



THE LEGACY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT: GREAT LEADER OR POWER-HUNGRY TYRANT?

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

Session 1 Reader's Theater Youth Leadership Forum Building Background Knowledge	2–4
Session 2 More Building Background Knowledge Perspectives on Alexander the Great Examining Perspectives	5–9
Session 3 Timeline Help Wanted Crime Report Preparing for Both Sides of the Debate	10–15
Session 4 Preparing for the Debate It's Debate Time!	16–17
Session 5 Writing	18–19

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES FOR OTHER CONTENT AREAS

ELA Current Language and Ancient Greek Traditions	20
Math Approximating Using Scale	21
Science Going Ballistic	22

FOCUS WORDS

Examining the Focus Words Closely	23
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Reader's Theater

Drama on the Recycling Committee

Setting: Four friends have just walked out in the middle of the Hillsdale Middle School student government meeting where they were discussing the upcoming recycling event.

Dana: Baje, I can't believe Alex just kicked you off of the recycling committee! All you asked is if he was being **methodical** enough with the schedule he created for picking up paper and cans!

Baje: Right? All I did was ask him a question about the schedule and he immediately **deduced** that I was trying to make him look bad. Ever since he became class president, he thinks he's untouchable and above criticism. If we go with his schedule, the recycling pickup will **descend** into chaos! Plus, we're members of the student council and we were elected to represent the student body.

Ricki: Maybe the power is going to his head a bit, but he has made some great changes. One of Alex's great **legacies** as class president is that he worked **methodically** to persuade the principal to allow us to use smartphones in class.

Luke: That was awesome. It makes it so much easier to look up words that I don't know.

Baje: I'm surprised your phone battery lasts long enough, Luke!

Luke: Whoa. That's the same tone that you just used with Alex and probably the reason he booted you from the committee. You can't make him look bad if he's going to be a strong leader. So, he booted you because he had to set an example that he wouldn't tolerate that kind of disrespect.

Dana: But Luke, Baje was right. Someone needed to question Alex so that he would focus on getting things done properly, not just doing whatever it takes to become more popular.

Luke: Okay, Alex should be questioned – just not in front of everybody. I hope Alex continues to get students privileges like cell phone use, pizza lunches, and field trips. But he certainly won't be able to bring about these great changes if he doesn't have the respect of the school.

Dana: I admit he's done some popular things. The sixth graders get to go on a field trip because Alex persuaded the PTA to donate money. But being popular isn't enough. He's trying to create this **myth** about himself that he's a great leader, but what has he done to really improve our school? Smartphones and field trips? Doesn't take much to buy loyalty at this school.

Luke: I love that stuff! Giving people stuff makes them happy. Students will follow him because he got them these privileges.

Dana: But in his campaign speeches, he promised to bring harmony to this divided school. Instead, he's focused on making kids like him.

Ricki: But maybe being popular is a **tactic** that he's using to make some more important changes later. He has to get people on his side first and show that he's a strong leader. If that means Alex has to make an example of someone, so be it!

Baje: Yeah, well you weren't the example! I want him gone. He's always been like this as long as I've known him. Little tyrant.

Dana: Well, he's also your older brother. Maybe that's what's really at the **root** of this!

Baje: Like I said, Alex is a tyrant!

Luke: I just hope that he can use that popularity to get us some iPads. How he gets them doesn't really matter to me. Hello Angry Birds!

In this week's social studies lesson, you will learn about the life of Alexander the Great, considered by some to be the greatest military leader of all time. He was also one of the youngest; he died before his thirty-third birthday. You will read about his upbringing in ancient Greece and the 11-year military campaign that changed the world forever. But there are people who think that Alexander was not that great! Some people think that he was a power-hungry tyrant who caused many lives to be lost in a purposeless campaign for his own glory.

Youth Leadership Forum

Who is attending which workshop?

The town of Hillsdale is holding a Youth Leadership Forum. Members of the student governments from its local middle and high schools will run sessions that introduce students to leadership opportunities, as well as provide some **tactics** for becoming a strong leader.

Below is a list of workshops that participants can attend. Can you **deduce** which of the characters from the Reader's Theater chose to attend the different sessions? Find evidence from the text to support your choice.



Start listening! The best idea may not be your own!

Leaders often make the mistake of thinking that they are always right. But the best solutions might come from listening to others. This session will help you develop the ability to listen to suggestions without becoming defensive.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dana | Evidence from text _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baje | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ricki | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luke | _____ |

Popularity works! A methodical approach to leadership.

Before you can lead, you must make sure your followers like and trust you. This session will show you a few easy tricks to get people to like you so that they will follow your directions and help you build your **legacy**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dana | Evidence from text _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baje | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ricki | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luke | _____ |

Give 'em what they want!

How do you develop and maintain your leadership? Get your followers privileges they really want. Find ways to keep people happy so they don't question your **tactics**. Once you follow these simple suggestions you will be able to forge ahead with your agenda without any pushback.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Dana | Evidence from text _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baje | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ricki | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luke | _____ |

Be a great leader without all the nonsense!

