



Alexander: Ruler of the World Classroom Guide

Alexander: Ruler of the World tells the story of the brilliant general and statesman who conquered Greece, overthrew the Persian empire and invaded northern India in the 3rd century BC. The son of Philip of Macedon, Alexander the Great was tutored by Aristotle, founded the city of Alexandria in Egypt and died at age 33. This 1-hour BIO explores Alexander's military strategies and provides a vivid portrait of warfare in the ancient world. It is recommended for middle and high school students.

Vocabulary:

Using the dictionary at www.merriamwebster.com, an internet resource such as www.google.com, or an encyclopedia, students should define or explain the significance of the following terms:

- astute
- charisma
- conquest
- conspicuous
- empire
- emulate
- insurrections
- meteoric
- pinnacle

Discussion Questions

1. Why is Alexander described as complex and contradictory?
2. Why was Athens considered the most powerful of the Greek city-states?
3. Describe Alexander's education. In what ways was he influenced by Aristotle? How did his education differ from education provided to students today?
4. Do you see parallel between the lives of Alexander and Achilles? Why did Alexander attempt to model his life on that of Achilles?
5. What were Alexander's strengths as a general? What was his strategy in the battle of Gaugamela?
6. Who wrote the many legends about Alexander? What can we learn from these legends? How have these legends functioned to shape our views of ancient history?

7. Why did Alexander follow the religious protocol in the areas he conquered? Why did he work to cultivate decent relationships with local priests?
8. Why do scholars and artists still celebrate the memory of the ancient city of Alexandria? Which cities in the world today stir similar sentiments among artists and intellectuals?

Extended Activities:

1. Draw a map showing the world Alexander traveled through. Mark significant places in Alexander's life, including Thebes, Athens, Alexandria, and sites in the Persian empire. Trace Alexander's campaign across Persia, Egypt and into India.
2. Write an essay in which you detail the qualities that made Alexander a successful statesman. What qualities are needed in statesmen or world leaders today?
3. At the conclusion of the documentary a scholar comments, "The making of war had become an art." What do you think this statement means? Why do scholars say that Alexander founded a new world? What was Alexander's legacy? Write a brief response essay.

Websites

Read more about Alexander the Great on BIO.com:

<http://www.biography.com/articles/Alexander-the-Great-9180468>

History for Kids page on Greek architecture:

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/greeks/architecture/greekarch.htm>

The British Museum's Ancient Greece site:

<http://www.ancientgreece.co.uk>

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's article on Architecture in Ancient Greece in its Timeline of Art History:

http://www.metmuseum.org/TOAH/hd/grarc/hd_grarc.htm

Books

Behor, G. *Ancient Greece: The Famous Monuments Past and Present* (Getty Trust Publications, 2000).

Chisholm, Jane. *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece* (Usborne Books, 2002).

Gergel, Tania. *Alexander the Great: The Brief Life and Towering Exploits of History's Greatest Conqueror--As Told By His Original Biographers* (Penguin Books, 2004).

Ross, Stewart. *History in Stone: Ancient Greece* (Silver Dolphin Books, 2001).