**Guiding Ideas**

1. What factors affect the decline of various civilizations?

2. Which of these factors do you think had the biggest impact?

**Webquest: Decline of Civilizations**

You will be taking the role of a historian, tasked with researching why civilizations decline and how civilizations today can learn from the past. You will analyze the sources provided to compare and contrast factors contributing to the decline of civilizations.

**Source 1: Why do Civilizations Fall? (Maya, Mesopotamia, Mali and Songhai)**

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/collapse/index.html>

Task: Complete the chart with the appropriate information (not all boxes will necessarily be filled in).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Maya | Mesopotamia | Mali & Songhai |
| Cities and City Life |  |  |  |
| Natural Disasters |  |  |  |
| Agricultural  Problems |  |  |  |
| Population Changes |  |  |  |
| Internal Problems (Society, Government, Religion) |  |  |  |
| External Problems (Invasions) |  |  |  |
| Economic Problems |  |  |  |

**Source 2: Rome**  
8 Reasons Why Rome Fell <http://www.history.com/news/history-lists/8-reasons-why-rome-fell>

Barbarian Invasions

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhQO6giXAnY&list=PLApbkdyBKHWZ0ZTmN6LVMByecVcoGLfEc>

Using the sources provided, rank which factors contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire from the most important factor to the least important factor. You will also include a brief written explanation as to why you chose the order that you did.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranking** | **Factor** | **Reason for Ranking** |
| 1 |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |

Do you think Rome could have prevented their decline? Explain.

Are there any similarities between Rome’s decline and other civilizations? (past or present)

**Source 3: India**

* Decline of Harrapan Culture <http://mocomi.com/harappan-civilization/>
* The Aryan Migration <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IZ-xwO77xA>
* Disappearance of the Indus River Valley <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/indus_valley/the_end_of_the_indus/>

Traditionally, there have been two main theories about why the Harappan civilization declined and disappeared. Below, fill in the table with information from each of the sources.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| External Factors  (invasions, environmental) | Internal Factors  (government, cultural, societal) |
|  |  |

Using what you have learned, what do you think is the most likely cause of the Harappan civilization’s decline?