

# Alexander the Great

## A Hero or a **VILLAIN**?

Complete your wanted or in loving memory poster

# Context

Directions: Use the following lyrics from “Alexander the Great” written by the heavy metal band Iron Maiden, to answer the following questions.

"My son ask for thyself another  
Kingdom, for that which I leave  
is too small for thee"  
(King Philip of Macedonia - 339 B.C.)

Near to the east  
In a part of ancient Greece  
In an ancient land called Macedonia  
Was born a son  
To Philip of Macedon  
The legend his name was Alexander

At the age of nineteen  
He became the Macedon King  
And he swore to free all of Asia Minor  
By the Aegean Sea  
In 334 B.C.

He utterly beat the armies of Persia  
Alexander the Great  
His name struck fear into hearts of men  
Alexander the Great  
Became a legend 'mongst mortal men

King Darius the third  
Defeated fled Persia  
The Scythians fell by the river Jaxartes  
Then Egypt fell to the Macedon King as well  
And he founded the city called Alexandria

By the Tigris river  
He met King Darius again  
And crushed him again in the battle of Arbela  
Entering Babylon  
And Susa, treasures he found  
Took Persepolis the capital of Persia

Alexander the Great  
His name struck fear into hearts of men  
Alexander the Great  
Became a God amongst mortal men  
A Phrygian King had bound a chariot yoke  
And Alexander cut the 'Gordian knot'  
And legend said that who untied the knot

He would become the master of Asia  
Hellenism he spread far and wide  
The Macedonian learned mind  
Their culture was a western way of life  
He paved the way for Christianity

Marching on, marching on  
The battle weary marching side by side  
Alexander's army line by line  
They wouldn't follow him to India  
Tired of the combat, pain and the glory  
Alexander the Great  
His name struck fear into hearts of men  
Alexander the Great  
He died of fever in Babylon

## Questions

1. **Who was the father of Alexander the Great?**
2. **Where was Alexander the Great born?**
3. **At the age of 19, what did Alexander become?**
4. **Which persian leader did he defeat?**
5. **Which place did Alexander conquer?**
6. **When Alexander conquered a place what culture spread?**
7. **Do you think this is a reliable source?**
8. **Defend your answer to #7 on why this source is reliable or not.**

Song  
Lyrics:  
Not  
required  
to watch,  
if you do  
the song  
starts  
around  
1:57 and  
has a lot  
of guitar  
solos.

Then Egypt fell to the  
Macedon King as well  
And he founded the  
city called Alexandria

# Analyzing Sources & Deduction



1- Alexander the Great was from Macedonia. What cultures did he come into contact with when building his empire?

2- Name 3 bodies of water that bordered Alexander the Great's empire/

3- Why would it be difficult to rule Alexander's empire?

4-How would you describe the type of culture that flourished in Alexander's Empire?

# Analyzing Sources & Deduction

Directions: Read the following documents referring to Alexander the Great, determine if they are primary or secondary, and whether he was a hero or villain.

## Document #1

“When he came to Thebes, to show how willing he was to accept of their repentance for what was past, he only demanded of them Phoenix and Prothytes, the authors of the rebellion, and proclaimed a general pardon to those who would come over to him. But when the Thebans merely retorted by demanding Philotas and Antipater to be delivered into their hands, and by a proclamation on their part invited all who would assert the liberty of Greece to come over to them, he presently applied himself to make them feel the last extremities of war. The Thebans indeed defended themselves with a zeal and courage beyond their strength, being much outnumbered by their enemies. But when the Macedonian garrison sallied out upon them from the citadel, they were so hemmed in on all sides that the greater part of them fell in the battle; the city itself being taken by storm, was sacked and razed. Alexander's hope being that so severe an example might terrify the rest of Greece into obedience, and also in order to gratify the hostility of his confederates, the Phocians and Plataeans. So that, except the priests, and some few who had heretofore been the friends and connections of the Macedonians, the family of the poet Pindar, and those who were known to have opposed the public vote for the war, all the rest, to the number of thirty thousand, were publicly sold for slaves; and it is computed that upwards of six thousand were put to the sword.”

