

History

The Crusades - Lesson 3 of 6

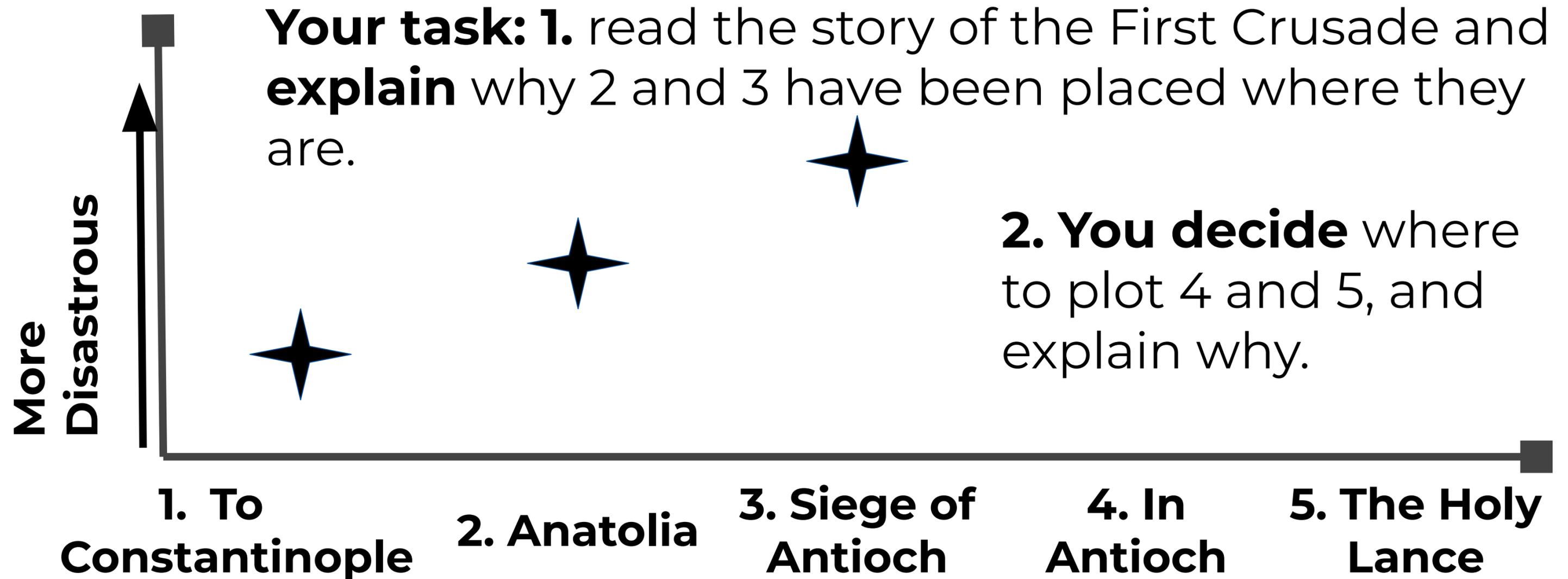
## **The Journey of the First Crusade**

***Why did Europeans join the Crusades?***

Mr Wallace



# The Disaster-o-meter™



**Tip:** You might want to draw this into your book or onto paper to help. **OR** you could give each stage a score out of 10 for how disastrous it gets, and then explain why.



# 1. To Constantinople

Peter the Hermit and the People's Crusade was a disaster. However a much better prepared group of Europeans also prepared for a crusade. Many nobles had been inspired to fight for God, as well as to claim some land and glory for themselves. It was led by **nobles** including **Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond of Toulouse** and **Bohemond of Taranto**. These nobles, and many others, took thousands of soldiers each on the journey. When they reached Constantinople, Emperor Alexios made each swear an **oath of fealty** to him, and made them promise to hand over any land that they recovered to the Byzantine Empire. All swore the oath - except Raymond of Toulouse, who simply promised 'friendship' with the Emperor.



## 2. Going through Anatolia

The nobles had large armies, and were much better prepared than the People's Crusade that had ended in disaster. But that did not make the journey easy. They were attacked by Seljuq soldiers repeatedly, and it took strength and courage to keep pushing forward towards the Holy Land. Many of the soldiers died, as did the horses, and some Crusaders abandoned the trip because of how difficult it was. Supplies ran low, and some would have wondered if they were ever going to make it. The trip pushed the Crusaders to the limit, but day by day, they got a little closer to their goal: Jerusalem.



### 3. The Siege of Antioch

By October 1097, they reached the city of Antioch. Here the first major battle of the Crusade took place. The city was key. It was high on a hill and well defended so could control all the land nearby. If the Crusaders wanted to reach the Holy Land, they had to take Antioch first. Knights led by **Raymond of Toulouse** began the **siege** of the city, and the others joined. They surrounded it for nearly ten months and it seemed like it would never be taken. Over the winter, food began to run out, and the Crusaders began to starve, as did their horses...



