

# Teacher's Guide for DIG: *World's Greatest Warrior, Alexander the Great*

March 2008

*Teacher Guide prepared by Lisa Greenberg. Lisa taught in international schools in Japan, Singapore and Saudi Arabia. Her coffee table book SAUDI ARABIA, photographs by Mohammed Babelli and text by Lisa was published in May, 2007, and her children's story "Flying Like a Djinn" was in Cricket, September 2007.*

## Getting Ready:

Display the cover of the magazine and initiate a discussion with the students about who Alexander the Great was, what they know about him, what questions they have about him and his times, and what they would like to know about him.

As you talk with students, make a two-column chart or bulletin board labeled: Alexander the Great, Facts and Questions.

Encourage students think about the questions as they read the articles and to add new questions they might have. You may want to add a third column: Answers!

## Dig Facts, p. 5

ART: Using the facts listed and other material in the issue (p. 9, copy of Lysippus's Alexander, p. 24 the Mir Zakah coin, p. 33, The Alexander Mosaic) challenge students to create a picture or statue of Alexander alone or in a group.

You may want to display these in the room.

## Alexander's Allied Queens, pp. 8-10

MAP WORK: Pass out black outline maps of the area of the world from Greece to Afghanistan (or have students trace their own maps). Explain to students that Alexander the Great is often referred to "Conqueror of the World". By tracing his routes of conquest, they will see just which part of the world he held and influenced. As they read, they should research the locations mentioned, such as Bodrum and mark them on the maps (info on pp. 13, 19, 22, 23, and others).

## UNDERSTANDING MILITARY STRATEGY:

Divide students into groups and have different groups tackle the following projects (or use as topics for discussion):

- 1/ List the various defenses of Halicarnassus and how Alexander's Macedonians overcame them.
- 2/ Explain why Ada, sister of the ruler of Halicarnassus, approached and adopted Alexander and why this was to her advantage and to Alexander's advantage.
- 3/ Write three diary entries from a Halicarnassus defender (one of Mausolus's soldiers) and a Macedonian attacker (one of Alexander's soldiers).

## Unraveling the Gordian Knot, pp. 11-14

### READING FOR INFORMATION:

1. Where is Gordian? (ancient Phrygia, now part of present-day Turkey)
2. Who was its King in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century BC? (Midas)
3. How did Gordian's relationship to its neighbors change from the 8<sup>th</sup> C to the 5<sup>th</sup> C BC? (In the 8<sup>th</sup> C it threatened even its distant Eastern neighbors, such as Assyria, but in 540 BC it was conquered by Persia, an even more distant Eastern land.)

4. When did Alexander visit Gordion? (333 BC)
5. Why do scholars have to depend on archeological evidence to understand what Alexander saw in Gordion? (There are no written records.)
6. What does the archeological evidence tell us? (The city was large and Persian-controlled; imports show that it was a thriving trading city.)
7. Why did Gordion remain large even after it was conquered by the Persians? (It was on major trade and transportation routes, was a center of manufacturing, and provided access to the Black Sea)
8. Why does the author think that Alexander made the detour to Gordion? (A prophecy associated with the Gordion knot said that whoever untied the knot would conquer all Asia and Alexander wanted to be that person.)
9. Do we know whether Alexander untied the knot? (No, some say he untied it; some say he cut through it with his sword.)
10. Do we know whether he conquered Asia? (He certainly conquered Persia, a major force in Asia.)

#### **The Forecast for Gaugamela, pp. 16-19**

##### **UNDERSTANDING MILITARY STRATEGY:**

Draw a cartoon or poster showing the strategy that Darius planned and how Alexander developed his own strategy in response.

##### **DISCUSS:**

How did the Persians interpret lunar eclipses? What particular prophecy did they make? How might this have affected the outcome of the battle? Was the prophecy accurate?

#### **The Lost Tomb, pp. 20-22**

##### **DISCUSS:**

1. Why is it so difficult to find Alexander's tomb? (Because his corpse was sent away from Babylon, his place of death, and no one is quite sure where it went.)
2. Where might it have been headed? (Macedonia, Siwa Oasis)
3. Where did it go instead? (To Egypt)
4. Why did Ptolemy want Alexander's sarcophagus in Egypt? (In order to support his rule of Egypt)
5. Where does the author suggest Ptolemy buried Alexander and why? (Memphis, because it was the greatest city of Egypt and close to the tombs of the Pharaohs at Giza)
6. Then where might it have been taken? (to the new leading city, Alexandria, by Ptolemy's son, Ptolemy II)
7. What did Ptolemy IV do? (He moved Alexander's body again, to a new tomb called the Soma, where both Alexander and members of the Ptolemaic royal family were buried, thus cementing the symbolic relationship between Alexander and the rulers of Egypt.)
8. So, why can't we find Alexander's tomb? (The Soma in Alexandria did not survive, perhaps because of the destruction and rebuilding that accompanied the transformation of Alexandria from a pagan to a Christian city and then to a Muslim city).

#### **Al Khanum, p. 23**

##### **DISCUSS:**

What evidence shows that Alexander's army might have reached Al Khanum in Afghanistan? (Roman colonnades, temples, and Greek inscriptions) Why would they have gone that far to found a city? (Because Alexander believed that Greek culture should spread throughout the known world.)

#### **One Small, Gold Coin, pp. 24-**

How did the Mir Zakah find change historians' understanding of Alexander? (It showed that Alexander commissioned his own portrait as a "god", not just a person with god-like power, and that he was proud of his conquering of India.)

**CREATIVE WRITING:** Write an imaginative story of the life of the Mir Zakah Alexander coin. Imagine where the coin might have been before it was tossed in the well, why it was thrown in the well, how it was discovered, how it made its journey to the bazaar, and how the journalist might have treated it

**Whose Tomb? and Identifying Remains, pp. 27-29**

**UNDERSTANDING THE ARGUMENT:**

Fold a paper lengthwise in three. Label each third of the paper as Tomb 1, Tomb 2, Tomb 3. List the inhabitants of each tomb and the reasoning for why the body(ies) are so identified.

**CAREERS:**

Identify and list the skills needed to work with tomb excavations and the identification of remains.

**Wrapping Up:**

Review the original chart with all its amendments and a good map of Alexander's conquests and journeys. Discuss with students, Why was Alexander historically important? How do you think he impacted the world? What was his greatest achievement?