- Plutarch, Greek Historian, 90 A.D.

1. Primary or Secondary source?
2. According to this document, What did Alexander the Great do?
3. How does this document depict (describe) Alexander the Great?

# Analyzing Sources & Deduction

Directions: Read the following documents referring to Alexander the Great, determine if they are primary or secondary, and whether he was a hero or villain.

## Document #2

Alexander, by founding more than seventy cities among the barbarian tribes, ... suppressed their savage and uncivilized customs ... Those whom Alexander conquered were more fortunate than those who escaped ... [He desired to give] all the races in the world ... one rule and one form of government, making all mankind a single people.

- Plutarch, Greek Historian, 90 A.D.

1. Primary or Secondary source?
2. According to this document, What did Alexander the Great do?
3. How does this document depict (describe) Alexander the Great?

# Analyzing Sources & Deduction

Directions: Read the following documents referring to Alexander the Great, determine if they are primary or secondary, and whether he was a hero or villain.

## Document #3

“For I myself believe that there was at that time no race of mankind, no city, no individual (to whom) the name Alexander had not reached. And so not I can suppose that a man quite beyond all other men was born without some divine influence”

-Arrian, philosopher A.D. 171

1. Primary or Secondary source?
2. According to this document, What did Alexander the Great do?
3. How does this document depict (describe) Alexander the Great?

# Analyzing Sources & Deduction

Directions: Read the following documents referring to Alexander the Great, determine if they are primary or secondary, and whether he was a hero or villain.

## Document #4

“He was.... Very heroic in courage... He was very clever he was very clever in recognizing what was necessary to be done when others were still in a state of uncertainty... In... ruling an army, he was exceedingly skillful; and very renowned for rousing the courage of his soldiers, filling them with hopes of success, and dispelling their fear in the midst of danger by his own freedom from fear. He was likewise very (dedicated) to keeping the agreements and settlements which he made.”

- Arrian, Philosopher 171 A.D.

1. Primary or Secondary source?
2. According to this document, What did Alexander the Great do?
3. How does this document depict (describe) Alexander the Great?

Throughout history many leaders either have referred to themselves or have been given by others the distinctive title of “the Great” to be placed after his/her name. In this assignment you will decide if Alexander the Great proved worthy of his title by evaluating his words and accomplishments.



**Background:** Alexander III of Macedon served as king of macedonia from 336 to 323 B.C. Born to king Phillip, and educated by Aristotle, one of history's greatest philosophers, Alexanders is considered in history as one of the greatest military geniuses of all times. After the death of King Philip, Alexander garnered the support of macedonian army and eliminated his enemies to become king and leader of the Corinthian League. Alexander went on to conquer Persia and Egypt, his kingdom which extending from the Mediterranean to the border of India. Referred to as Alexander the Great, he is regarded as one of history's brilliant military leaders and most powerful rulers.

Is he deserving? You decide. The following are some of Alexander's recorded achievements. Place a check mark in the “great: or “not so great” box next to the fact.



Great

# You Decide

Not So Great

☐

1- The Prince took charge of the Companion Cavalry at age 18, and aided his father in defeating the Athenian and Theban armies at Chaeronea Alexander became King of Macedonia at the age of 20.

☐☐

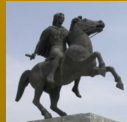
2- Alexander's army consisted of 40,000 soldiers on foot (infantry) and 5,000 soldiers on horseback (cavalry). He considered himself a great leader and was quoted: *"I am not afraid of an army of lions led by a sheep; I am afraid of an army of sheep lead by a lion."*

☐☐

3- From his first victory at age 18, Alexander gained a reputation of being successful when he lead his men to battle. Most notably, he would send smaller forces to reach and break the enemy lines before his enemies were ready to battle. Due to this, Alexander never lost a battle in 15 years of conquest.

