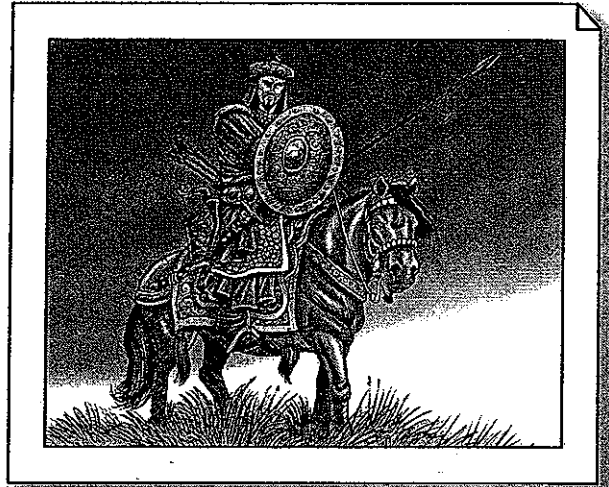




# Genghis Khan and the Mongols

**A** belt of dry grassland called the steppe stretches 5,000 miles across Europe and Asia. The Mongols were nomadic people who lived on the eastern steppe. They lived in small groups called clans. Around 1200 A.D., one of the Mongol clan leaders decided to bring all the Mongols under his leadership. He conquered the other groups, one by one. This man became known as Genghis Khan, or “universal ruler” of all the Mongol clans. Once he took leadership of the Mongols, Genghis Khan wanted more. With an enormous army, he successfully took over many lands beyond the Mongolian borders.



Under Genghis Khan, the Mongols were extremely organized. An effective military planner, he grouped troops in armies of 10,000. Each army was like a moving city. Soldiers brought family members, horses, and livestock with them. Mongol women were responsible for the needs of the camp. They also took care of the wounded.

Mongol soldiers were excellent horsemen. When traveling, each soldier had three extra horses. By changing horses, they could keep riding for many days and nights at a time. Sometimes, Mongol messengers traveled as far as 120 miles in a day. Each cavalry warrior had leather armor, a lance, and a dagger, as well as a bow and arrows.

The Mongols used tricks to confuse their enemies. The soldiers made their foes believe they had more men than they actually had. The Mongols did this by dressing prisoners or lifelike dummies as Mongol warriors. They also used spies. Sometimes a small Mongol unit would attack and then pretend to run away. The small unit led enemy soldiers to the rest of the Mongol army. Then, the larger Mongol army surprised and slaughtered the enemy forces.

Genghis Khan used fear as a tool to conquer Asia. The Mongols destroyed one city after another, killing many of the people who lived in them. The populations of some cities were wiped out completely. Sometimes, conquered peoples were forced to serve as troops for the Mongols against their own allies. People heard about the terrible things the Mongols did to those who stood up to them. The rumors about the Mongols' cruelty frightened people. After hearing such terrible stories, many towns surrendered to the Mongols without a fight.

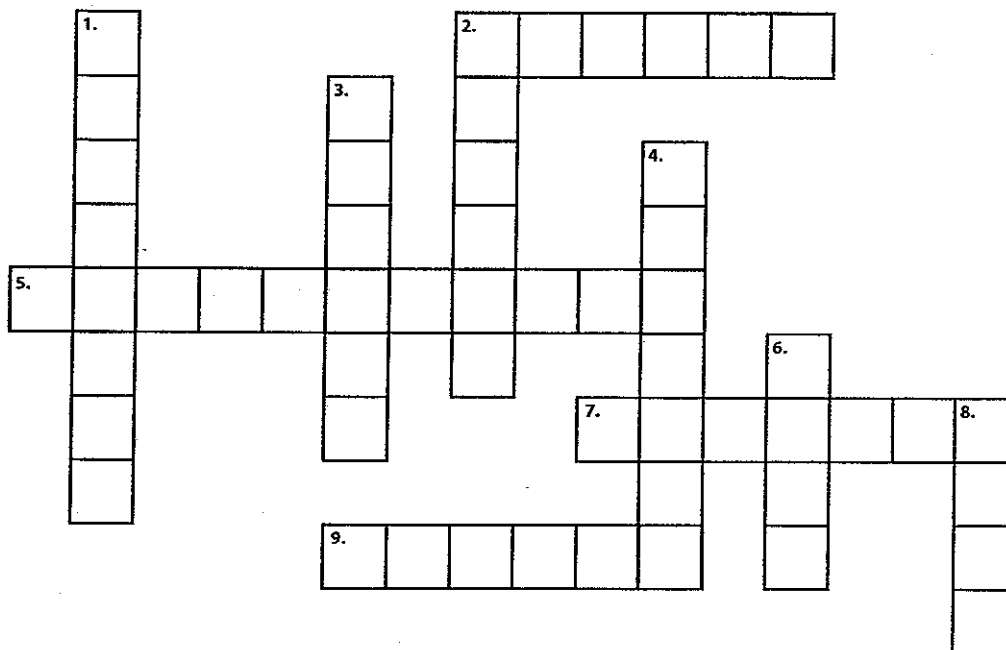
The Mongols conquered much of Asia. By 1221, Central Asia was under Mongol control. Genghis Khan died from an illness in 1227. Those who ruled after him kept expanding the Mongol Empire, conquering territory from China to Poland.



# Genghis Khan and the Mongols

## Crossword Puzzle

Write the best answer in each blank, and complete the crossword puzzle.



### ACROSS

2. Mongol \_\_\_\_\_ were grouped in armies of 10,000 soldiers each.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ was the leader of the Mongols.
7. The Mongols were \_\_\_\_\_ people who lived on the eastern steppe.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ about the Mongols frightened many towns into surrendering to the Mongols without a fight.

### DOWN

1. Mongol soldiers were excellent \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Mongols used \_\_\_\_\_ to confuse their enemies.
3. Sometimes, conquered peoples were forced to serve as troops for the Mongols against their own \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ conquered much of Asia.
6. Mongol women were responsible for the needs of the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Each Mongol army was like a moving \_\_\_\_\_.