

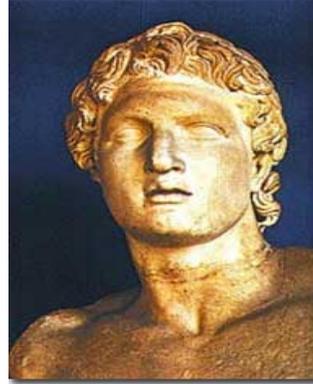
ALEXANDER THE GREAT DBQ

HOMework DUE _____

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "GREAT"?

Directions: Below is a list of seven personal traits or characteristics. Next to each trait, write the name of a person who has that trait *and has used it to achieve greatness*. The person may be a historical figure, someone famous who is alive today, or even friends and family that you associate with those characteristics.

1. courage _____
2. intelligence _____
3. creativity _____
4. leadership _____
5. empathy _____



Though he was an unquestionably skilled and highly respected military leader, Alexander the Great was feared by those around him for his paranoia and dangerous temper.

CLOSE READING: WAS ALEXANDER THE GREAT REALLY GREAT?

Alexander the Great, a great conqueror, in 13 short years he amassed the largest empire in the entire ancient world — an empire that covered 3,000 miles. And he did this without the benefit of modern technology and weaponry. In his day, troop movements were primarily on foot, and communications were face to face. Not bad for a kid who became the King of Macedon at the age of 20.

Many of Alexander's accomplishments were made possible by his father, Philip of Macedon. Macedon, which existed roughly where the modern country of Macedonia lies today, was a kingdom located that lay geographically north of the Greek city-states. In 338 B.C.E., King Philip of Macedon invaded and conquered the Greek city-states. Philip took advantage of the fact that the Greek city-states were divided by years of squabbling and infighting. Philip succeeded in doing what years of fighting between city-states had not done. He united Greece.

Philip's next goal was to defeat Greece's age-old enemy to the east: Persia. For years, the massive Persian Empire threatened the very existence of the Greek way of life. But before he was able to pursue his second goal, Philip was assassinated.

When his son, Alexander, took the throne in 336 B.C.E., he vowed to complete the plans of his father. In 334 B.C.E., Alexander invaded Persia, which lay across the Aegean Sea in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). After three grueling years of warfare and three decisive battles, Alexander smashed the Persian armies at the Tigris River and conquered the mighty Persian Empire, including the legendary city of Babylon. For many Greeks, this victory marked a moment of sweet revenge against a bitter foe.

At this point, at the age of 25, Alexander ruled an expansive empire. Nevertheless, his ambitions were not satisfied. While fighting the Persians, Alexander conquered Egypt and founded a city at the mouth of the Nile River. This city, which he named Alexandria after himself, became a cosmopolitan, diverse, bustling center of trade, the arts, and ideas.

But Alexander was not done. He continued his campaign, driving farther east, until he reached India and the Indus River in 326 B.C.E. At this point, his exhausted troops refused to fight further. Without the support of his army, Alexander had no choice but to turn back and begin consolidating and organizing his far-flung empire. On his way home, Alexander died from disease in 323 B.C.E.

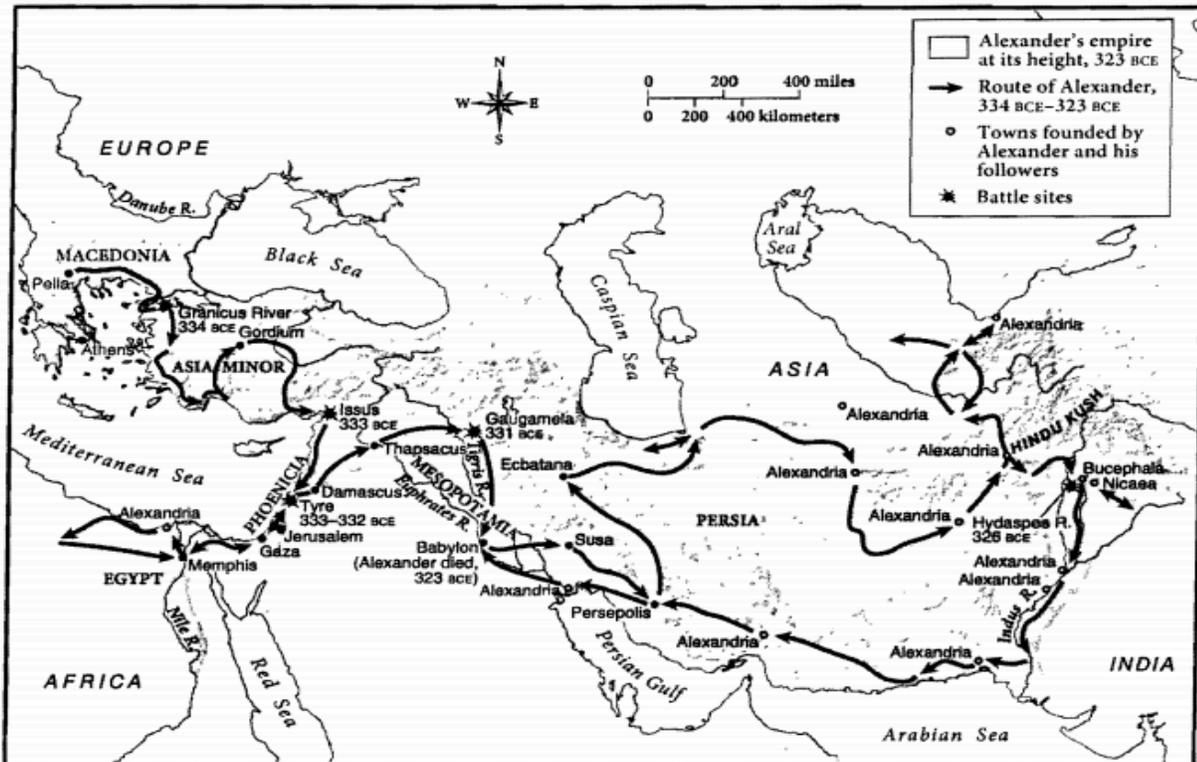
Alexander the Great's legacy is both far-reaching and profound. First, his father was able to unite the Greek city-states, and Alexander destroyed the Persian Empire forever. More importantly, Alexander's conquests spread Greek culture, also known as Hellenism, across his empire.

