



**#3618**

# THE HUNS

Grade Levels: 8-13+

26 minutes

AMBROSE VIDEO PUBLISHING 1998

## DESCRIPTION

An unknown warrior tribe from an unknown land suddenly appeared in Europe in the late 4th century. Living a nomadic life on horseback and wagon, they fought to destroy, not to occupy. Describes their battle strategies, the importance of their horses, and their mighty bows. Attila, their most famous leader, united the Huns and terrorized all tribes in his path.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Subject Area: World History

- ◆ Standard: Understands the Imperial crises and their aftermath in various regions from 300 to 700 CE
  - Benchmark: Understands the significant social, political, and cultural characteristics of Gupta society (e.g., the Gupta decline and the importance of Hun invasions in the empire's disintegration; the Gupta golden age under Chandragupta II; centers of learning in India in the 4th and 5th centuries CE, and the role of Buddhist monks in education and higher learning; types of evidence available for understanding Gupta India; the route of the Hun invasion of India, and the revival of the golden age of the Guptas)
  - Benchmark: Understands political and social elements during the decline of the Roman and Han Empires and the rise of the Byzantine Empire (e.g., the strengths and weaknesses of the eastern and western Roman Empires and the factors that enabled the Byzantine Empire to continue as Rome fell; how Constantine selectively supported aspects of Western rule with Eastern institutions to create a new, independent, Byzantine state in the 4th century CE; the links between military, social, and economic causes for the decline in the Han and Roman Empires; the impact of barbarian movements on the regions of Europe, China, and India by the end of the 7th century CE; the life of Germanic peoples and society including the status and role of women)

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To contrast Hun and Roman warriors.
2. To illustrate the strengths of the Huns.
3. To depict the Huns as ultimate conquerors of Rome.
4. To present three historically important Huns: Edico, Attila and Odoacer.

## VOCABULARY

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- |                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. herald             | 11. allegiance |
| 2. steppe             | 12. corpse     |
| 3. fugitive           | 13. shrewd     |
| 4. exhaustion         | 14. unopposed  |
| 5. wheel their horses | 15. scorch     |
| 6. captivity          | 16. summon     |
| 7. sinew              | 17. ally       |
| 8. marksman           | 18. muster     |
| 9. rally              | 19. vanquish   |
| 10. forge             | 20. stupor     |

## BEFORE SHOWING

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1. Discuss the Roman Empire during the fifth century A.D.
  - a. What were the boundaries of the Roman Empire?
  - b. What were the Empire's strengths and weaknesses?
  - c. What was the status of the Empire's military forces? What were its strengths and weaknesses?
  - d. What was Rome's attitude towards barbarian tribes like the Huns?
  - e. How did the Roman Empire end?
  - f. What were the differences between the eastern and western Roman Empires?
2. Locate the following places on a map of Europe and Asia. Note which places are found on historic and current maps. Identify each place as a body of water, a country or a city.
  - a. The Black Sea
  - b. Constantinople
  - c. Rome
  - d. The Mediterranean Sea
  - e. The Rhine
  - f. Gaul
  - g. France
  - h. Hungary
  - i. Belgrade
  - j. Russia
  - k. Nis
  - l. Sofia



## AFTER SHOWING

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### Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss Hun warriors.
  - a. What would have happened if the Huns had not had their horses?

- b. What skills did a warrior have by age 3? By age 5?
  - c. Why were the cheeks of males cut with a sword?
  - d. Why could no weapon match the Hunic bow? How did the Huns lose the advantage of this secret weapon?
  - e. Why did the Hunic bow take weeks to make?
  - f. Why did the Huns desire to destroy rather than occupy when they campaigned?
  - g. How did Hun soldiers display the wealth of nearly a century of victory?
2. Discuss Roman warriors.
    - a. How did the Romans' use the Hunic bow against the Huns?
    - b. What did the Romans learn from barbarians that helped them in defeating the Huns at Gaul?
3. Discuss the Huns.
    - a. In what ways did the Huns resemble American pioneers?
    - b. How is the history of the Huns known?
    - c. Why did the Christians and Romans believe that the Huns came from nowhere?
    - d. In what ways were the Huns typical nomads? In what ways were they atypical?
    - e. For what reasons may the Huns have initially begun their westward journeys?
    - f. What is the value of Hun art to students of history? Why was the art not considered to be monuments or chronicles of the Huns?
    - g. In what ways were Hun horses transport, sustenance and currency?
    - h. Why did the Huns leave few traces of their passage in Europe or in history?
    - i. Who were the Hunic foot soldiers?
4. Discuss the Huns' enemies.
5. Discuss conflicts between the Huns and the Roman Empire.
    - a. How did the Roman commoners respond to an alert that the Huns were coming?
    - b. How were these reports spread?
    - c. How did Attila penetrate the heart of the eastern Roman Empire?
    - d. What was the Hun battle plan against Constantinople?
    - e. Why did Emperor Theodosius have no choice but to sue for peace? At what price?
    - f. How did the fact that the Huns were undefeated influence the outcome of the battle in Gaul?
6. Discuss Edico.
    - a. Why was the Huns' campaign against Belgrade, Nis and Sofia a campaign of glory for Edico?
    - b. What offer did Edico receive from a Roman minister in Constantinople while negotiating peace?
    - c. How did Edico show his loyalty to Attila?
    - d. Why was Edico's legacy much more enduring than Attila's?
7. Discuss Attila.
    - a. How was Attila a terror to all lands?
    - b. What was Attila's first nonwarring triumph among the Huns?
    - c. Why could the Huns not settle down under Attila's leadership?
    - d. How did Attila buy the Huns' allegiance?