The **root** of many leadership failures is a focus on popularity rather than on purpose or vision. Leaders can be popular, but being liked won't always result in the changes that are needed. This session will help you to balance popularity with purpose.

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Dana | Evidence from text _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baje | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ricki | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luke | _____ |

Building Background Knowledge

Alexander the Great: The Early Years

Four hundred years after the first Greek Olympic Games, the great city-states of Athens and Sparta had lost much of their military power. After centuries of war, their armies were no longer very strong. These once great city-states had **descended** into weakness. At this point in history, a new military leader, King Philip of Macedon, arose. He successfully united many rival Greek tribes, created ancient Greece's most powerful army, and unified a large region under his leadership.

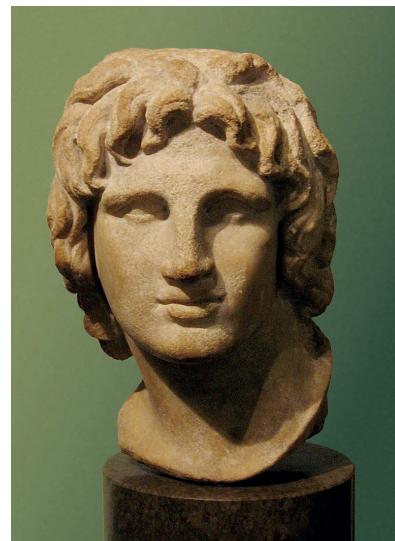
In 356 BCE, King Philip and his wife Olympias had a son named Alexander. Alexander inherited his father's ambition and learned many leadership **tactics** from him. His mother also wanted Alexander to be a great leader. She told people that Alexander's father was actually Zeus, the most powerful of the Greek gods. Unlike the Egyptian Pharaohs, the Greeks did not believe that their leaders were part god, but Alexander himself may have believed the **myth** his mother created. Many of his actions throughout his short life may have their **roots** in his mother's story.

As a teenager, Alexander was tutored by Aristotle, one of Ancient Greece's best-known philosophers. Aristotle introduced Alexander to many ideas about leadership and government, but he also taught him the ancient **myths** of Greece. For example, Alexander loved the **myth** about Achilles, who was also supposedly the son of a god. Stories about Achilles' bravery, leadership, and fearlessness in the Trojan War inspired the young Alexander. He wanted to be just like Achilles, who died young in battle.

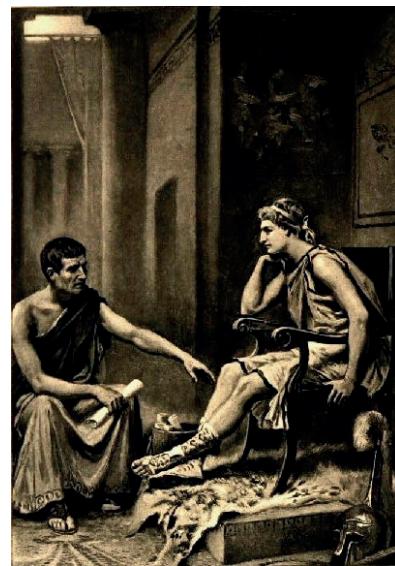
Alexander became known for his bravery as a teenager when he confronted a wild horse that no one could tame. In front of his father and other witnesses, Alexander brought the horse under control. He named the horse Bucephalus and rode him for many years. The story of Alexander's bravery spread throughout Greece, and became one **root** of the "Alexander **myth**."

King Philip's military ambition included conquering Persia. The Persians had attacked and burned down much of Athens 150 years earlier, and King Philip was determined to lead his powerful army in a war against this rival empire. In doing so, young Alexander would be left behind. However, he wanted to be like Achilles and be a war hero.

King Philip was assassinated at a family wedding and Alexander would soon take over as ruler. Some historians have **deduced** that it was Alexander who was behind his father's murder! They point out that without his father in the way, Alexander could be the great leader that he was destined to be!



Bust of a young Alexander the Great from the Hellenistic era, British Museum



"Aristotle tutoring Alexander" by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris, 1895

TURN AND TALK

This passage explains some of the **roots** of Alexander's ambition and success. What do you think is the most important reason behind Alexander's quest for greatness?

More Building Background Knowledge

Alexander: Fulfilling his Destiny to be Great!

In 336 BCE, at the age of 20, Alexander took command of his father's army and led them toward Persia. His first stop was Troy as he wanted to visit the tomb where Achilles was supposed to be buried and pay tribute to his hero. During the next 11 years, Alexander and his army conquered Persia, India, and Egypt. He quickly proved to be an inspiring and strategic military commander.

Alexander, like Achilles, led his men into battle and fought alongside them. He was thus able to closely examine his enemies' strengths and weaknesses and **methodically** devise **tactics** to defeat them. For example, he learned that the Indian army included soldiers mounted on elephants. Alexander ordered his soldiers to throw their spears at the elephants. The injured and confused elephants trampled thousands of the Indian soldiers who surrounded them. These **tactics** forced India to finally surrender to Alexander.

