td>2. How did the plague affect Constantinople?</td>
</tr>
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<td>674</td>
<td>Arab armies attack Constantinople.</td>
<td>3. How did the Byzantines first try to prop up their shaky empire?</td>
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<tr>
<td>860</td>
<td>Russians invade Constantinople for the first of three times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1054</td>
<td>Christianity splits into the Roman Catholic Church in the west and the Orthodox Church in the east.</td>
<td>4. What factors led to the schism?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1204</td>
<td>Crusading knights from Europe pillage Constantinople.</td>
<td>5. What was the effect of the split?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1453</td>
<td>Constantinople falls to Ottoman Turks.</td>
<td>6. What factors enabled the city to survive foreign attacks for hundreds of years before finally falling?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

B. Analyzing Causes   On the back of this paper, explain how icons and excommunication helped lead to a split between Rome and Constantinople.
That Justinian was not a man, but a demon, as I have said, in human form, one might prove by considering the enormity of the evils he brought upon mankind. For in the monstrousness of his actions the power of a fiend is manifest. Certainly an accurate reckoning of all those whom he destroyed would be impossible, I think, for anyone but God to make. Sooner could one number, I fancy, the sands of the sea than the men this Emperor murdered. Examining the countries that he made desolate of inhabitants, I would say he slew a trillion people. For Libya [North Africa], vast as it is, he so devastated that you would have to go a long way to find a single man, and he would be remarkable. Yet eighty thousand Vandals capable of bearing arms had dwelt there, and as for their wives and children and servants, who could guess their number? Yet still more numerous than these were the Mauretanians, who with their wives and children were all exterminated. And again, many Roman soldiers and those who followed them to Constantinople, the earth now covers; so that if one should venture to say that five million men perished in Libya alone, he would not, I imagine, be telling the half of it.

The reason for this was that after the Vandals were defeated, Justinian planned, not how he might best strengthen his hold on the country, nor how by safeguarding the interests of those who were loyal to him he might have the goodwill of his subjects: but instead he foolishly recalled Belisarius at once, on the charge that the latter intended to make himself King (an idea of which Belisarius was utterly incapable), and so that he might manage affairs there himself and be able to plunder the whole of Libya. Sending commissioners to value the province, he imposed grievous taxes where before there had been none. Whatever lands were most valuable, he seized, and prohibited the Arians from observing their religious ceremonies. Negligent toward sending necessary supplies to the soldiers, he was overstrict with them in other ways; wherefore mutinies arose resulting in the deaths of many. For he was never able to abide by established customs, but naturally threw everything into confusion and disturbance. . . .

So while he was Emperor, the whole earth ran red with . . . blood. . . .

Excerpt from *Secret History* by Procopius, translated by Richard Atwater. Copyright © 1961 by The University of Michigan. All rights reserved. Used by permission of The University of Michigan Press.
The Hagia Sophia by Procopius

The Byzantine emperor Justinian ordered his official court historian, Procopius, to document his ambitious public building program. Procopius wrote On Justinian's Buildings in 555 in which he described Hagia Sophia, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, in Constantinople. Completed in about 537, this magnificent church was considered the largest Christian building in the world. How would you describe this church in your own words?

I t is, indeed, a proof of the esteem with which God regarded the Emperor, that He furnished him with men who would be so useful in effecting his designs, and we are compelled to admire the intelligence of the Emperor, in being able to choose the most suitable of mankind to carry out the noblest of his works.