## 4. In Antioch

However, the siege was broken when **Bohemond** bribed a tower guard to let some of them inside the city. At night, they crept up the tower, and opened the gates from the inside. Thousands of soldiers burst into the city and began slaughtering the inhabitants. But if the Crusaders thought this was enough, they were wrong. Many of the inhabitants protected themselves inside the **citadel**, which was well protected. Meanwhile, a Seljuq army surrounded the city, and the Crusaders were trapped. They were desperate, outnumbered and many were sure that all hope had gone.



## 5. The Holy Lance

It was then that, according to sources, one Crusader had a vision that led them to the **Holy Lance** - the very lance that was used against Jesus during the Crucifixion. Discovering a holy **relic** convinced them that God was on their side. This inspired the crusaders to fight on. Even though they were outnumbered, they defeated the Seljuq army and captured the citadel. Antioch was theirs, and control of the city went to **Bohemond of Taranto**. This became one of the **Crusader States** - areas in the Holy Land controlled by the Christians of Europe. Antioch had fallen. The crusaders then started planning their march to Jerusalem.



# Glossary

**Crusader State** - Land taken by the Crusaders which they keep and run as their own Christian territory

**Oath of Fealty** - A promise, sworn before God, of loyalty to another person

**Holy Lance** - The weapon used to stab Jesus Christ when on the cross

**Citadel** - A fortress, usually high above a city

**Siege** - To surround a place and cut off its supplies in order to force it to surrender.

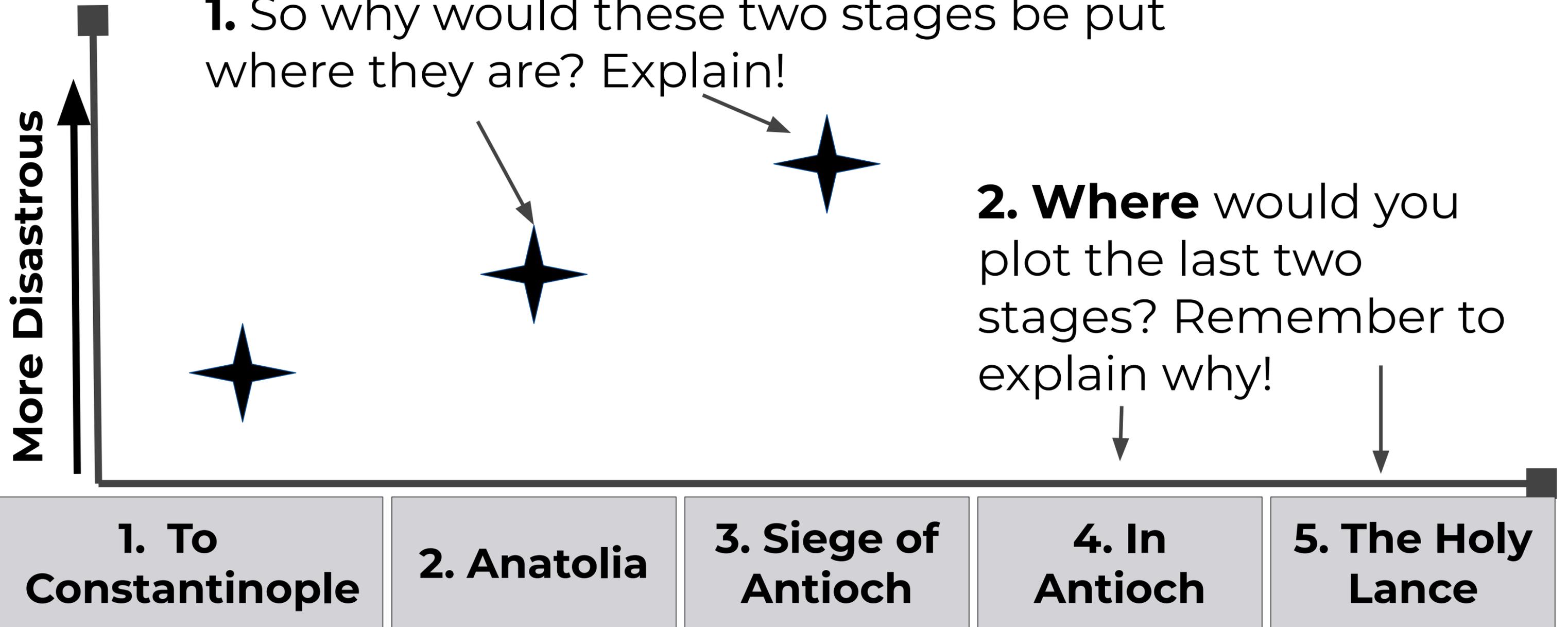
**Relic** - An object that has special importance to people, e.g. a religious object

**Nobles** - A powerful and wealthy person who holds a lot of land and knights



# The Disaster-o-meter™

1. So why would these two stages be put where they are? Explain!



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