Alexander's army was so fearsome and successful that many decided it was best to surrender without a fight. For example, Egypt surrendered to Alexander, welcomed his army, and gave him the title of Pharaoh. Since Egyptians believed their Pharaohs to be gods, Alexander's mother's story was finally justified! Alexander enjoyed his role as Pharaoh and founded a city which he named after himself: Alexandria.

Other cities did not surrender to Alexander's army. One defiant leader was dragged through his defeated city by a horse until he died. Alexander's army also crucified 2,000 men who refused to surrender in order to send a message to those about to be invaded: Surrender or prepare to die a painful death. As his cruelty rose, Alexander's own men began to fear him. When one of his soldiers suggested that all of his success was due to his own royal father's actions, Alexander had the man killed. Another soldier said that Alexander had become a tyrant. He was tortured and killed.

Toward the end of this 11-year military campaign, Alexander's men began to lose faith in their leader's mission and were ready to return home to Macedonia. Alexander resisted initially but eventually he turned back toward Greece. But as retribution for the army's desire to return home, Alexander decided to take them via a new route across the desert, where many of his men died from heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Before arriving back in Alexandria to run his expanded empire, Alexander became very ill and died quickly. He was 32 years old and reigned over his empire for just over twelve and a half years. Within a few years, Alexander's vast empire would collapse and be divided among his generals.

TURN AND TALK

This passage describes Alexander's conquests and **tactics** for maintaining a loyal army and defeating his opponents. Which of those **tactics** do you think worked best for maintaining his troops and defeating his enemies?

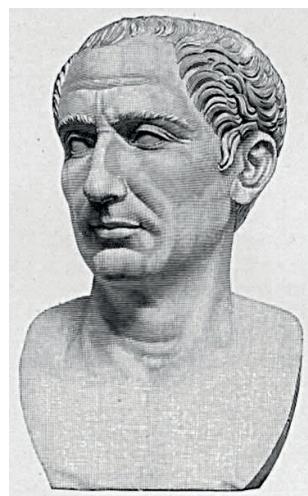


More Building Background Knowledge

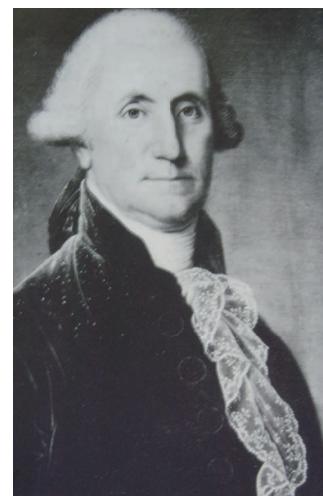
Alexander the Great's Legacy

Military Legacy

Roman emperors studied Alexander's leadership qualities and his military strategy. For example, the emperor Julius Caesar is said to have cried when he turned 32 because he could not measure up to Alexander's greatness. George Washington's **tactics** used to defeat the British can be traced to similar **tactics** used by Alexander's army. Alexander's war **tactics** are still studied at military colleges.



Julius Caesar
University of Texas
Library



George Washington
Metropolitan Museums of
Art

Blending of Cultures

Alexander's conquests brought Greek ideas to many areas throughout Asia. Greek plays, **myths**, and philosophy were spread across Asia as a result of Alexander's invasions. Ideas and values from multiple cultures across continents began to fuse together in a way that had not occurred previously. For example, in the Persian city of Susa, Alexander arranged a mass wedding between his Greek officers and Persian women. The children from these marriages represented this blending of cultures as well.



Foundation of Cities

During his conquests, Alexander founded over 20 cities. All of them were given local variants of his name. The most famous is Alexandria in Egypt, which became a great center of learning in the years following Alexander's death. Iskandariya in Iraq and Kandahar in Afghanistan are two major cities founded by Alexander. Both continue to be important cities in the Middle East.



ALEXANDRIA.

Perspectives on Alexander the Great

The Macedonian Times

Two thousand years after Alexander's death, historians have many opinions about Alexander the Great. Some look upon his accomplishments and describe how the world was positively changed because of his military conquests and exchanges between cultures. However, others view Alexander's actions as cruel and motivated by a selfish desire to be remembered as a great leader.

Let's consider various perspectives of people who were affected by Alexander's actions during the time period in which he reigned.



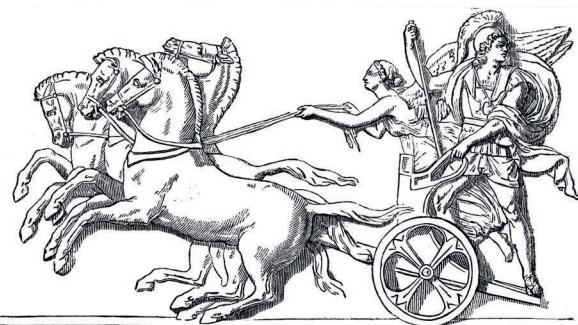
Let's go back in history to 324 BCE An article in the Macedonian Times sparked controversy around the expanded Greek Empire!

THE MACEDONIAN TIMES

JUNE, 324 BCE

ALEXANDER: WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE ABOUT THIS GUY?