The church consequently presented a most glorious spectacle, extraordinary to those who beheld it, and altogether incredible to those who are told of it. In height it rises to the very heavens, and overtops the neighbouring buildings like a ship anchored among them: it rises above the rest of the city, which it adorns, while it forms a part of it. . . . It is singularly full of light and sunshine; you would declare that the place is not lighted by the sun from without, but that the rays are produced within itself, such an abundance of light is poured into this church . . . Thus far I imagine the building is not incapable of being described, even by a weak and feeble tongue. As the arches are arranged in a quadrangular figure, the stonework between them takes the shape of a triangle. . . . A spherical-shaped dome . . . makes it exceedingly beautiful; from the lightness of the building it does not appear to rest upon a solid foundation, but to cover the place beneath as though it were suspended from heaven by the fabled golden chain. . . . The sight causes men to constantly change their point of view, and the spectator can nowhere point to any part which he admires more than the rest, but having viewed the art which appears everywhere, men contract their eyebrows as they look at each point, and are unable to comprehend such workmanship, but always depart thence stupified through their incapacity to comprehend it.

The entire ceiling is covered with pure gold, which adds glory to its beauty, though the rays of light reflected upon the gold from the marble surpass it in beauty; there are two porticos on each side, which do not in any way dwarf the size of the church, but add to its width. . . . Of these two porticos, the one is set apart for male, and the other for female worshippers; there is no variety in them, nor do they differ in any respect from one another, but their very equality and similarity add to the beauty of the church. . . . Whoever enters there to worship perceives at once that it is not by any human strength or skill, but by the favour of God that this work has been perfected; his mind rises sublime to commune with God, feeling that He cannot be far off, but must especially love to dwell in the place which He has chosen. . . . Moreover, it is impossible accurately to describe the treasure of gold and silver plate and gems, which the Emperor Justinian has presented to it; but by the description of one of them, I leave the rest to be inferred. That part of the church which is especially sacred, and where the priests alone are allowed to enter, which is called the Sanctuary, contains forty thousand pounds' weight of silver.

Research Options

1. Analyzing Issues Find photographs of the Hagia Sophia. Then discuss with classmates whether or not Procopius accurately depicts this church in his account.

2. Using Research in Writing Find out more about the Hagia Sophia. Who designed it? How long did it take to build? What are its dimensions? How much did it cost to build? What construction materials were used? Then draw a sketch of the church or create a scale model, adding captions to report your findings.
Having nothing else to do, Hagen did not mind waiting for hours to get into the Hippodrome. The crowds amazed him. Some of these people, the ones at the head of the two lines, had waited for days to get the best seats; they brought food in baskets, jugs of wine, blankets to sleep on. Their voices were strident with excitement. Their children climbed and ran and fought and wailed around their knees, while the parents argued at the tops of their voices over the various drivers and teams of horses. All around Hagen, the Greeks made bets with the fervor of men seeking Heaven. They swore and laughed and sang songs in honor of their favorites, and hated anyone who disagreed with them.

There were two factions, Hagen gathered, from what he overheard, and everybody in the waiting crowd wore his faction’s colors, blue or green. They banded together, all the greens in one line, all the blues in the other. Two teams in each faction raced today. The Blues had some local hero, a driver who seemed to be related to the Empress, and also had brought in a team from Nicomedia; and the Greens were putting up a team from Thessalonica as well as their home team from Constantinople, whose driver was named Mauros-Ishmael, Black Ishmael.

Since Hagen had by chance come to stand in the Blue line, he heard wonderful things about the Prince, who was the favorite to win. The bet-takers, working their way up and down the line, were calling out the odds on their teams, and Prince Michael was never offered at more than one to one. Being champion, he wore the Golden Belt, which was the object of winning the race.

The lines clogged the whole street outside the Hippodrome and wound away into the City. The high brick wall of the racecourse curved around to the southwest, and the street travelled along its foot, going steeply downhill, and at the foot of the hill opened out on to a flat wide pavement. All along this way, the Hippodrome wall was cut into a series of arches, leading into caverns and alleys and rooms beneath the wall. . . .

It was a beautiful racecourse. The oval was covered with coarse sand; down the center ran a low wall of brick, studded with curious shafts of stone and statues of people and animals. Up here, at the top, there were more statues. The whole top tier was crowded with them, old, battered, in no order, some reduced to pieces of pieces, an arm, a foot, a horse’s head. He roamed among them, fascinated by the variety and number of them. Below him, the living, raucous crowd rapidly filled up the whole Hippodrome.