- e. How did Attila prove his shrewdness against Constantinople?
- f. Why was Attila outraged after the terms of peace had been negotiated with Constantinople? How did this harm other parts of the Roman Empire?
- g. What led to Attila's death?
- h. Why should Attila have died in battle?



ATTILA, WITH GOAT HORNS  
16th c. medallion at Pavia, Italy

### Applications and Activities

1. Debate if the original nonunited Huns were from the same location and people.
2. Write the chronicles of a tribe or group of people.
  - a. The chronicles of the Huns written by a Hun.
  - b. The chronicles of a local ethnic, religious or family group.
3. Imagine daily and family life as a Hun. Write or draw a depiction.
  - a. What was the role of women in Hun society?
  - b. Where were the women and children during a Hun battle?
  - c. What was the goal of childrearing?
  - d. How were the values of the Huns lived out during nonwarring days?
  - e. What were the typical possessions of a Hun family? Woman? Child? Warrior?
  - f. What foods were commonly eaten?
4. Write an inaugural speech for Odoacer taking the place of the last Roman emperor. Include a review of the history, battles and great leaders of both tribes.
5. Debate which of the ancient tribes were the best warriors.
  - a. Huns
  - b. Incas
  - c. Aztecs
  - d. Assyrians
  - e. Janissaries
  - f. Knights Templar
  - g. Macedonians
  - h. Spanish conquistadors
  - i. Spartans
  - j. Vikings
6. Evaluate the usage of the word barbarian.
  - a. How does this term validate the Roman world view?
  - b. In what ways does the use of this word compare to ways Europeans and Americans have referred historically to indigenous people?
  - c. What words reflecting the Huns' world view may have been used to refer to the Huns, the Goths, the Vandals and the Romans?
7. Dramatize the conflict between the Goths and the Huns.

8. Research horsemanship.
  - a. Visit a local location for boarding and riding horses.
  - b. Consider the value of horses to the Spanish conquistadors and American cowboys.
  - c. List modern uses of horses in the local community and around the world.
9. Create a tale where the Huns truly could not walk. Include the reasons for their inability to walk, how horses were introduced into their culture and how they performed daily activities from horseback.
10. Build a model of a Hunic bow. Label each part.
  - a. What materials are needed?
  - b. What is the cost of the materials?
  - c. What tools are needed?
  - d. How much time is required?
11. Compare the Christian belief that the Huns were devils sent to curse the earth to modern tales of aliens and UFOs.
12. Imagine that Attila's goal among the Huns had been to transform them from a people of war to a people of peace.
  - a. What skills must the Huns learn?
  - b. What would be the motivation for changing their way of life?
  - c. How could warriors be rewarded and honored to give up killing?
  - d. What role would horses have in their new economy?
13. Investigate the gods of the Huns.
14. Research the modern descendants of the Huns.

## **RELATED RESOURCES**

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### **Captioned Media Program**

- The Assyrians #3565
- The Aztecs #3567
- The Conquest of the Incas #3593
- The Huns #3618
- The Janissaries #3621
- The Knights Templar #3623
- The Macedonians #363
- The Romans #3652
- The Spanish Armada #3663
- The Spartans #3664

## World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and “kid-safe” sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **I’M A BARBARIAN**

<http://art1.candor.com/barbarian/>

This text-heavy site includes extensive information regarding Attila the Hun and ancient Rome with links to other barbarian and ancient history sites.

- **THE ULTIMATE BARBARIAN PAGE**

<http://www.wizardrealm.com/barbarians/>

Features a breadth of information regarding barbarians including: history, art, literature, games and related resources.

- **ATTILA’S INVASION OF ITALY**

<http://www.boglewood.com/timeline/huninvasion.html>

Brief text overview of Attila including a map and pictures of artwork. Part of the Venice virtual tour.