AT AGE 20, HE TOOK COMMAND OF THE
BEST-TRAINED AND FIERCEST ARMY.



PORTION OF THE ENTRY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT INTO BABYLON.

Anonymous letters to the editor descended upon the *Macedonian Times* from people across the empire. Here are some excerpts from letters that represent soldiers in Alexander's army, conquered peoples, and Greeks from the home front.

[see next page ►](#)

Perspectives on Alexander the Great

The Macedonian Times

THE MACEDONIAN TIMES

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I know that we Persians invaded and burned Athens. But that was 150 years ago. Did the average Greek still want revenge? Well, Alexander defeated our army and our king was run off into the mountains and killed by one of his own officers. So Alexander won and became our leader. But did he have to come back and burn our most beautiful city, Persepolis? This was one of the richest and most beautiful places in the world and now it's ruined. He left the palace alone at first, but got drunk one night and had it burned down as well. And as if that wasn't enough, he held a marriage ceremony where thousands of our women were forced to marry his soldiers so that he could create a new generation that had both Greek and Persian roots. He was just a bully.

Yours in disappointment,
Enough is Enough

I've been a soldier in Alexander's army for 10 years now. He's been a fierce leader and never asked us to fight a battle that he wouldn't fight himself. He takes a personal interest in us, regardless of our rank. He never sends us into battle without carefully studying our opponent's tactics. We defeated armies three times our size because of Alexander's ability to find the right time and place for an attack. I'm tired and ready to go home, but I'd do it all over again if he asked me to!

Yours truly,
Loyal and Proud

Living in Egypt has had its ups and downs. We've been rebelling against the Persians for hundreds of years. The Persians do not respect our gods or our religion. Alexander was a welcome change. We are glad that he defeated the Persians and will keep them away from us. When he arrived in Egypt, he actually participated in some of our religion's ceremonies and made a sacrifice to our sacred bull. Sure, we would rather be left alone, but he's a lot better than those Persian kings. We made him the Pharaoh! That made him happy and keeps the gods happy too. I guess that's the best we can hope for!

Sincerely,
Making the Best of a Bad Situation

I'm proud to say that I served in Alexander's army for the past 10 years. At first, he seemed to care about us and really wanted to conquer Persia to finish his father's work. But as time went by, he became a little obsessed with thinking he was a god. Once, we almost got lost in the desert searching for the Oracle so he could ask if he was part god like his mother used to say! In Egypt, they made him the Pharaoh, and that also went to his head. We've been marching back and forth across this region for years and are ready to go home. It looks like we're going back to Macedonia soon, but I heard a rumor that he's going to make us march through the desert for two years in order to get there!

Regards,
Frustrated and Doubtful

Our great leader has finally avenged the Persian invasion from years ago. He has created a renewed sense of pride among the Greek people. Now, in lands far away, Greek ideas about government and philosophy are influencing people. They are learning about our religion and enjoying our famous poetry and plays. Plus, Alexander sends money and goods back to Greece from the people he conquered. It's a great time to be Greek again!

Yours truly,
Proud and Comfortable

I think it's great that Greek ideas are being spread throughout the world. And I enjoy the extra money from Alexander's exploits. But what I really want is for the soldiers to return home. Our sons and brothers are forced to join Alexander wherever in the world he happens to be! It's clear that he's a great military leader, but we need a strong leader here at home. He left us with a weak leader, which isn't that terrible because no army would be stupid enough to invade Alexander's Greece while he's gone. But what if something happens to Alexander? Who is going to run this new empire that he's out creating? Alexander, it's time to come home and lead your people, not just your army!

Sincerely,
Left at Home

Examining Perspectives

Alexander the So-So?

Each writer has expressed his or her perspective on Alexander. For each writer, determine if they would consider him to be Alexander the Great, Alexander the So-So, or Alexander the Tyrant. What evidence from their letter helped you decide what label they would give him?

Anonymous Letter Writer:	Alexander:	Evidence from letter:
Enough is Enough	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> So-So <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant	Alexander destroyed a beautiful city and burned down the palace. Alexander forced Greek men and Persian women to marry.
Loyal and Proud	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> So-So <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant	
Making the Best of a Bad Situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> So-So <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant	
Frustrated and Doubtful	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> So-So <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant	
Proud and Comfortable	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> So-So <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant	
Left at Home	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> So-So <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrant	

Timeline

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

GREAT LEADER OR POWER-HUNGRY TYRANT?

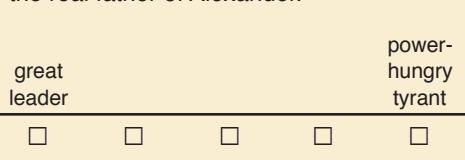
338 BCE King Philip begins to plan a war against the Persian Empire. Alexander gains interest in his father's plans to attack Persia. He wants to fight but will have to stay home with his mother.



344 BCE Alexander tames the wild horse named Bucephalus. Rumors spread of Alexander's bravery and skill. Aristotle tutors Alexander. He discovers his hero, Achilles, from Greek **myths**.