He had never seen so many people all in one place, not at the Marchfield where the lords of the Franks assembled to give and hear counsel; not at the hostings of King Charles; yet those numbers had been marshalled up by great effort for grand purposes, and these people had come in off the streets, to see a horse-race.

Rogerius would have said something about that. Hagen clenched his jaws tight against the sudden renewed ache in his heart.

Off to his left, the awesome sweep of the benches was broken. From the middle of the crowd rose a sort of square tower built up out of the wall. A huge silky pavilion topped it. This must be where the Basileus would sit to watch the race. Hagen walked closer along the top tier of the racecourse wall; from this height he was above even the floating purple silk canopy, and he saw easily into the space beneath it. There seemed to be no one inside it, although ranks of armed guards were slowly filing into place along the outside of the square wall that supported it.

These were men wearing leather armor, like the men who had killed his brother. He found himself standing taut, with fists raised. He reminded himself that he knew nothing of this place—he had no
understanding of the course of events that had caught him and Rogerius up momentarily and ground his brother’s life away.

Down on the racetrack, a few of the spectators had climbed the wall and dropped to the sand, and one took a string and made it into a sort of bridle for the other and pretended to drive him up and down past the benches of onlookers. A swelling roar of approval greeted this performance. Flowers and pieces of bread sailed out of the stands onto the track, and people applauded and crowded and cheered and shouted derisively.

Now other people were scrambling down from the benches onto the racecourse. Tumblers did flips and handstands up and down the sand, and someone tried to climb the stone column at one end of the central ridge.

The day was wearing on. The sun burned hot, and still the Imperial box was empty. All around the crowd, people began to clap in unison. Swiftly the hand-drumming spread, and everybody turned to peer at the pavilion, with its billow of purple silk rising and drifting on the wind from the sea. The rhythmic applause swelled to a thunder, all hands together.

“Come forth!” they shouted, a hundred voices at once. “Come forth, O Radiant One, Glory of the World, our pride and our hope! Come forth, come forth—let the races begin!”

Nothing happened. Hagen walked closer to the canopy; where he walked stone men and beasts packed the ledge so densely that he had to squeeze between them.

“Come forth, Joy of Christ—Protected of God, come forth!”

Now Hagen was almost directly above the Imperial balcony, and he could see people inside, moving around behind the drawn curtains. He squatted down on his heels, close enough now that he knew he would be spotted if he did not conceal himself a little.

The purple silk fluttered. For a moment longer, the pavilion curtains hung closed, and then abruptly a fanfare blared out from the brass throats of a dozen horns. The rippling drapery was thrown back, and out on to the expanse of white marble at the front of the box walked a woman dressed all in gold.

The crowd howled at the sight of her. They tossed their hats and baskets and empty wine jugs into the air and waved their arms, while the horns blasted, and drums rolled, and at the edge of the pavilion the golden woman raised her hand and made the Sign of the Cross over them, first to the left, then to the center, then the right. Her clothes shimmered. The sunshine struck her gown and surrounded her with a dazzling nimbus of reflected light. Her face itself shone like gold. With two little pages around her to spread out her glittering skirts, she took her seat in the center of the balcony.

Now other horns tooted, and the whole crowd shifted its attention from the Basileus to the race-track, every head turning. The noise dropped to a hush of excitement, like the slack of a wave, and then mounted again to a shout that rock ed the Hippodrome. The chariots were coming out on to the track.

There were four, all in a line, each drawn by four horses. They went decorously around the track, showing themselves to the crowd. The cars were only large enough to hold the man who drove the team. The horses were big, strapping beasts, with long thin heads, and legs like deer. They snorted and danced in their harness, the little cars jiggling along lightly on their heels, comical afterthoughts to the power of the brutes that drew them.

Hagen admired these horses. The two stallions he had now were Syrian-bred; he and Rogerius had bought them in Aleppo, and he was determined to get them back to Frankland, even if it meant paying out all his money for their passage to Italy, so that he could breed them to his Frankish mares. But the horses from Aleppo were mules compared to these racehorses.