☐☐

4- Driven to conquer, he convinced his soldiers to march thousands of miles in harsh conditions, risking their lives in one military conquest after another for the sake of the glory. Yet, they were all willing as he was considered a great leader. This photo is the Equestrian statue of Alexander the Great on the waterfront at Thessaloniki, capital of Greek Macedonia.

☐☐

5- Alexander commemorated his conquest by founding more than twenty cities. He decided to name this city after himself, and called them Alexander.

☐☐

6- In his battles he destroyed the great capital of Persepolis, along with the temples and emblems of the ancient zoroastrian religion.

☐☐

7- His military conquest greatly increased contacts and trade between the East and West. Areas to the east were significantly exposed to Greek civilization and other influences of Greece. Some of the cities he founded became major cultural centers, with some surviving into the 21st century.

☐

Using all the evidence you have studied, do you think Alexander the Great is worthy of his title, or is he a villain? Write a thesis statement for your opinion.

Supporting Fact #1	Supporting Fact #2	Supporting Fact #3	Conclusion
<p>Write a portion of an expert of that supports your opinion or topic sentence below. <i>Remember you can use ellipses (...) to replace text that is unnecessary to support your answer.</i></p> <p>Transition in your own words.</p> <p>This quote demonstrates that Alexander the Great was a _____ because</p>	<p>Write a portion of an expert of that supports your opinion ot topic sentence below. <i>Remember you can use ellipses (...) to replace text that is unnecessary to support your answer.</i></p> <p>Transition in your own words.</p> <p>This quote demonstrates that Alexander the Great was a _____ because</p>	<p>Write a portion of an expert of that supports your opinion ot topic sentence below. <i>Remember you can use ellipses (...) to replace text that is unnecessary to support your answer.</i></p> <p>Transition in your own words.</p> <p>This quote demonstrates that Alexander the Great was a _____ because</p>	<p>Write a conclusion below that best summarizes your opinion about what you have learned about Alexander the Great. Remember, your conclusion should reflect your topic sentence/ opinion but have more detail.</p>

# Extra Extra Read All About It

You are going to create a *Wanted Poster* or an *In Loving Memory* poster depending on your position.

## HERO or VILLAIN?

### Alexander the Great



July 356 BCE – June 323 BCE

Created one of the largest empires of the ancient world by the age of 30

"There is nothing impossible to him who will try."

Undeclared in battle, he is widely considered one of history's most successful military leaders

"[It is] a most slavish thing to luxuriate, and a most royal thing to labor."



Spent his entire life building an empire that quickly crumbled after his death

"A tomb now suffices him for whom the whole world was not sufficient." —tomb epitaph

Died at the age of 33 from unknown causes


"Holy shadows of the dead, I'm not to blame for your cruel and bitter fate, but the accursed rivalry which brought sister nations and brother people to fight one another."

#### Feats:

- ★ Became the king of Macedon at the age of 20 upon the death of his father
- ★ Conquered the entire Persian empire stretching all the way to India in just a matter of a few years
- ★ Founded dozens of cities bearing his name and spread Greek culture throughout the known world
- ★ Ranked among the most influential people in human history, with military feats still studied today
- ★ Solved the unsolvable Gordian Knot by slashing through it with his sword, fulfilling prophecies that the man who solved the knot would be the next king of Asia

#### Failures:

- ★ Exploits were halted, not by defeat, but by his own troops growing homesick and protesting
- ★ Executed several of his governors for mismanagement of the empire while he was away
- ★ His empire was ill-prepared for his sudden death and quickly split up following it
- ★ Destroyed ancient artifacts, killed thousands, and damaged the cultures in the regions he conquered
- ★ Reported as being short-tempered and resorted to violent means to solve even small problems



## YOU Be the Judge!

TEACHER'S Discovery

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