356 BCE Alexander is born to King Philip of Macedon and Olympias. Olympias spreads the rumor that Zeus is actually the real father of Alexander.



332 BCE Alexander defeats the city of Tyre after a tough fight. He punishes the city for not surrendering by crucifying 2,000 men. The governor of Gaza is dragged through the streets by a horse until he dies. This is also a punishment for not surrendering to Alexander's army.



333 BCE Alexander's army invades and conquers many cities. He proves to his army that he is brave and does not ask them to do things that he is not willing to do. News travels of Alexander's powerful army.



334 BCE Alexander leads the army into Asia to invade the Persian Empire. Alexander stops by the supposed tomb of the mythical hero Achilles to pay tribute to his hero.



336 BCE King Philip is assassinated at a family wedding. Some historians speculate that Alexander may have had a part in his father's murder. Alexander takes over as King of Macedonia.



**335
BCE**

331 BCE Alexander arrives in Egypt. He is welcomed by Egyptians and participates in Egyptian religious ceremonies such as making a sacrifice to their sacred bull. Alexander becomes Pharaoh of Egypt. Egyptians view their Pharaoh as a god. The city of Alexandria is founded in Egypt. Alexander's army gets lost in the desert looking for the Oracle. Alexander wants to ask the Oracle if he is really part god.



Timeline

327 BCE Alexander's army invades India. The Indian army includes large elephants that can kill soldiers by stepping on them. Alexander devises a plan where his men throw their spears at the elephants. The elephants become confused and kill the Indians. Indians surrender to Alexander. Some of Alexander's men are accused of conspiring against him. Alexander has them killed.



326-325 BCE Alexander's men begin to get tired and are ready to go home. They begin a long journey back to Macedonia. Alexander makes them travel through the desert. Many men die from exposure to the sun. Some say that Alexander chose this desert route to punish his men for wanting to return to Macedonia.



320 BCE

325 BCE

321 BCE Because Alexander did not have any children, there was no heir to rule his empire. Some of the generals in his army divided the empire. These new territories became weak and were easily conquered in the years that followed.



329 BCE to 328 BCE Alexander's army continues to conquer Asia. They spread Greek religion, politics, and philosophy across Asia. Alexander sends back treasures and money to Greece. Alexander tries to blend cultures. He even dresses like the people in the places he conquers.



330 BCE Alexander's army defeats the Persians even though they are outnumbered. The Persian king is killed by his own officer. Alexander's men destroy the beautiful city of Persepolis and burn down the palace.



323 BCE Alexander dies after a short illness. He was only 32 years old and was the king for twelve and a half years.



324 BCE Alexander forces his men to marry Persian women as a way of making sure there is a blending of the cultures.



Help Wanted

Activity A

Directions:

Your teacher will assign either Activity A or Activity B. Use the timeline as well as any other information from the readings to help you complete the activity.

JOB DESCRIPTION: The city of Rome is looking for a military ambassador to help expand its fast-growing empire. Candidates for this position must have a proven track record of leading a large army as it conquers new lands. The ideal candidate for this job must be able to organize and motivate soldiers as well as use a variety of **tactics** to defeat armies. This leader must also be able to **methodically** introduce Roman ideas and culture to its newly conquered citizens, while showing respect for their **roots**. Send a resume which includes a brief description of your experience for this exciting position.

One detail has already been included on the resume. Select five additional events from Alexander's life that will help him to get this job!

RESUME**Alexander of Macedon**

Career Objective: To be the military ambassador for the city of Rome.

Experience:

336 BCE Took command of Macedonian army when 20 years old

Crime Report

Activity B

Directions:

Use information from the timeline to complete the crime report for Alexander of Macedon.

ACCUSED: Alexander of Macedon

CRIME: Based on reports from witnesses in Tyre, Gaza, and Persia, we have **deduced** that the so-called Alexander the Great has committed multiple crimes against humanity.

 SHARE OUT!

Directions:

1. Students who completed "Help Wanted" (Activity A) should now find a partner who completed "Crime Report" (Activity B).
 2. Partner B asks Partner A, "Why is Alexander qualified for the position of military ambassador of Rome?" Partner A responds using the resume. Partner B can ask clarifying questions.
 3. When finished, Partner A asks partner B, "Why should Alexander go on trial for crimes against humanity?" Partner B responds using the crime report. Partner A can ask clarifying questions.

Preparing for Both Sides of the Debate

The Great Leader Argument

Some debates require that the debater prepare to argue both sides of a controversy. Choose events from the timeline that support Alexander's **legacy** as a great leader. Then, choose events that you would use to argue that he was a power-hungry tyrant. Explain why each event supports each position. Some examples have been filled in for you.

Alexander is a Great Leader	Reason
Alexander tames the wild horse named Bucephalus. Rumors spread of Alexander's bravery and skill.	Alexander made people respect him at a very young age. A great leader must earn the respect of people before they will follow him or her.
Alexander arrives in Egypt. He is welcomed by Egyptians and participates in Egyptian religious ceremonies such as making a sacrifice to their sacred bull.	Alexander showed the Egyptian people that he would respect their customs. A great leader must connect with his or her followers.