Below him, now, the four little cars lined up side by side. The crowd fell still. On the side of the racecourse, a man stood with his arm upstretched, holding a flag.

The flag fell. A trumpet blew. The horses surged forward down the track, and from the great crowd watching a yell went up that washed away all sound and left Hagen with his ears ringing.

The horses swept down the track, the cars flying at their heels, fighting for position to take the sharp

**“Come forth, come forth—let the races begin!”**
curve on the inside track and save some ground. In the turn, the cars swung out on one wheel, the drivers leaning hard to the left to keep the flimsy vehicles from overturning. The cars lurched back and forth, banging into one another. Teetering on the verge of a crash, one skittered along sideways through the whole turn, and the crowd screamed for every bump and wobble.

Now they were racing down the far side of the track. In the lead was a driver in a blue cap, leaning forward over the rumps of his team, the reins in both hands, urging them on with his whole body. Around his upper arm was a rag of some color other than blue; Hagen wondered what that meant. In the far turn, the blue driver swerved his team around under the noses of the horses running second and straightened his car out down the middle of the track as a flying team of greys and blacks ranged up alongside.

The crowd doubled its huge voice. Below Hagen’s vantage point, people wept and prayed, clung to one another and beat the air with their fists.

“Prince Michael! The Prince—The Prince—”
“Mauros-Ishmael! Ishmael!”
“The Prince! Michael! Michael!”

The fool who had cried out for Mauros-Ishmael was quickly beaten to the floor by the people around him. Hagen stared at the fight, amazed, and when the nameless Greek lay bleeding on his bench, Hagen looked around at the Empress Irene in her pavilion.

She sat canted forward, her face taut, hawklike, her gaze on the race. Her fists were clenched on her knees. . . . As the crowd around her shrieked, its ardor rising to its climax, Irene herself raised her voice in a wild animal cry, and heaved in her place, her arms pumping, urging on the teams that hurtled toward the finish line, and then, the race over, she sank back as if exhausted, limp and sated in her chair.

Activity Options
1. Synthesizing Imagine that *The Belt of Gold* is being made into a movie. With a group of classmates, tape-record a sound track for the film version of the Hippodrome race. Include such sounds as the cheers of the crowd, drum rolls, and trumpet blasts. Then play the sound track for the class.
2. Developing Historical Perspective As a fan of the Blues or the Greens, write a diary entry about the chariot race described in this excerpt.
A fateful encounter transformed Theodora from a reformed actress to the wife of the heir apparent to the Byzantine throne. Intelligent and beautiful, she shed her humble beginnings and rose to the heights of power in Byzantium. She served the emperor Justinian as both his political adviser and wife—and saved his throne.

Theodora's early life is shrouded in mystery. Her exact birth date is unknown, although it is believed that she was born around A.D. 500. Her father, Acacius, worked in the famous Hippodrome in Constantinople. This was the huge arena where events such as chariot races and animal fights were held. Two groups struggled for victory in these contests: the Blues and the Greens. These groups also held considerable political power.

Theodora became an actress like her older sister, and by her teens she was well-known. Like other actresses of the time, she had a well-deserved reputation for immoral living. After traveling to North Africa with an important politician, she eventually found her way back to Constantinople. She returned as a convert to Christianity but did not adopt the standard form of that religion. She joined a sect called the Monophysites. They believed that Jesus had a mixture of both God-like and human-like natures.

Conversion changed Theodora's life. She abandoned her old ways and began to live quietly and modestly. It was then that the fateful encounter with Justinian occurred. The future ruler met her and fell in love. However, a law banned actresses from marrying anyone. Nevertheless, he had Theodora officially named a patrician, or member of the noble class, and ruled that the law no longer applied to former actresses. In 525, he and Theodora married. Two years later, they became emperor and empress.

For more than 20 years, Theodora worked alongside Justinian to strengthen Byzantine power and lead the empire. She also took some steps to improve the position of women. For instance, she made divorce laws more favorable to them.

