Map #1
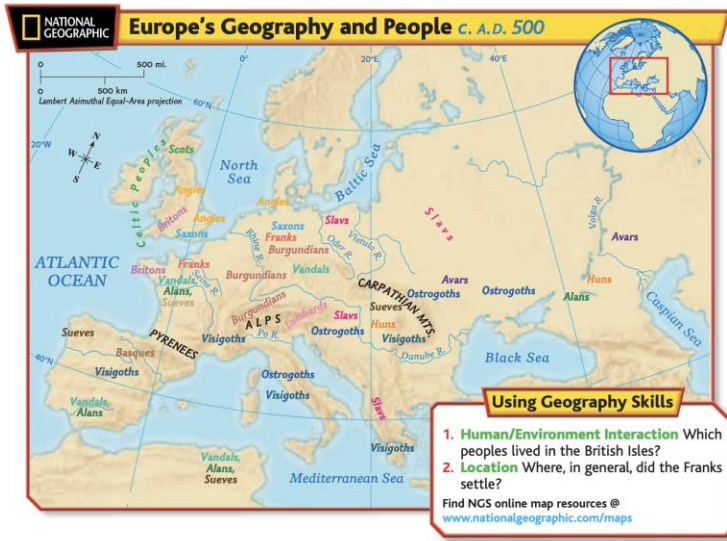

Map #2

Using the maps, answer the following questions.

1. What can you observe from the two maps?

2. Using map #2, which Germanic tribe had the largest kingdom? _____

3. Using your observations from the maps, predict potential problems.

   a. What potential problems can you predict?

   b. *Why* do you think that would become a problem?

The Geography of Europe

  The Roman Empire had united all the land surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. When the last Roman emperor in the West fell from power in A.D. 476, that unity was lost. Western Europe was divided into many kingdoms as wave after wave of Germanic invaders swept south and west, conquering large areas of Europe.

  Now that Rome no longer united people, Europe's geography began to play a more significant role in shaping events. Europe is a continent, but it is also a very large peninsula made up of many smaller peninsulas. As a result, most of Europe lies within 300 miles (483 km) of an ocean or a sea. This encouraged trade and fishing and helped Europe's economy to grow.

  Rivers also played an important role in Europe. The Rhine, Danube, Vistula, Volga, Seine, and Po Rivers made it easy to travel into the interior of Europe and encouraged people to trade. The seas and rivers provided safety as well as opportunities for trade.

  The English Channel, for instance, separated Britain and Ireland from the rest of Europe. As a result, people there were sheltered from the many wars fought on Europe's mainland. They were able to develop their own distinct ways of life. Within Europe, wide rivers like the Rhine also kept people separated and enabled different cultures to develop.

  Europe also has many mountain ranges. In the east, the Carpathians cut off what is now Ukraine and Russia from southeast Europe. In the middle, the Alps separated Italy from central Europe. To the southwest, the Pyrenees isolated Spain and Portugal. The mountains, like the rivers, made it difficult for one group to rule all of Europe and encouraged the development of independent kingdoms.

Using the text, answer the following questions.

1. Geographically, why did Europe develop into individual kingdoms?

2. Geographically, why was Europe good for trade?:
  a. How did Europe's *world location* affect trade?

  b. How did *seas and rivers* promote trade?

3. What did Europe's seas, rivers and mountains provide for its people?