In fact, Alexander's reign marked the beginning of a new era known as the Hellenistic Age because of the powerful influence that Greek culture had on other people. Without Alexander's ambition, Greek ideas and culture might well have remained confined to Greece.

Many historians see Alexander the Great in a different light. Although Alexander was both intelligent and handsome, he also had a darker side. He possessed a ferocious temper and from time to time would arbitrarily murder close advisors and even friends. Also, toward the end of his many campaigns, he senselessly slaughtered thousands whose only crime was being in his way.

DOCUMENT A

Alexander's Empire



Note: In 334 BCE, Alexander crossed from Macedonia to Asia with an army of about 40,000. Most were Macedonians; others were Greeks and mercenaries (hired fighters).

Analysis

1. How many times does the city name "Alexandria" appear on the map?
2. What conclusions can you draw from this?

So is this evidence that he is Great or Not Great? Explain.

DOCUMENT B

Note: Lucius Flavius Arrianus, known as Arrian, was a Greek philosopher and historian who lived some 400 years after the time of Alexander. His book is considered the best account of Alexander's reign. In this excerpt, Arrian describes Alexander's last major battle, fought against a prince named Porus on the eastern bank of the Hydaspes River in India. Because he was so impressed with Porus's bravery, Alexander allowed him to retain administrative rule after the Indians' defeat.

Alexander pitched camp on the bank of the Hydaspes ("hay-das-pees"), and Porus was to be seen on the other bank with his whole army and his force of elephants. He realized that he could not cross at the point where Porus was encamped – his elephants were too numerous.... When Alexander saw this, he [decided to] move his troops in all different directions so that Porus would keep puzzled.... At night he would take most of his cavalry to various points along the river bank where he would create a clamour, raise the war cry and produce all other such noises as would come from men preparing to cross the river. Porus would actually parallel his movements on the other side, leading his elephants toward the shouting, and Alexander got him into the habit of making these corresponding movements. This actually went on for quite a long time [until] Porus no longer reacted.

Editor's Note: Arrian then writes that Alexander, leaving 5,000 armed men in full view opposite Porus's camp, led a force exceeding 10,000 foot soldiers, archers, and cavalry and crossed the river about ten miles upstream. Rafts for ferrying the men were made from hides wrapped around hay and sewn watertight. The crossing was further hidden by a midnight thunderstorm. Too late to stop the crossing, Porus arranged his army on a nearby plain and prepared for battle. The narrative continues:

The engagement was ... unlike any other previous battles.... [Porus's] elephants were now boxed in, and the damage inflicted by them fell on friend no less than foe, with men trampled under as the beasts twisted and turned.... Most of the drivers of the elephants, too, had been brought down by spears.... Eventually the animals grew tired and their charges lost vigor.... Alexander then threw his cavalry in a circle around the entire force, and ordered the infantry to lock shields, to group tightly and to advance as a phalanx.... At this juncture, ... the Indians all took to flight.

Analysis

1. Explain how Alexander's army was able to cross the Hydaspes before Porus was able to react.
2. How was Alexander able to turn Porus's elephants into a kind of weapon?

So, is this evidence that he is Great or Not Great? Explain.

DOCUMENT C

Note: During Alexander's march down the Mediterranean coast, many cities surrendered without a fight. Some were happy to have the Persians removed. Alexander treated these cities rather kindly. Tyre ("tire") was another matter. Its citizens refused to surrender. They believed their city was unconquerable because it was built on an island and protected by high walls. Alexander proceeded to build a causeway, or land bridge, of timber and rubble so his soldiers could cross from the mainland to the island. The city held out for seven months and Tyrian counterattacks caused Alexander to lose many men. In the end, however, the causeway was completed and Alexander's army smashed into the city.