Theodora also tried to win tolerance for the Monophysites. Justinian wanted to restore the empire to its former size, which meant recapturing lands in western Europe. To help achieve this, he believed he needed to favor Orthodox Christianity, which was powerful in the west. Theodora thought that the future of the Byzantine Empire lay in the east, where Monophysitism was popular. She persuaded him to practice toleration to keep the Monophysite subjects in those provinces happy.

In 532, during the terrible Nika rebellion, Theodora showed her great strength and supreme loyalty to Justinian. The Blues and the Greens had stopped arguing with each other to join forces against the government. They rioted throughout Constantinople, burning much of the city and threatening to topple the emperor from his throne. Justinian, Theodora, and their advisers gathered in the palace. The emperor was ready to flee the city, giving up his position to save his life. Then Theodora made the famous speech quoted above. When she finished, the room was briefly filled with silence. In response to her words, the generals quickly prepared plans to regain control of the city.

Once the revolt was ended, the imperial couple began to rebuild the city. They made Constantinople a glittering jewel and built 25 religious structures and countless other impressive buildings. In 548, Theodora died of cancer. She was buried in one of the churches they had built. Justinian joined her when he died years later.

Questions
1. **Determining Main Ideas** What does Theodora mean by the last sentence in the quotation?
2. **Analyzing Issues** What obstacles did Theodora have to overcome to rise in society?
3. **Drawing Conclusions** What divisions split Byzantine society during Theodora's time?
1. Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, created a system of government that existed for centuries. How did the government of the eastern empire compare with that of the western empire?

________________________________________________________________________________________

2. One of Rome’s lasting contributions was its law. How does the Justinian Code compare with the principles of Roman law?

________________________________________________________________________________________

3. In ancient Rome, the Colosseum was the site of free games, races, and gladiator contests for the masses. What kinds of free entertainment did the Hippodrome offer to citizens of Constantinople?

________________________________________________________________________________________

4. Roman architects and engineers built spectacular structures admired for such features as the arch and the dome. How did the architecture of Constantinople compare with Roman architecture?

________________________________________________________________________________________

5. In Rome, few children went to school. How was education viewed in the New Rome?

________________________________________________________________________________________

6. What do you think is the greatest legacy of the New Rome?

________________________________________________________________________________________
RETEACHING ACTIVITY  The Byzantine Empire

Multiple Choice  Choose the best answer for each item. Write the letter of your answer in the blank.

1. The eastern Roman Empire became known as
   a. Constantinople.
   b. Greece.
   c. Byzantium.
   d. Istanbul.

2. A high-ranking Byzantine nobleman who took the throne of the Eastern Empire in 527 was
   a. Constantine.
   b. Belisarius.
   c. Caesar.
   d. Justinian.

3. The Justinian Code was
   a. a body of civil law that controlled Byzantine life.
   b. a code for entering Constantinople.
   c. a collection of religious laws.
   d. a code of honor governing the Byzantine Empire.

4. The crowning religious glory of Justinian’s building program was
   a. the statue of Herodotus.
   b. the Hagia Sophia.
   c. a series of law courts.
   d. the “Middle Way.”

5. The site of wild chariot races in Constantinople was the
   a. “Middle Way.”
   b. Colosseum.
   c. Hippodrome.
   d. Forum of Constantine.

6. From 398-404, Saint John Chrysostom served in Constantinople as bishop, or
   a. scholar.
   b. emperor.
   c. pope.
   d. patriarch.

7. Religious images used by eastern Christians in their devotions were called
   a. icons.
   b. idols.
   c. relics.
   d. artifacts.

8. When the pope casts an official out of the Church it is called
   a. heresy.
   b. iconology.
   c. excommunication.
   d. succession.

9. The Cyrillic alphabet for the Slavic languages was created by
   a. Herodotus.
   b. Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Cyril.
   c. Saint Methodious and Saint Cyril.
   d. Empress Theodora.