

The Fall of Rome Name: _____ Prd: ____ Score: ____ / _15 pts._

Directions: Evidenzi la risposta nel testo a sinistra.

*The people of Rome were in a **panic!** A large army of Visigoths had crossed the Alps & entered Italy. The **Visigoths, Germanic nomadic tribes from Sweden,** spread terror in the northern cities by stealing *everything* they could carry away. Now, in 410 A.D., they were marching on Rome! *And the city was helpless! It had no defense at all against invaders!**

The Romans had changed a lot since early days when they won a great empire. Since then, the wealthy senators & nobles had grown soft & lazy with time. Some writers & critics were disgusted by the extreme luxury in which many people lived. The Roman historian Ammianus wrote that *a noble person would not even swat a fly but, instead, waited for his slave to do it!* They would not fight in the army or send their sons to fight, either.

What about the *common* people? Most of the tough farmers of Italy had lost their land to larger, richer farms. Rome was filled with 1000s of people who had no jobs. Many were freed slaves & drifters from all over the empire. They could not find jobs because slaves did most of the work. They lived in dark & crowded slums. The emperor kept them quiet by giving them *free* bread, pork, oil & cheap wine every month. He also entertained them with *free* gladiator fights & chariot races. Most of the drifters loafed in the streets & gambled all day. They were lazy & of no use as soldiers.

Where was the young emperor Honorius while the Visigoths were marching on Rome? He had fled to the safety of Ravenna, which was a long way from Rome. Honorius had actually left a Vandal soldier in charge of the Roman government. This soldier, Stilicho, had kept the Visigoths away from Rome 7 years earlier. However, the Roman Senate began to suspect Stilicho of plotting to murder Honorius. So... Honorius ordered Stilicho executed instead!

Consequently, there was no one in charge of Rome in 410. So, it was easy for the Visigoth king Alaric & his army to march on Rome.

Applying Past Knowledge BONUS: *From where* (in Greek mythology) does the word "**panic**" come?

T or F: (← Circle 1) **Nomadic** means wandering.

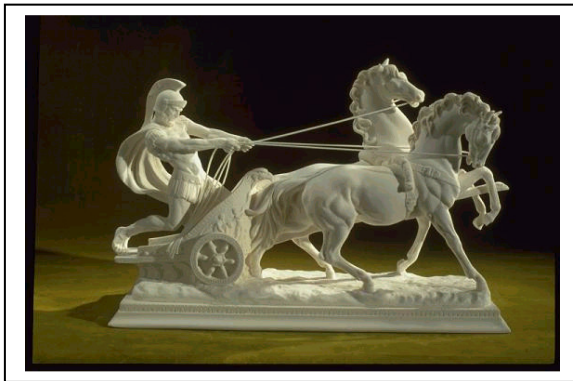
Visigoths were _____.

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Roman warriors | c. traveling minstrels |
| b. Greek invaders | d. German nomadic tribesman |

Applying Past Knowledge: A **synonym** for **luxury** is _____.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| a. essentials | c. basics |
| b. decadence | d. extravagance |

Making inferences: *How* do you know **Romans** had "**grown soft**" with time? _____



Give 2 examples of the life of a commoner during these "lazy" days. 1) _____

2) _____

Making inferences: *How* was it **easy for Alaric to conquer** (take on) **Rome**?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| a. the Senate has adjourned | d. all the above |
| b. the emperor had left a soldier in charge of Rome | e. a & b only |
| c. Honorius had fled Rome | f. b & c only |



Alaric's army did not try to break into Rome at once. The city was protected by strong, high walls. Instead, the army surrounded Rome & did not let any food in! This was a **siege**. Soon the Romans were starving. The *rich spent their money on the food that was left & the poor were forced to eat anything they could find, even rats!* It was rumored that some *desperate people killed & ate other people. Thousands of people died of hunger, & there was no place to bury them. Then disease spread over the city, & yet more people died.*

Frightened, the Senate decided to talk to Alaric. First they tried to threaten him. They pretended that they had a large army waiting inside the city walls. Alaric just laughed. He knew that the Romans were really desperate.

At last, Alaric offered to stop the siege in return for some treasure. He asked for 5000 pounds of gold & 3000 pounds of costly pepper, among other things. The senators asked him, "O king, if these are your demands, what do you plan to leave us with?"

"Your lives!" thundered the proud king.

Alaric was true to his word. Although he burned many of the great mansions of Rome, all Romans who did *not* fight back were spared. The great public buildings were left standing. He was especially careful to leave the churches alone because he considered himself a Christian.

The Romans tried to resume life as usual after Alaric & his army finally left. But their spirit was broken. They had been humbled by the very people they had looked down upon. Their government was in chaos. A 2nd Germanic tribe called the Vandals sacked Rome in 455. They took pleasure in destroying many of the buildings that Alaric had spared. The meaning of **vandal** comes from their very conduct!

Finally, Odoacer, a Germanic king, attacked Rome for the 3rd time in 476. He proclaimed himself emperor of the western hemisphere. Tribal kings & chiefs now ruled all of Western Europe. The *great* Roman empire in the West was now dead!

Describe Alaric's "clever" **seige on Rome**.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Determining cause & effect: Because of this great siege, *what happened* to 1000s of Roman people? _____

And because so many died & **could not be buried**, *what did this lead to?* _____



Rome traded _____ for their _____.

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| a. safety / emperor | c. women / men |
| b. gold & pepper / lives | d. empire / gold |

What did Alaric **leave untouched** in the city of Rome?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

The word **vandal** means "one who..."

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. willfully destroys or defaces | c. seeks revenge on others |
| b. borrows from other civilizations | d. comes from their very conduct |