When the last organized resistance was broken, Alexander's [soldiers] ranged through the city on a ferocious manhunt. . . . Alexander had ordered that all [except] those who sought sanctuary [safety in the temple] were to be slain, and his commands were executed with savage relish. The air grew thick with smoke from burning buildings. Seven thousand Tyrians died . . . and the number would have been far higher had it not been for the men of Sidon, who entered the city alongside Alexander's troops. Even though Tyre had been Sidon's rival for centuries, these neighbors of the victims, horrified by what they now witnessed, managed to smuggle some 15,000 of them to safety.

The great city . . . was now utterly destroyed. Her king, Azimilik, and various other notables, including envoys from Carthage, had taken refuge in the temple of Melkart, and Alexander spared their lives. The remaining survivors, some 30,000 in number, he sold into slavery. Two thousand men of military age were crucified.

Analysis

1. How might you explain Alexander's decision not to kill anyone who took sanctuary in the temple?
2. What can you interpret from Alexander's decision to crucify 2,000 military aged men?
3. What would be a military reason for the severe treatment of Tyrian survivors?

So, is this evidence that he is Great or Not Great? Explain.

DOCUMENT D

The Legend of the Helmet

The army was crossing a desert of sand; the sun was already blazing down upon them, but they were struggling on under the necessity of reaching water, which was still far away. Alexander, like everyone else, was tormented by thirst, but he was nonetheless marching on foot at the head of his men. It was all he could do to keep going, but he did so, and the result (as always) was that the men were the better able to endure their misery when they saw that it was equally shared. As they toiled on, a party of light infantry which had gone off looking for water found some—just a wretched little trickle collected in a shallow gully. They scooped up with difficulty what they could and hurried back ... to Alexander; then, just before they reached him, they tipped the water into a helmet and gave it to him. Alexander, with a word of thanks for the gift, took the helmet and, in full view of his troops, poured the water on the ground. So extraordinary was the effect of this action that the water wasted by Alexander was as good as a drink for every man in the army.

Analysis

1. Why did Alexander pour the water on the ground?

So, is this evidence that he is Great or Not Great? Explain.



DOCUMENT E

Note: "Hellenes" is what ancient Greeks called themselves. The term "Hellenistic" was first used in the 19th century by historians to describe the period following Alexander when Greek ideas and culture spread.

Alexander's Legacy (selected items)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Size of Alexander's empire at his death (sq. miles) | 2,000,000 |
| Size of Roman Empire at its greatest (sq. miles) | 2,200,000 |
| Years that it took Alexander to build his empire | 11 |
| Years that Alexander's empire held together after his death | 10 |
| Length of Hellenistic period in Middle East and western Asia (years) | 300 |
| Number of cities founded by Alexander | 70 |
| Estimated enemy soldiers and civilians killed in four major battles | 100,000 |
| Religion most directly influenced by Greek art and ritual | Buddhism in India |
| Number of years after Alexander that Roman Emperor Marcus Macrinus had images of Alexander sewn into his clothing | 540 |
| Number of years after Alexander that Greek literature and theater remained strong cultural influences in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East | About 900 |
| Number of years Greek remained official language of Jordan | 1,000 |

Analysis

1. What conclusions can you draw from the numbers on this chart (use at least one piece of data in your answer)?

So, is this evidence that he is Great or Not Great? Explain.



LEARNING TARGET: I can extract evidence from primary and secondary source documents and use that evidence to support a claim about the reputation of Alexander the Great.

Pick a position:

After reading the documents I have come to the conclusion that (circle one)

Alexander was great

Alexander was NOT great

My plan:

Documents I will use to support my claim:

- Doc _____ Useful evidence from this document: _____

- Doc _____ Useful evidence from this document:

- Doc _____ Useful evidence from this document:

-----Now turn your position and evidence into a claim-----

My Claim:

- My claim is a complete sentence (no “it” or “he/she” or “they”)
- My claim takes a position: It is clear to the reader that I have come to a conclusion about the topic and the rest of my essay would be the explanation of that conclusion
- My claim explains my position/opinion in an academic argument **with 3 clear key points**
- My claim is arguable it can be backed up with evidence, quotations, argumentation, expert opinion, statistics, and telling details from the sources I have to work with (even though I won’t use that evidence right now)

Grade breakdown: Your score has been circled and multiplied by 5

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Incomplete. Please finish and submit as soon as possible | Student has not successfully extracted evidence from documents, chosen effective quotes to strengthen their writing, or identified the main idea of those documents or used them to support their claim. Errors in logic and conclusions are present. Student can redo for additional practice and points. | Student shows the ability to extract evidence from documents by answering the questions, but has not successfully determined the main idea for each document, or cited specific evidence to strengthen their writing. Can redo for additional practice and points. | You mostly have it! Writing shows that student has the ability to extract evidence from documents, cite specific evidence, use evidence to support their claim and determine main ideas. |  |