

THE HUNNIC INVASIONS

Mark It on the Map

Refer students to the map on pages 24–25.

Introduction

Have student volunteers read aloud “Message From the Editors.” Point out central Asia, where the Huns originated, and trace the arrows to the regions they threatened: China, India, Persia, and Europe.

Discuss how soldiers invading other countries can spread epidemics, then ask students to name some other groups of people who have carried diseases from one area to another or might do so today.

Vocabulary

rampart	encased
interrelationship	scabbard
epidemic	scourge
nomadic	domesticated
Eurasian	skeletal
steppe	plague
stirrup	immunization
polygamy	predator
shaman	entomologist
rite	

Questions for Discussion

- Why are the stories we have of the Huns biased?
- When did the Huns become a threat to other civilizations? Why are they important in world history?
- What made the Huns superior warriors? What two inventions of theirs changed warfare?
- What was the role of women in Hunnic tribes?
- What were the most important achievements of the First Emperor of Qin in China?
- When did the Huns rule northern China?
- What area did Genghis Khan conquer? How large was the Mongol Empire by A.D. 1300? (Locate these areas on the map.)
- How did China under the Ming dynasty keep the Mongols out?
- Explain how the Huns were sometimes the friends and sometimes the enemies of the Persians.
- Who were the Sāsānians, and what was their civilization like? What were their relations with the Hephthalites?
- What finally happened to the Hephthalites?
- When did the Gupta dynasty rule northern India? What were some of its achievements?
- Who were the Hūnas, and what parts of India did they conquer? (Show these on the map.)
- At the height of his power, how much territory did Attila control?
- Who opposed Attila at the decisive battle in eastern Gaul in A.D. 451? What do some historians believe would have happened if Attila had won this battle?
- What happened to Attila’s kingdom after his death?
- What was the Sword of Mars, and why did Attila prize it?
- How have plagues or epidemics affected the history of civilizations such as ancient Athens, the Roman Empire, and the Huns of eastern Europe?
- What are some of the ways in which epidemics are spread?
- How are epidemics controlled in modern times?
- What cures have been found for diseases such as typhus and malaria?
- Why is biological pest control preferable to using chemicals?

Writing Workout

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Make a list of adjectives that describe the Huns.
- The Hephthalites played a trick on their enemies, the Sāsānians of Persia (see page 18). Turn this episode into a story told from the point of view of a young Hephthalite warrior.
- Write a letter from the monk who called Attila the “Scourge of God” to his family in Gaul. Tell why he gave Attila this name and what it means.
- In a journal entry, tell your thoughts and feelings about AIDS, the deadly epidemic of our time.

Viewpoints

Have the class discuss why the Huns are important in world history. Ask students how history might have been different if the Huns had not invaded other parts of the world.

Then and Now

Have the class reread “Message From the Editors.” Discuss why it is important to understand the patterns of events in the past. Ask students what they have learned from reading about the Huns and about epidemics that could influence how they look at events today.

Then and Now

Have the class reread “Message From the Editors.” Discuss why it is important to understand the patterns of events in the past. Ask students what they have learned from reading about the Huns and about epidemics that could influence how they look at events today.

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Design a book jacket for a biography of Attila.
- Create a mobile about the Huns, their horses, and their weapons.
- Create a poster reminding parents to take their children to a clinic for immunization shots.
- Draw a cartoon of Snoopy honoring a dog in the Beagle Brigade (see page 47).

Just for Fun

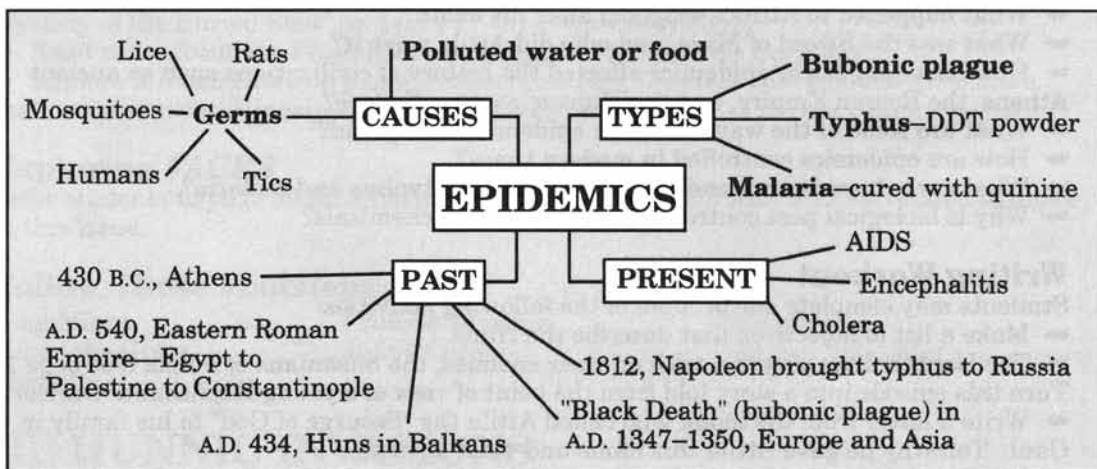
- Make a *yih* board and play the game according to the directions on page 12.
- After reading “The Hephthalites and the Persians” on pages 13–18, try your luck with the puzzle on page 19.
- Read about Attila on pages 26–30, then use the information to solve “Attila’s Scramble” on page 31.

Take a Break

Share a yogurt and fruit snack with your class while listening to a recording of “Polovetsian Dances” from *Prince Igor* by Borodin to create the mood of exotic central Asia.

A Semantic Web

Show the class how to make an information (semantic) web to organize what they have learned about epidemics. Have the class work with you to create the web and copy it into their notebooks to use as a study tool.



Medical Hall of Fame

Begin with the names and biographies on page 48 to create a bulletin board display. Form a research group to find other names to add to the list of great medical scientists who have discovered important preventatives or cures.

Word Study

Challenge students to list as many words as they can that contain the Latin noun *aster*, meaning “star.” (See page 44.)

Follow These Footsteps

Xiongnu	Attila	Emperor Shi Huangdi
Bléda	Hsien-pi	Theodosius II
Wendi	Honorio	Genghis Khan
Valentinian	Hephthalites	Aëtius
Sāsānians	Theodoric	King Shāpūr II
Xerxes	Prince Fīrūz	Hippocrates
Kavadh	Asklepios	Chosroes I
Napoleon	Skanda Gupta	Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Fischer
Mihirakula		