**Alexander the Great & Hellenism**



**I. Introduction**

The long war between Athens and Sparta made both countries weak and tired. King Phillip of Macedonia (another part of Greece) noticed this and wanted to take over. He attacked Greece and little by little, took it over. When Phillip was assassinated (murder of a public figure) in 336 BCE, his son Alexander became the king. Alexander was only 20 when he became king. He had a great education and was taught philosophy as well as military tactics. Most of Alexander’s time was spent on the battlefield, which helped to expand his Empire. Although his empire would eventually crumble, he made changes across the Mediterranean world and the Middle East for centuries.

**DIRECTIONS: Actively read (highlight/underline important words/phrases, circle words you do not understand) about the things Alexander did as a leader of Western Europe. Evaluate whether or not Alexander was a good or bad leader (E, G, S, F).**

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| **ALEXANDER’S ACTIONS & LEGACY** | **GRADE** |
| **Conquests & Rule:**  Alexander determined to conquer both Greece and Persia, and combine them into an empire that would rival any other empire anywhere in the world. Before the age of 30, Alexander led his army 11,000 miles, founding over 70 cities and creating and empire that stretched across 3 continents and covered over 2 million square miles. Today, Alexander’s empire would include Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of India. For the next 13 years Alexander, now known as Alexander the Great, marched his troops from battle to battle, conquering more and more territory. If the people he ruled went against him, he would act with violence. For example, when the people of Thebes went against him, Alexander ordered that the city be burned to the ground and its people killed or sold into slavery. His empire linked together to create an international network of trade and commerce (business).  *“I am not afraid of an army lions led by sheep, am afraid of an army of sheep lead by lions.”* |  |
| **Blending of Cultures:**  Alexander founded many new cities, mostly named after him. Greek soldiers, traders, artisans (skilled workers) settled in these cities. From Egypt to the borders of India, these people built Greek temples, filled with Greek statues, and held athletic contests they had in Greece. Local people **assimilated**, or absorbed, Greek ideas. In turn, Greek settlers adopted local customs. As a result, blending of eastern and western cultures occurred (sharing of Greek culture and non-Greek culture). Alexander encouraged this blending when he married a Persian woman and insisted his soldiers to follow his example. He had adopted many Persian customs. After his death, a new culture came about that blended Greek, Persian, Egyptian, & Indian influences. Alexander was known for adopting foreign customers in order to rule his millions of ethnically diverse groups of people. |  |
| **Alexandria**  The city of Alexandria, Egypt would become home to millions of people. Greeks, Egyptians, Persians, Hebrews, and many others would crowd its busy streets. Alexander and his successors (people who ruled after him) encouraged the work of scholars. The rulers of Alexandria built the great Museum as a center of learning. It had laboratories, lecture halls, and a zoo. It also had a library with thousands of scrolls that represented all of their knowledge. |  |
| **Opportunities for Women**  During the Hellenistic period, women were no longer restricted to their homes. Women learned how to read and write. Some became philosophers (thinkers) or poets. Royal women held power, working along their husbands and sons. In Egypt, the clever queen Cleopatra came to rule in her own right. |  |

Alexander the Great was only 20 when he became King of Macedonia. He was known for creating a vast empire. Alexander the Great **was truly great/not truly great (circle one)**.

There are a few reasons that make Alexander the Great **truly great/not truly great (circle one)**. One reason is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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