

Constantine

Constantine the Great (272 AD –337 AD) was a Roman Emperor who ruled between 306 and 337 AD. His father, Constantius, was a Roman Army officer, and his mother was Empress Helena. His father became the Deputy Emperor in the west, in 293 AD. At that time, Constantine was sent east, where he quickly rose through the ranks of the military. In 305 AD, his father was given the rank of Augustus, Senior Western Emperor, and Constantine was recalled west to campaign under his father in Britannia (Britain).



After his father's death in 306 AD, Constantine was exalted as emperor by the army at Eboracum (which is now modern-day York in Britain). He then fought and won a series of civil wars against Emperors Maxentius and Licinius to become the sole ruler by 324 AD.

As emperor, Constantine introduced the solidus, a new gold coin that became the standard European currency for more than a thousand years. Constantine was the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity as he joined the Christian faith on his deathbed. He has historically been referred to as the 'First Christian Emperor'.

The age of Constantine was significant in the history of the Roman Empire. He built a new imperial residence in Byzantium and renamed the city Constantinople, which we now know as Istanbul in Turkey. It became the capital of the Empire for more than a thousand years, with the Eastern Roman Empire beginning to be referred to as the Byzantine Empire by historians. However, his more immediate political legacy was that he adopted the idea of dynastic succession, meaning he was able to leave the empire to his sons. For this reason his reputation flourished for centuries after his reign.

Constantine

Comprehension

1 – Between what years did Constantine live? (1)

2 – Who were his parents? (1)

3 – What rank was his father given in 305 AD? (1)

4 – Where was Constantine sent to campaign for his father? (1)

5 – Where was Constantine when his father died, and what did the army there exclaim? (2)

6 – What two other emperors waged civil wars against Constantine? (1)

7 – Explain what the 'solidus' was, and how long was it around? (1)

8 – Why might he have been referred to as the 'First Christian Emperor'? (2)

9 – What modern day city did he build a residence in and then rename after himself? (1)

10 – What evidence from the text shows us that this city was hugely important? (1)

11 – What might 'dynastic succession' mean? (1)

Constantine

Grammar

12 - Underline the main clause in the following sentence: (1)

As emperor, Constantine introduced the solidus, a new gold coin that became the standard European currency for more than a thousand years.

13 – What might the word ‘flourished’ mean in the final sentence of the text? (1)

Extension

14 – Use the informational text to write eight detailed facts about Constantine the Great. (3)

Constantine

Questions

Comprehension Questions

- 1 – Between what years did Constantine live? (1)
- 2 – Who were his parents? (1)
- 3 – What rank was his father given in 305 AD? (1)
- 4 – Where was Constantine sent to campaign for his father? (1)
- 5 – Where was Constantine when his father died, and what did the army there exclaim? (2)
- 6 – What two other emperors waged civil wars against Constantine? (1)
- 7 – Explain what the ‘solidus’ was, and how long was it around? (1)
- 8 – Why might he have been referred to as the ‘First Christian Emperor’? (2)
- 9 – What modern day city did he build a residence in and then rename after himself? (1)
- 10 – What evidence from the text shows us that this city was hugely important? (1)
- 11 – What might ‘dynastic succession’ mean? (1)

Grammar Questions

- 12 - Underline the main clause in the following sentence: (1)
As emperor, Constantine introduced the solidus, a new gold coin that became the standard European currency for more than a thousand years.
- 13 – What might the word ‘flourished’ mean in the final sentence of the text? (1)

Extension

- 14 – Use the informational text to write eight detailed facts about Constantine the Great. (3)

Answers

Comprehension Questions

- 1 - 272 AD –337 AD
- 2 – His father, Constantius, was a Roman Army officer, and his mother was Empress Helena.
- 3 – Augustus, senior western emperor
- 4 – Britannia (Britain)
- 5 – Eboracum (or modern-day York in Britain) / The army exclaimed him as Emperor
- 6 – Maxentius and Licinius
- 7 – A new gold coin that became the standard European currency / For more than a thousand years
- 8 – He was the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity / He joined the Christian faith on his deathbed
- 9 – Istanbul
- 10 – It says - It became the capital of the Empire for more than a thousand years / He renamed the city after himself
- 11 – It means that the next leader will be the current leaders son or daughter (or something similar)

Grammar Questions

- 12 – As emperor, Constantine introduced the solidus, a new gold coin that became the standard European currency for more than a thousand years.
- 13 – It means it improved / Got better (or something similar)