Preparing for Both Sides of the Debate

The Power-Hungry Tyrant Argument

Alexander is a Power-Hungry Tyrant	Reason
Alexander's army gets lost in the desert looking for the Oracle. Alexander wants to ask the Oracle if he is really part god.	Alexander risked the lives of his soldiers because he wanted to find out if he was really part god. A good leader would care about the well-being of his soldiers and not pursue this selfish quest.

Preparing for the Debate

Counterarguments

During the debate you will encounter arguments that challenge the evidence and reasons presented by your group. With your classmates, come up with a response to the counterargument presented below.

Alexander is a Power-Hungry Tyrant	Reason
Alexander's army gets lost in the desert looking for the Oracle. Alexander wants to ask the Oracle if he is really part god.	Alexander risked the lives of his soldiers because he wanted to find out if he was really part god. A good leader would care about the well-being of his soldiers and not pursue this selfish quest.

Counterargument:

“But maybe his men would have been more loyal and fierce if they heard that the Oracle said he was a god! That would make him an even greater leader in their eyes.”

What would you say?

TAKE A STAND!

You have prepared for a debate on Alexander the Great's **legacy**. Is he a great leader or a power-hungry tyrant? Your teacher may assign you either position. Or, you may get to debate both positions. Use your organizers that you prepared yesterday.

It's Debate Time!

During and After the Debate

Be sure to consider:

- Did they use evidence to support their argument?
- Did they challenge the other group's arguments well?
- Did their arguments make sense?

Example:
Clearly supported Sparta.

Examples:

- asked authentic questions
- supported the group's argument
- responded to challenges from the other group
- listened and waited her turn to speak

Example:
Use "what if" statements to challenge opposing arguments.

Members of My Group	Notes on the Argument	Strengths & Weaknesses	Focus Words My Group Used	Feedback for My Group
			<input type="checkbox"/> deduce <input type="checkbox"/> methodical <input type="checkbox"/> legacy <input type="checkbox"/> descend <input type="checkbox"/> root <input type="checkbox"/> myth <input type="checkbox"/> tactic	

What did you learn from this debate?

Did you change your mind? Why or why not?

Writing

Responding to Criticism

Six writers shared perspectives on Alexander's leadership in letters to the *Macedonian Times*. Of course there were no newspapers at the time, but certainly Alexander was aware of the different opinions that were being spread around his empire.

Imagine that Alexander was given the opportunity to respond to the letters. What would he say to defend his **legacy** as a great leader? Choose one of the following letters from the *Macedonian Times* and write a brief response from Alexander.

THE MACEDONIAN TIMES

JUNE, 324 BCE

I'm proud to say that I served in Alexander's army for the past 10 years. At first, he seemed to care about us and really wanted to conquer Persia to finish his father's work. But as time went by, he became a little obsessed with thinking he was a god. Once, we almost got lost in the desert searching for the Oracle so he could ask if he was part god like his mother used to say! In Egypt, they made him the Pharaoh, and that also went to his head. We've been marching back and forth across this region for years and are ready to go home. It looks like we're going back to Macedonia soon, but I heard a rumor that he's going to make us march through the desert for two years in order to get there!

Regards,
Frustrated and Doubtful

I know that we Persians invaded and burned Athens. But that was 150 years ago. Did the average Greek still want revenge? Well, Alexander defeated our army and our king was run off into the mountains and killed by one of his own officers. So Alexander won and became our leader. But did he have to come back and burn our most beautiful city, Persepolis? This was one of the richest and most beautiful places in the world and now it's ruined. He left the palace alone at first, but got drunk one night and had it burned down as well. And as if that wasn't enough, he held a marriage ceremony where thousands of our women were forced to marry his soldiers so that he could create a new generation that had both Greek and Persian roots. He was just a bully.

Yours in disappointment,
Enough is Enough

I think it's great that Greek ideas are being spread throughout the world. And I enjoy the extra money from Alexander's exploits. But what I really want is for the soldiers to return home. Our sons and brothers are forced to join Alexander wherever in the world he happens to be! It's clear that he's a great military leader, but we need a strong leader here at home. He left us with a weak leader, which isn't that terrible because no army would be stupid enough to invade Alexander's Greece while he's gone. But what if something happens to Alexander? Who is going to run this new empire that he's out creating? Alexander, it's time to come home and lead your people, not just your army!

Sincerely,
Left at Home

Writing

Writing a Response

Below is my response to:

- Frustrated and Doubtful
 - Enough is Enough
 - Left at Home

Remember:

Use evidence from the unit!

Use the focus words!

Current Language and Ancient Greek Traditions

Achilles' Heel and Other Phrases That Have Endured

As a young student of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle, Alexander the Great learned about Achilles, one of the great warriors from Greek mythology. Alexander may have been inspired by the stories of Achilles' bravery, honor, and fierce loyalty. When the prince of Troy killed Achilles' best friend in battle, Achilles killed the prince and dragged his dead body behind a chariot for all of Troy to see. Historians have **deduced** that Alexander was influenced by this story when he used a similar **tactic** during his conquests.

