UNIT 8- BYZANTINE EMPIRE GRAPES NOTES

G=GEOGRAPHY

* Extension of the Roman Empire
* When Rome started to fall, it divided into two parts at the Bosporus Strait which divided Europe and Asia.
* The Eastern part was the Byzantine Empire.
* Easily defended (peninsula)
* Crossroads of international trade (northeast was China, southeast was India)
* Constantinople- old name; known as Istanbul today (in the country of Turkey)

R=RELIGION

* Christianity- became the center of the Christian world
* The Byzantine Empire split from the Roman Catholic Church and formed the Eastern Orthodox Church
* Built elaborate churches
  + Most famous is Hagia Sophia- the Church of Holy Wisdom
  + Built in 5 months
* Relics and treasures were taken to the West when the empire fell to the Ottomans

A= ACHIEVEMENTS

* Enhanced Roman style of using natural marble for mosaics and colored glass
* Decorated Christian churches by combining architecture
  + Roman arches, vaults, and domes
  + Greek columns
  + Life-like statues
  + All Byzantine art was religious based
* Spread Greek philosophy and language

P=POLTICS

* Was a monarchy with many advisors
* **Justinian Code** 
  + Simplified Roman legal system
  + Made the laws more accessible to average citizens
  + Wrote new laws that protected women and slaves
  + So well-written, became the basis for many countries around the world
  + Compared to Hammurabi’s Code as it helped protect the people
* Educated scholars and government officials to better serve the people
* International university in Constantinople

E=ECONOMICS

* Traded pottery, marble, metalwork, silk, and spices
* Center of trade between China and the West
* Marco Polo comes as an explorer and trading merchant- helped to create the overland trade route to Europe (1271)
* Trade brought the plague
  + At its height, 10,000 people died each day in Constantinople
  + Plague stopped Italy and the West from helping against the Ottomans

S=SOCIAL STRUCTURE

* Kept Roman laws and culture
* Preserved Greek culture
* Ruled by Emperor and Christian values
* Classes of Society—
  + Upper class– aristocracy, government officials, senior military officials, large landowners
  + Middle class- merchants, industrialists, medium size landowners
  + Lower class- wage earners and paupers (extremely poor people)
  + Priests received special privileges but were in no special class
  + Slaves were able to earn their freedom.