

If you only have 15 minutes ...

We gather information from different sources as we learn about significant historical periods. Reading texts as well as analyzing pictures and maps are some of the most common sources. A map can help you visualize the location of different places and distances between them. This will help you better understand complex situations in a simpler way.

It can be hard to comprehend how Severus became an emperor of the Roman Empire and how he was able to rule over such a vast area of land. This timeline and mapping exercise takes you through important periods of his life and helps you visualize the vast area he was able to control.

To start, make a photocopy of the map from the article, “The Emperor From Africa.” The map shows the vast area of land controlled by Emperor Septimius Severus. Look over the list of events in his life below and review. Place the letter of the event in the correct location on the map.¹

- A. Was born in Libya (Creta et Cyrenaica).
- B. Acquired land in Italy.
- C. Moved to Rome (Roma).
- D. First military post in Sardinia.
- E. First command on the Upper Danube River. Upriver is close to the start of the river.
(On the map determine which direction the Danube runs. HINT: rivers run from higher elevations into larger rivers or larger bodies of water.)
- F. Seized the capitol in Rome.
- G. Expanded the empire into Iraq (Mesopotamia).
- H. Expanded trade routes on Arabian Peninsula (Syria Arabia).
- I. Campaigned on the Sahara.

J. Made a final campaign in Britannia.

MAP



After you've finished the map, join the class in discussing the following questions.

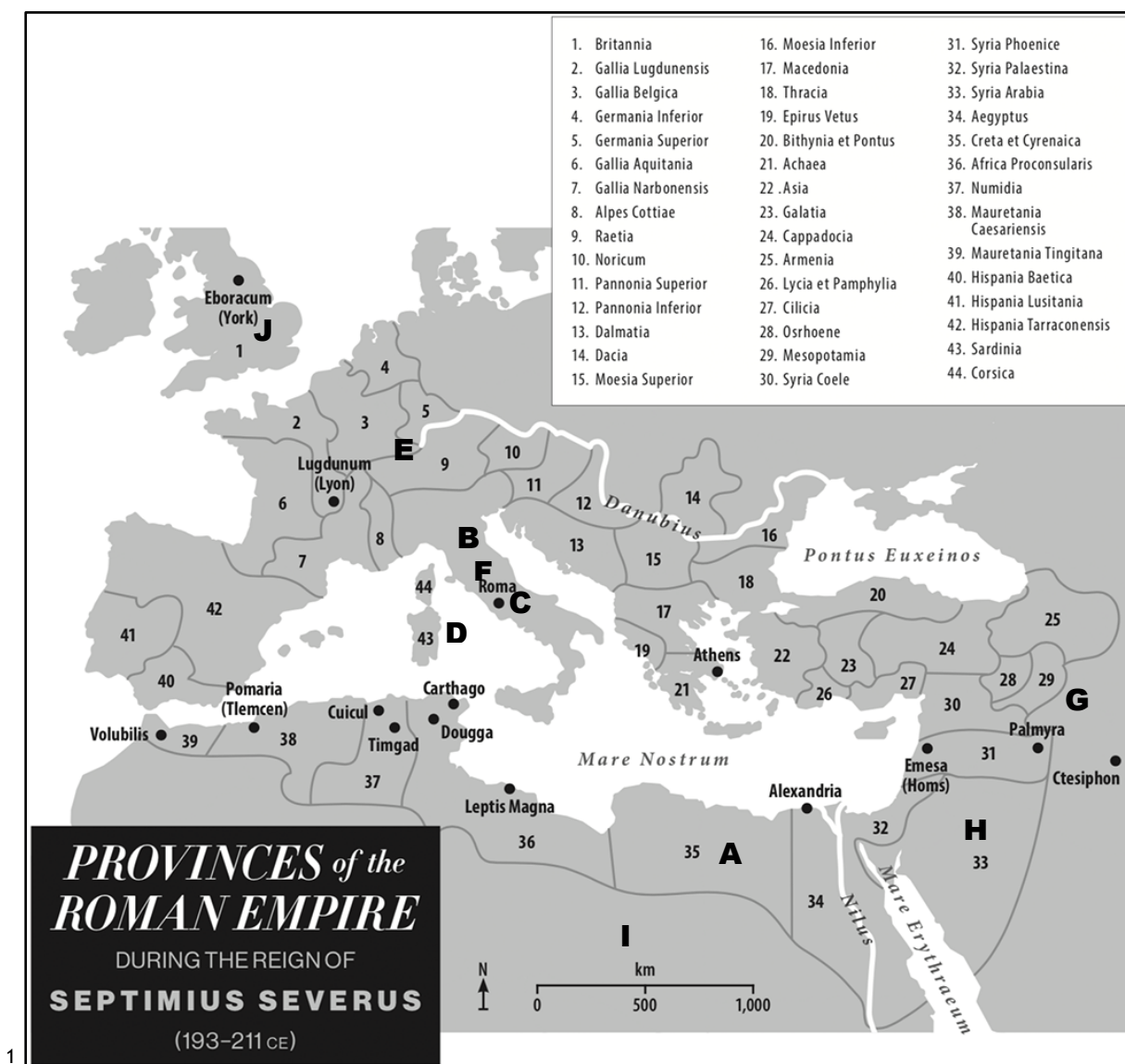
1. Why would acquiring land in Italy and eventually moving to Rome help the Severus family become more accepted by Roman leaders?²
2. Severus and his brother Geta served in the military on the Danube River. Why was this post important for the empire? Why did its military appointment help elevate his family?³
3. Why do you think Severus ruled from provincial cities and military camps, rather than from Rome? How might this help him rule such a vast empire?⁴

Common Core Standard(s) Met:

CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



² Investing in land gave them a pathway to joining the ruling class in the empire.

³ Answers should include: The assignment along the Danube was to defend the empire from the Germanic tribes. This placed the family in an exceptional position of power. It reveals the degree of trust vested in them by Pertinax who was running the empire.

⁴ It kept him closer to the military, which was the leading force in the Roman Empire. It also helped him understand what was going on in the provinces, where rebellion could occur.