Today, Achilles' **legacy** has its **root** in his famous foot – or his heel to be more precise! According to the **myth**, Achilles' mother dipped her infant son in the river Styx. This would protect his body from any future harm, making him immortal. However, because she held him by his heel, this part of his body was not immersed in the river. It was the only part of his body that could be harmed. Achilles was killed in battle when an arrow pierced his heel!

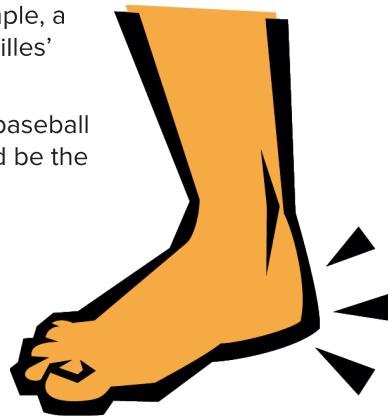
We now call a person's weak spot their Achilles' heel. Usually, a person's Achilles' heel is not a physical weakness but some other problem that gets in the way of success. For example, a basketball player may be very successful making baskets during gameplay but her Achilles' heel may be her free throws!

An organization like a soccer club or baseball team may also have an Achilles' heel. A baseball team may have great hitters and fielders but its pitching is losing games. Pitching would be the team's Achilles' heel.

TURN AND TALK

What is the Achilles' heel of a sports team that you like?

Is there something in your life that keeps you from being successful? Do you have an Achilles' heel?



There are many words and phrases that we use today that have their **roots** in Greek mythology. Below are a few examples. See if you can fill in the missing information!

Name and Origin	How it's used today	Example
Nemesis - Greek goddess of revenge	A nemesis is an opponent or enemy that is very difficult to defeat.	Every superhero has a nemesis. Batman's nemesis is the Joker. Superman's nemesis is _____.
Hercules - Greek hero known for his strength	A herculean task is something difficult that has to be done that will take an extraordinary amount of strength or effort to accomplish.	It will take a herculean effort to bring up my grade in science from a "C" to an "A," but I know I can do it.
Pandora's box - Pandora was given a beautiful box by the gods and told not to open it. She was curious and opened it. The box contained all of the evil in the world and it escaped.	We call something a Pandora's box when at first it seems harmless or simple but in the end turns out to be dangerous or very complicated.	When smartphones first came out, they were a good way to check email without needing a computer. As it turns out, they were a Pandora's box for a whole new way of life because _____.

Approximating Using Scale

Alexander: Going the Distance



Alexander's military **legacy** was possible in part due to his **tactic** of having his troops **methodically** march from place to place. Draw a straight line using a ruler from Memphis in Egypt to Bucephala in Gandhara. Use the scale printed on the map to determine the distance between the two cities "as the crow flies." Now instead, try to trace a route Alexander traveled between the two cities with a pencil. Using a string or some similar method, attempt to estimate the distance traveled by soldiers on land. You can now **deduce** the difference between the land route and the air route using subtraction.

From Memphis to Bucephala

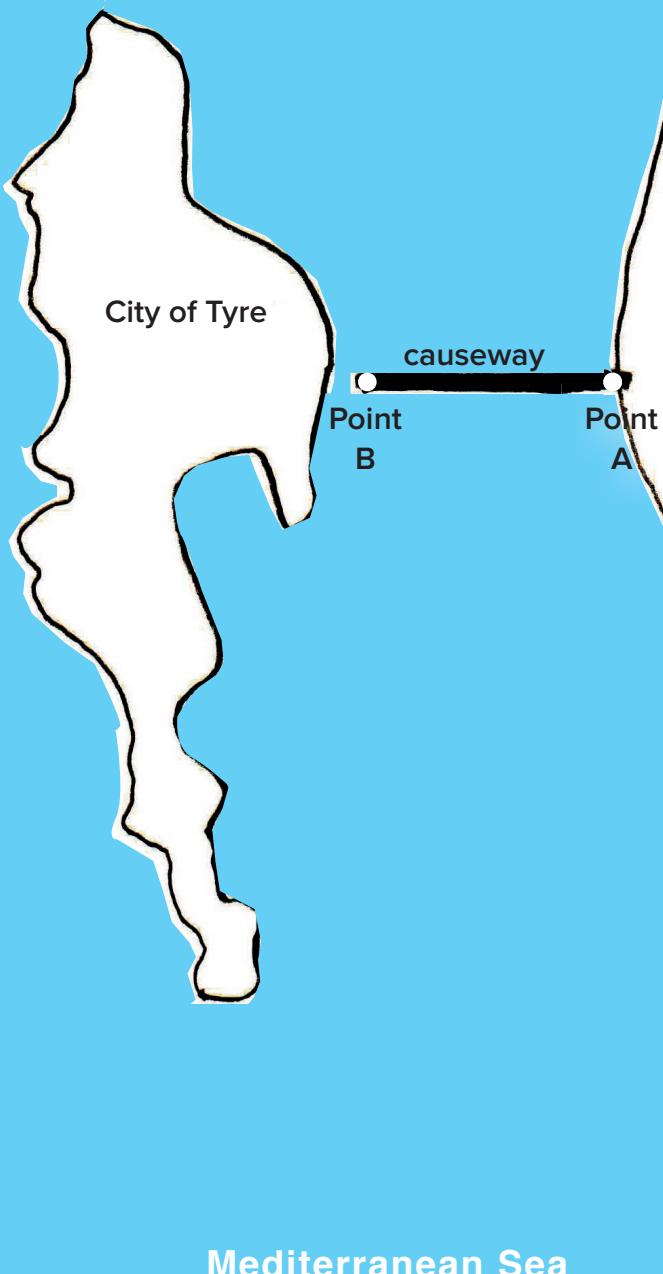
Aerial Distance Approximation:

Land Route Approximation:

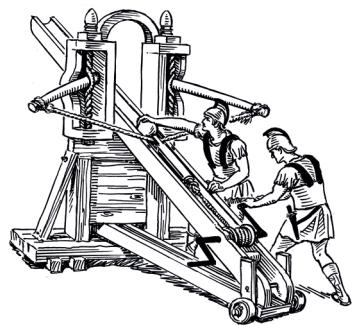
Difference:

Going Ballistic

Alexander's Artillery



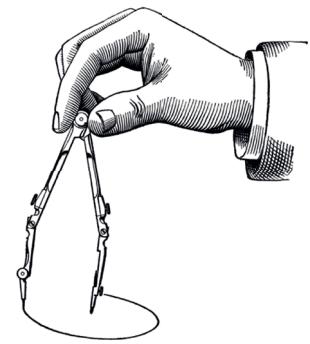
The City of Tyre was located on an island in the Mediterranean Sea. Not only that, the island had walls protecting it from battle.



One of the main siege weapons used by Alexander's army was the ballista (shown here). This weapon was a **legacy** of his father's time. It worked effectively in other sieges because it shot burning arrows and other damaging items over walls of cities under attack. The projectiles would then **descend** upon the people and kill or injure them. This **tactic** did not work at Tyre because the island was too far off shore. Alexander did not have a navy at this time.

Alexander's siege of Tyre was very unusual. He decided to have his army **methodically** construct a causeway (like a stone pier) out to the island. That way, his weaponry could do damage to the island city.

The length of the causeway was about 1 km. That was also the approximate range of his ballista weapons.



Using a compass, draw a circle on this page using the causeway as the radius and Point A as the midpoint. How effective would the ballista be if it were located at Point A?

Draw another circle, using the causeway as the radius again, but this time use Point B as the midpoint. Please **deduce** how effective the ballista would be if it were moved to the end of the causeway.

This was such an unusual **tactic** that some might assume it is a **myth**. But you can go check it out for yourself. Tyre and Alexander's stone causeway are both still there!

Focus Words

deduce • methodical • legacy • descend • root • myth • tactic

Examining the Focus Words Closely

SoGen Unit 6.4

FOCUS WORD OR *RELATED FORM	DEFINITION	SAMPLE SENTENCE	TURN AND TALK
deduce (verb)	to figure out	Historians have deduced that Alexander was influenced by this story when he used a similar tactic during his conquests.	 <i>What types of clues does a detective use to deduce what happened at a crime scene?</i> <i>Detectives use _____ to deduce what occurred at a crime scene.</i>
methodical (adjective)	careful and strategic	I just asked him if he was being methodical enough when creating the schedule for picking up paper and cans!	<i>Why is it important to be methodical when carrying out a science investigation?</i> <i>When carrying out a science investigation, it is essential to be methodical because _____.</i>
* methodically (adverb)	carefully following a plan	He decided to have his army methodically construct a causeway (like a stone pier) out to the island.	<i>How would you methodically determine the quickest way to your school from your house?</i>
legacy (noun)	the story that people remember about a person or event; reputation	His legacy at this school will be that he got the principal to allow us to use smartphones in class.	<i>What do you think will be the legacy of your class when you leave the school?</i> <i>Most likely, our legacy will be _____.</i>
descend (verb)	to go downward; to change to a worse condition	The recycling pickup will descend into chaos if we go with his schedule.	<i>What is a book or story that you've read where a character descends into madness?</i>
root (noun)	the original source of something	Many of his actions throughout his short life may have their roots in his mother's story.	<i>What do you think is the root of bullying behavior?</i> <i>The root of bullying is _____.</i>
myth (noun)	a story that people tell that tries to explain something they don't fully understand; a common belief that is false	This story spread throughout Greece, and became one root of the "Alexander myth ."	<i>Is the story of the first Thanksgiving history, myth, or both?</i>
tactic (noun)	a strategy that is carefully planned out to help accomplish a goal	George Washington's tactics used to defeat the British can be traced to similar tactics used by Alexander's army.	<i>What is a tactic that you use when playing a game or sport that you love?</i> <i>One tactic I use is _____.</i>