

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Mark It on the Map

Have students locate the area highlighted on pages 24–25 on a world map. Then use the scale of miles to determine the approximate distance Alexander and his troops marched. Have students compare this distance to one in the United States.

Vocabulary

mercenaries	legacy
oligarchy	odeion
catapult	gymnasium
museion	

Introduction

Have students make a list of the five personality traits they think a person needs to become a world conqueror and give a reason for each. List these characteristics on the board and discuss with the students how they would rank them in order of importance, and why. Have each student keep a copy of the list and note next to each characteristic when Alexander would have needed it. End with a roundtable discussion to crosscheck the notes.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What is “Hellenism”?
- ➔ What events propelled Alexander to the throne of Macedonia?
- ➔ What rule did Alexander follow when conquering other nations or peoples?
- ➔ Why did Alexander want to visit Troy? When did he choose to do so?
- ➔ What was the significance of the Battle of Issus, for the Persians and for Alexander?
- ➔ How did Alexander treat the defeated Poros?
- ➔ When and why did Alexander’s soldiers refuse to follow him any farther?
- ➔ What was Alexander’s plan for the return trip from India? What problems did he encounter? Why?
- ➔ What were Alexander’s plans for Alexandria in Egypt?
- ➔ Why did Alexander found cities along his marching route?
- ➔ Where is Ai Khanum? Why is the study of this ancient city important?

Think About It

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- ➔ Alexander led armies from the front. Since the American Civil War, generals have led their armies from behind. Why do you think this change occurred? Which would you advocate?
- ➔ Of the many people who have achieved much during their lifetime, relatively few have won everlasting renown. Why do you think Alexander is one of these people?
- ➔ What do you think Alexander meant when he said, “My father gave me life, but it was Aristotle who taught me how to live”?
- ➔ How do you interpret Alexander’s deathbed remark, “to the strongest”?
- ➔ Read the explanation of “Philippics” on page 31 and think of a present-day situation that you think might call for Philippics today. Suggest a person whom you think should deliver it.
- ➔ Do you think Alexander’s goal of a common culture throughout his empire was a realistic one? Explain why or why not.

Debate

Divide the class into two teams to debate the following statement: History should not assign the honorary title of “the Great” just to those who conquer lands and other peoples. Allow the teams time to prepare a 2-minute opening statement and a 5-minute argument. After both sides have presented their opening statements, allow teams time to prepare a 3-minute rebuttal. End with a class discussion of the arguments.

Then and Now

Alexander promoted the spread of Greek culture and predicted Greek would be the language of his world. What language and culture are becoming increasingly international in today's world? Explain, and suggest reasons why.

Research Projects

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Assign students to research at least four individuals who controlled empires (many lands beyond their own nation's boundaries). Examples: Persian King Darius, Indian King Ashoka, Russian Queen Catherine the Great, English Queen Victoria. Have the students or groups present their findings to the class.
- Assign students to research why the Greeks called themselves "Hellenes" and then have them report their findings to the class.
- Assign students to research why Philip, and then Alexander, were determined to conquer Persia. Have the student or group present their findings to the class.
- Assign students to research the siege of Tyre and present their findings to the class.
- Bring a book to class that includes the letters of the Greek alphabet. Assign a student to figure out the Greek word in the illustration on page 31 and tell it to the class.
- Assign two students or groups of students to research Archimedes' discoveries: the use of pulleys and levers and the "law of buoyancy." Have each group explain and demonstrate the principle for the rest of the class.

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Divide the class into groups. Assign each group a period in Alexander's life to illustrate, with brief captions explaining each illustration. Have the class design a poster, dividing it into sections with titles such as "The Young Prince," "Foray Into Egypt," and "Death in Babylon." Hang the completed collage/poster on the wall and have each group—in chronological order—explain its section.
- Have students illustrate the incident at Gordium and write a caption explaining it.
- Divide the class into five groups and assign each one of the dates on page 23. Ask each group to illustrate its date. Then have a spokesperson from each group, in chronological order (1180 to 146 B.C.), explain its illustration.
- Have students make a chart with illustrations and informative captions of each of the scientific achievements found on pages 42–45.

Word Work

Ask students to write a sentence that includes as many of the words described on page 30 as possible. See how many can accurately include all four.

Just for Fun

Students may complete one or both of the following activities:

- Match the people and places on pages 22.
- Make your own "mark" with seals by following the directions on pages 32–33.

Follow These Footsteps

Alexander the Great	Aristotle	Aristarchos	Ptolemy I
Philip II	Poros	Euclid	
Olympias	Archimedes	Herophilos	