

WORLD HISTORY READERS

Level 4-0

# Alexander the Great

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**Seed  
Learning**



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## A Boy Born to Rule the World

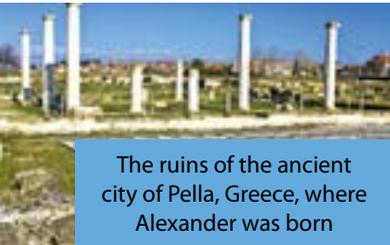
Can you imagine ruling the entire world? How would you do it? Alexander the Great was a king who wanted to do just that—rule the whole world!



Alexander created many statues of himself.

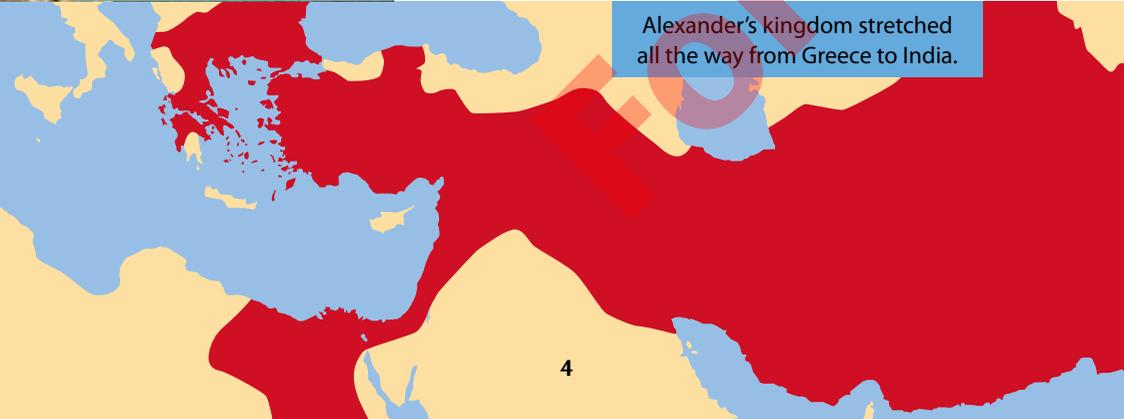
Alexander was born in 356 BC in Greece, nearly 2,500 years ago. By the time he died, his armies controlled a massive area stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the border of India.

Some rulers are called “great” by their people. These rulers are loved. Alexander was one of the greatest kings and most talented commanders in history. Yet he is called “great” for a different reason.



The ruins of the ancient city of Pella, Greece, where Alexander was born

Alexander's kingdom stretched all the way from Greece to India.



## Alexander's Early Life

Alexander's parents were King Philip II and Queen Olympia. They ruled a country called Macedonia. Philip had seven wives and many children. Philip believed that Alexander was the child of one of the Greek gods.



Alexander as a young man

King Philip hired the philosopher Aristotle to teach his son. For years, Aristotle taught Alexander philosophy, poetry, drama, science, and politics.

During his studies, Alexander learned the story of Achilles, a famous fighter. Achilles was strong and courageous. Alexander admired Achilles and wanted to be like him.



Aristotle and his student Alexander the Great



Achilles at war



Alexander's soldiers during the Battle of Thebes

King Philip was killed by one of his own soldiers in 336 BC. Alexander became king after his father's death.

Alexander convinced the other Greek cities to see him as their leader. He killed anyone else who wanted to be king. From the start, Alexander was bold.

In Thebes, there was more resistance. The people rebelled and rose up against Alexander. In response, Alexander burned the city to the ground. He killed all the men and captured the women and children. After that, many people were scared of Alexander, and no one wanted to challenge his power.



Timoclea of Thebes begs Alexander for her life.

## Life in the Army

Alexander was a talented general. The army left behind by his father was strong and very well-trained.

King Philip had increased the number of soldiers who rode horses. He also created a group of soldiers who were engineers. They built things such as bridges and towers for his army to use.

Alexander learned from his father. He was a brave leader, and he made the army even stronger.



Most statues of Alexander show him riding a horse.

Alexander's army had many soldiers riding horses.





The Persian King Darius III during his battle with Alexander

## The Battle of Issus

Alexander's greatest victory was at the Battle of Issus. It was the first time he faced the Persian king, Darius III. Darius had a much bigger army than Alexander. But Alexander was the better general. The armies met at the river Penarus, which is now in Turkey.

When Darius realized that Alexander would win the battle, he ran away. He left his family and a lot of gold and silver behind. His army ran away, too.

In the spring of 334 BC, Alexander crossed over to Asia Minor. He wanted to accomplish his father's dream—conquering the Persian Empire.

Battle by battle, he was successful. And in the places he took over, he did not try to control everything. He did not care what the people believed or how they acted. He cared about his trade routes. He cared about feeding and taking care of his soldiers.



Alexander looks over the body of Darius



Alexander meeting with the family of Darius after Darius fled

## Comprehension Questions

- How far did Alexander's empire stretch?
  - From Greece to Africa
  - From the Mediterranean Sea to Egypt
  - From Egypt to France
  - From the Mediterranean Sea to the border of India
- Which hero did Alexander hope to be like?
  - Philip
  - Aristotle
  - Achilles
  - Zeus
- What did Alexander do to the city of Thebes when it rebelled?
  - He burned it to the ground.
  - He killed all its animals.
  - He ignored it.
  - He killed all the women.
- How did Alexander's father improve the army?
  - He did not make them fight.
  - He trained them all to ride horses.
  - He employed more engineers and got more soldiers.
  - He encouraged them with kind words.
- Who was the king of Persia?
  - Roxana
  - Darius
  - Philip
  - Napoleon
- Where was the Battle of Issus?
  - In Turkey
  - In Persia
  - In Egypt
  - In Greece
- Alexander claimed to be...
  - the king of the world.
  - the best horse rider.
  - stronger than anyone.
  - the son of a god.
- After the Battle of the Hydaspes River, Alexander's...
  - wife got sick.
  - soldiers wanted to go home.
  - wife had a baby girl.
  - friends got killed.
- What happened to Greek culture after Alexander's victories?
  - It died out.
  - It spread through Europe.
  - It spread through western Asia.
  - It spread through Africa.
- How did Alexander die?
  - From heavy drinking
  - From old age
  - From stomach pains
  - We can't be sure.

## Glossary

- **accurate** exact; free from mistakes
- **conquer** to defeat people in a war or to take control of a country
- **convince** to make someone believe something
- **empire** a group of countries ruled by one person or government
- **intense** extreme or very strong
- **Macedonia** an ancient kingdom that is now divided into modern Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Greece
- **malaria** a serious disease that is passed to humans through mosquito bites
- **Persia** an area of land in western Asia, which is now modern-day Iran
- **poison** to hurt or kill someone with a dangerous substance
- **pregnant** having a baby growing inside your body
- **rebel** to refuse to follow rules
- **resistance** the attempt to prevent something by action or argument
- **rise up** to fight against a ruler or government

Key 1. (d) 2. (c) 3. (a) 4. (c) 5. (b) 6. (a) 7. (d) 8. (b) 9. (c) 10. (d)