Extension

- 14 – 0-3 marks depending on detail

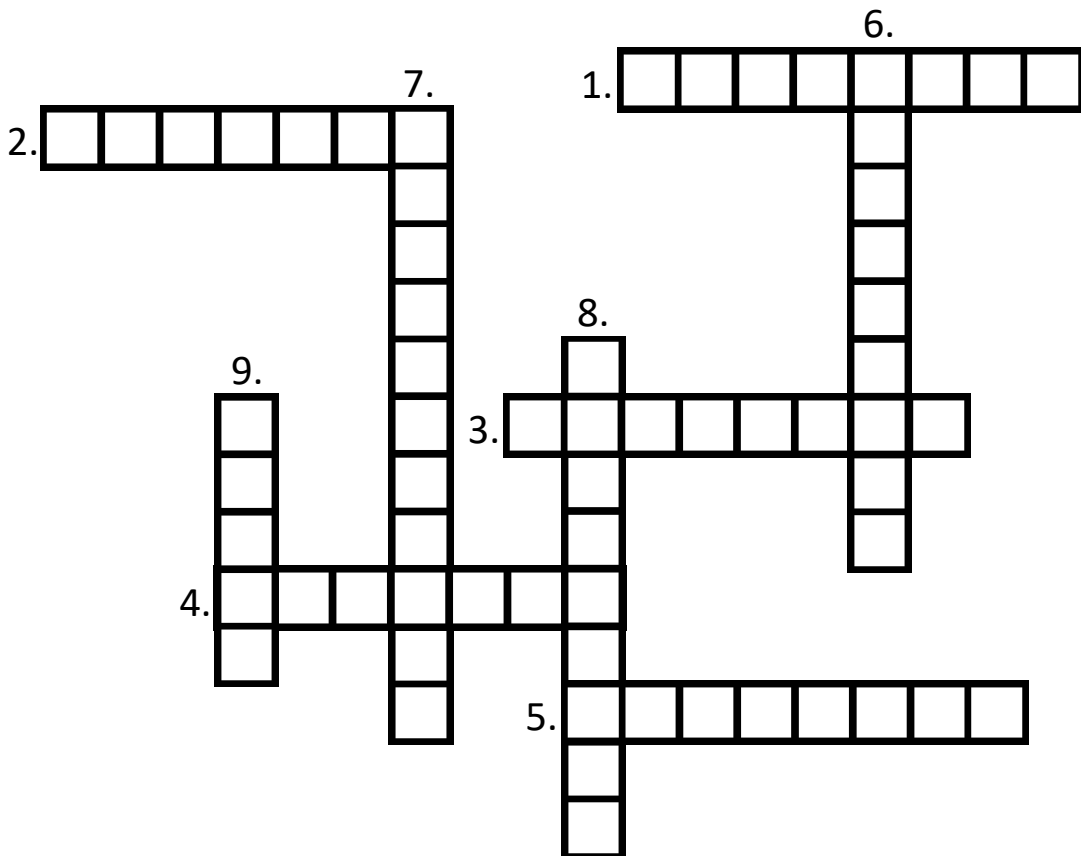
Constantine Crossword

Across

1. What was the Solidus?
2. What did Constantine become after his father's death?
3. How else was he known? Constantine _____
4. What was the gold coin he introduced called?
5. What modern-city did he name Constantinople?

Down

6. What did he have to fight and win to remain the sole ruler?
7. What empire did he rule over as emperor?
8. What was Constantine the first Roman emperor to be?
9. How is he often referred as? The _____ Christian Emperor



