

Name : _____

Period: _____

Date: _____

Constantinople DBQ

Historical Context: Constantinople's location was beneficial to the Byzantine Empire

Task: Part 1) Answer the document-based questions.

Part 2) Using evidence from the documents, write **one** paragraph (on a separate sheet) discussing three ways Constantinople's location was beneficial to the Byzantine Empire. Don't quote! Instead, analyze (explain HOW and WHY). Remember to cite sources. For example:

- According to "Constantine Founds Constantinople"...(Doc 1).
- According to the map by Farah and Karls showing trade in about 1000 A.D. ... (Doc 2)

Document 1

When he had settled his empire, and had freed himself from foreign foes, he resolved on founding a city which should be called by his own name, and should equal in fame even Rome. In obedience to the command of God, he therefore chose to enlarge the city formerly called Byzantium, and here he laid out the plan of a large and beautiful city, and built gates on a high spot of ground, whence they are still visible from the sea to sailors and easy to defend from foreign invaders. He then surrounded it with high walls; likewise he built splendid dwelling houses; and he summoned families from all over the empire and from other countries to come populate his new city.

Source: "Constantine Founds Constantinople, 324 CE," Sozomen, c. 450 CE

1. According to the document above, why did Constantine choose to build Constantinople on top of a hill?
2. What evidence is there in Document 1 that shows Constantinople would be a center of cultural diffusion?

Document 2

Trade about A.D. 1000



Source: Farah and Karls, *World History, The Human Experience*, Glencoe/McGraw-Hill (adapted)

1. According to the map, what city was most likely the center of trade in the Byzantine Empire?
2. What goods came from Africa?
3. What goods came from Europe?
4. How did these trade routes contribute to Constantinople's prosperity?

Document 3

The city is enormous in size, and in two parts separated by a great river. The part of the city on the eastern bank of the river contains the residence of the Emperor, the nobles and the rest of the population. Its marketplaces and streets are spacious and paved. The city lies at the foot of a hill which projects about nine miles into the sea. On the top of the hill there is a small citadel and the Emperor's palace. Round this hill runs the city-wall, which is very strong and cannot be taken by assault from the sea front. Within its walls there are about thirteen inhabited villages. The second part, on the western bank of the river is reserved to the western European Christians who dwell there. They are of different kinds, including Genoese, Venetians, Romans [other Italians?] and people of France; they are subject to the authority of the king of Constantinople. They are bound to pay a tax every year to the king of Constantinople, but often they revolt against him and he makes war on them. They are all men of commerce and their harbor is one of the largest in the world; I saw there about a hundred galleys [sailing ships] and other large ships, and the small ships were too many to be counted. The marketplaces in this part of the town are good but filthy, and a small and very dirty river runs through them. Their churches too are filthy and mean.

Source: "Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325-1354," Ibn Battuta

1. According to the Ibn Battuta, why is the eastern part of the city more secure?
2. According to the author, what types of people inhabit the western bank of the city?
3. What is the main profession of the men who live on the western bank of the city?
4. How does the Ibn Battuta describe the harbor of Constantinople?

Document 4

In its heyday, Constantinople was the richest and largest European city, exerting a powerful cultural pull and dominating economic life in the Mediterranean. This was due to its strategic position commanding the trade routes between the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea. Any traders in the area would be drawn to Constantinople and its great marketplaces. The Byzantine emperors, knowing this, uniformly taxed imports and exports at ten percent. Taxes could be paid with coinage, but also with luxury goods such as silk and precious metals. The Byzantines also regularly charged tolls for using its roads and waterways. It used a powerful Navy control the Bosphorous straits, the Black Sea, and parts of the Mediterranean Sea. It was through control of trade that Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire became a prosperous society.

Source: "The Byzantine Economy," Cecile Morrisson, Cambridge University Press, 2007

1. According to Morrisson, what are **two** ways the Byzantine Empire used the location of Constantinople to its advantage?
 - (1)
 - (2)