

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

“They keep hovering about the enemy, discharging their arrows first from one side and then from the other...Their horses are so well broken-in to quick changes of movement, that upon the signal given, they instantly turn in any direction, and by these rapid maneuvers many victories have been obtained.”

Marco Polo, *A Description of the World*

According to this quote, why was the horse so important to the Mongols during war?

- Fake retreats and attacked when enemy was vulnerable
- Used life-like dummies on horses to trick the enemy
- Slaughtered a few cities in attempt to scare other cities to surrender without a fight
- Used civilians as shields
- Drank horse's blood to stay alive
- Could travel up to 100 miles per day on horseback
- On occasion, used biological warfare (spread of disease)
- Used Chinese silk underwear so arrows had a hard time penetrating past the thick silk
- Leather armor, saddle, stirrups, helmets, shield, bows and arrows, battle axe, curved sword, lance and used catapults

Which military tactic do you think was the most effective?

Brief Biography of Genghis Khan

Genghis Khan, or Ghengis Khan as he is more widely known, was born about the year 1162 to a Mongol chieftain (ruler), Yesugei, and his wife. He was born with the name of *Temujin* which means 'iron worker' in his native language. When Temujin was born his fist was clutching a blood clot which was declared an omen that he was destined to become a heroic warrior. Very little is known of Temujin until he was around age 13 when his father declared that his son was to find a fiancée and get married. After several days of travel Temujin and Yesugei came across a tribe of Mongols that were very hospitable and welcoming. Temujin was not there long when he noticed a certain girl, *Bortei* the daughter of the chieftain. She was destined to become his wife.

Temüjin's father died when Temüjin was still young, poisoned by a group of Tartars. The Tartars were the chief power on the eastern Mongolian steppe at the time, and long-time rivals of the Mongols. When Temujin heard how his father had died, vowed one day to revenge the death.

Temujin left Bortei, returned to his tribe, with the intention to declare himself leader. At this time he was 13 years of age. Senior members of the tribe **ridiculed** (made fun of) his plans; rejected him as chief, and abandoned the youngster and his family to the Mongolian plains. While there were noble lineages among the Mongols, such as Temüjin's, they did not enjoy the automatic loyalty of others on the steppe. Nor did seniority guarantee a position of influence or power. Leadership seems to have often been a more informal institution, open to those with the right to contest for it. As a result of this rejection, Temujin extended his vengeful intentions to his own clan members.

Life was very hard for the family. It is related that when Temujin discovered his own brother stealing food from the group had no hesitation in killing him. News that he was a stern leader that would kill his own brother to keep order became widely known. On a hunting trip he was ambushed by an enemy tribe and taken prisoner. While prisoner he killed his guard and escaped. The enemy searched, but excellent survival skills kept him alive until he could meet up with his own tribe. This act of courage spread his name to all parts of the Mongolian plains. Shortly after, another raid by strangers left the family with one horse and very little food. Temujin took chase but could not catch them. During his chase he met up with *Bogurchi*, the son of a rich man, who would become a blood-brother and trusted ally. Bogurchi helped Temujin retrieve the stolen horses but the thieves escaped. Word of these exploits (adventures) became greatly exaggerated (blown up) to enhance his reputation even further.

After four years, the time had come to marry Bortei. As a wedding present her father gave him a very rare black sable fur. This gift proved to be one of the most important assets ever given to Temujin. Temujin used it to persuade *Togrul*, his father's sworn-brother, to join him in revenge attacks against the Tartars and other Mongol enemies. Togrul agreed to join and reconcile all of Temujin's father's men.

It Says: (Pick one sentence from the reading and copy it into the space below)

I Say: (What is your interpretation of that sentence? Put the sentence into your own words below)

SO? (What is your conclusion about the reading? Why is it important? What is your opinion of that quote?)