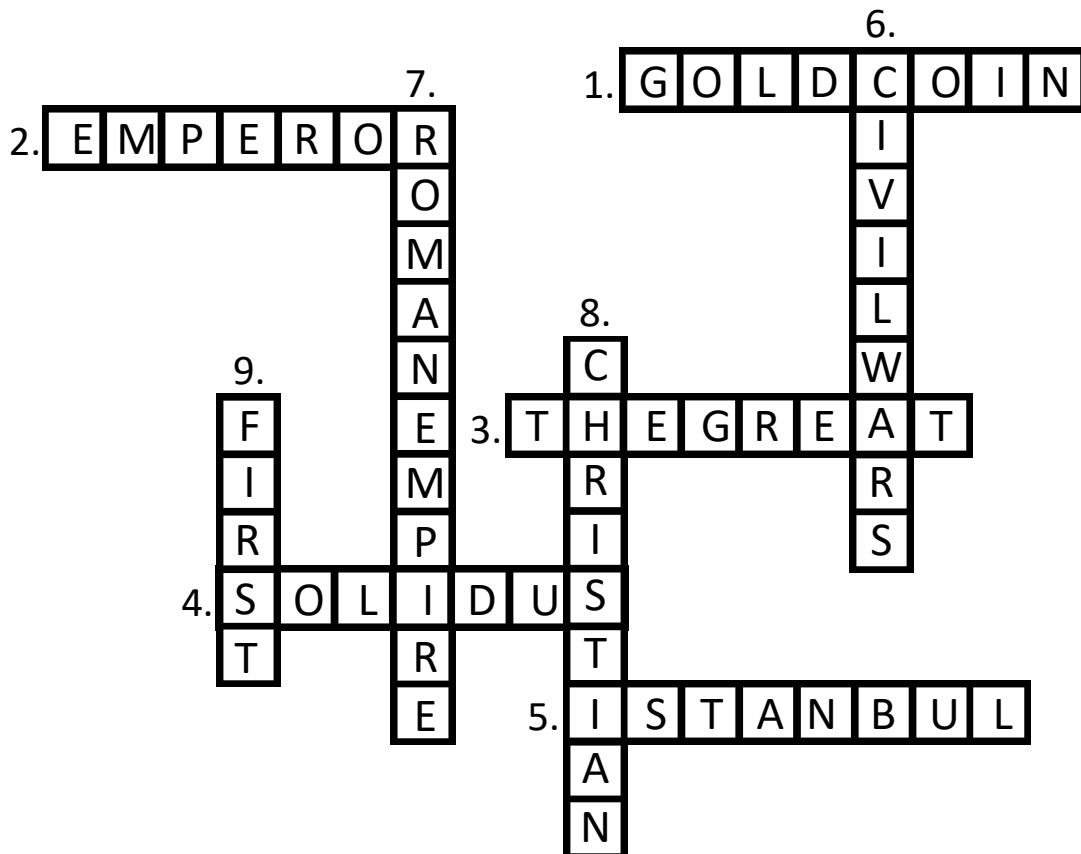
Constantine Crossword Answers

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Constantine Wordsearch

Find all the words below that relate to the famous emperor.



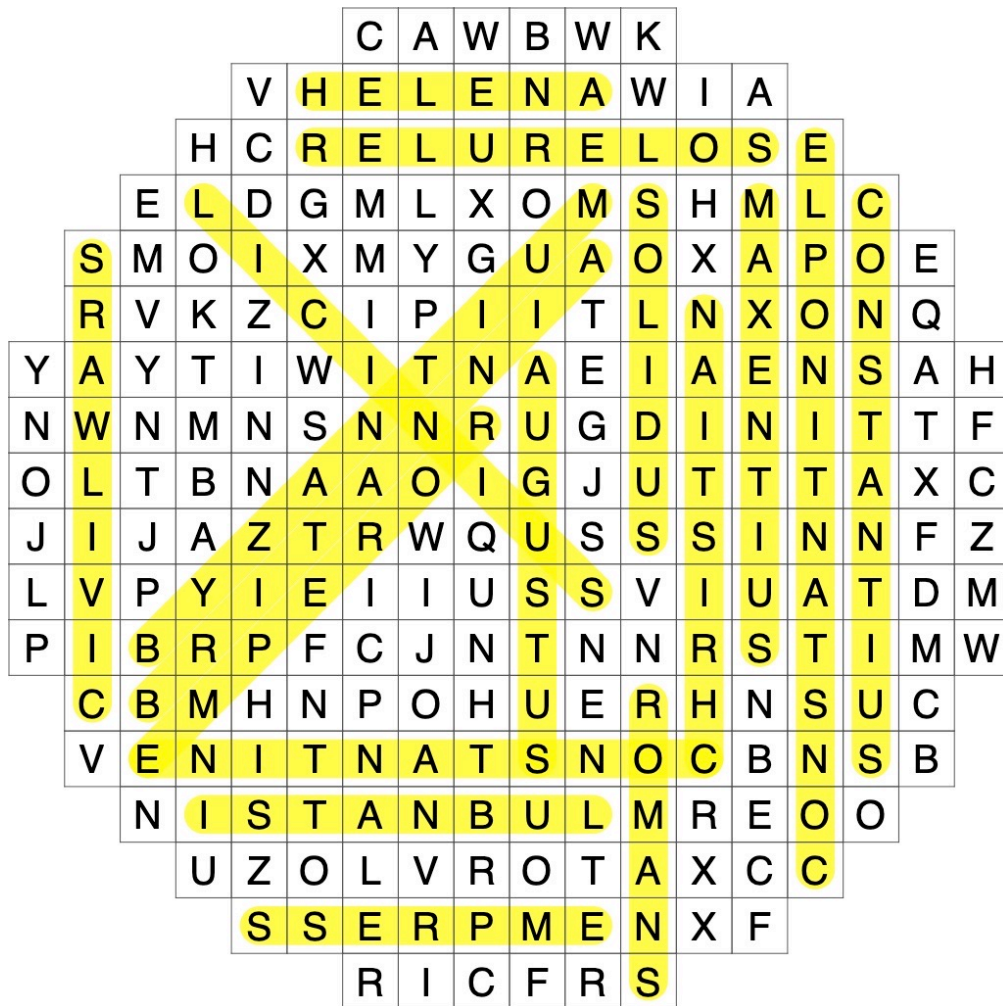
Constantine
Romans
Christian
Emperor
Civil Wars
Sole Ruler

Solidus
Britannia
Maxentius
Licinius
Istanbul

Constantinople
Byzantium
Constantius
Empress
Helena
Augustus

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