

WORDS

- **Asia Minor** = name for the main part of Turkey
- **ally** = a person who helps you in a fight against someone else
- **although** = while
- **ancient** = old
- **art** = painting and drawing
- **battle** = a fight between two parts of an army in a war
- **B.C.** = Before Christ
- **capital** = an important city where the government is
- **commander** = a person who is in control of part of an army
- **complex** = with a very difficult structure
- **conquer** = to get control of a country by fighting
- **custom** = tradition
- **defeat** = to win against someone
- **delta** = area of land near the sea where a river spreads into many smaller ones
- **draw out** = pull out
- **empire** = group of countries that are controlled by one ruler
- **flee** = to get away, escape
- **foot soldier** = soldier who moves on foot
- **found - founded** = start something new
- **free** = to set free
- **invade** = to enter a country and take control of it by fighting
- **kingdom** = country ruled by a king or queen
- **knot** = pieces of rope that have been twisted together
- **Mediterranean** = area between southern Europe and northern Africa
- **philosopher** = someone who studies ideas about nature, the meaning of good and evil etc..
- **reach** = get to
- **rule** = power, control
- **ruler** = person who has all the power in a country
- **sciences** = knowledge about the world, based on facts
- **search** = to look for
- **single** = only one
- **soldier** = person who fights for a country in a war
- **spread** = to move to other places
- **strait** = narrow passage of water between two areas of land
- **stretch** = to go from ... to
- **stroke** = hit
- **sword** = a long knife that is very pointed at the end

Alexander the Great was king of Macedonia and one of the greatest generals in history. He **conquered** the Persian Empire which **stretched** from the **Mediterranean** Sea to India. **Although** he died at the age of 33 he **conquered** most of the known world at that time and **spread** Greek ideas and **customs** to western Asia and Egypt.

EARLY LIFE

Alexander was born in 356 **B.C.** in Pella, the **capital** of Macedonia, a part of northern Greece but at that time an **ancient kingdom**. He was the son of Philip II, king of Macedonia, a strong **ruler** who **conquered** most cities of **ancient** Greece and was planning to take control of the Persian **Empire**.

When Alexander was thirteen years old, the Greek **philosopher** Aristotle came to Macedonia to teach him. He was trained in military strategy and planning but was also interested in **art** and **sciences**. At eighteen Alexander became **commander** of a part of the army and fought against Greek **soldiers**.

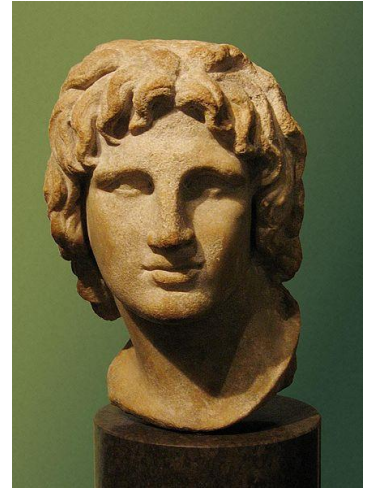
ALEXANDER BECOMES KING

When Philip was murdered in 336 **B.C.** Alexander became king of Macedonia and continued his father's plans for **invading** Asia. In 334 he led an army across the Hellespont - the narrow **strait** between Europe and Asia - with 30,000 **foot soldiers** and 5,000 men on horseback. At the Granicus River he **defeated** a much larger group of Persians. Along the way he **freed** Greek cities that were under Persian **rule** and made them his **allies**.

When Alexander came to the city of Gordium in **Asia Minor**, today's Turkey, a legend tells us that he was shown a strange, **complex knot**. The person who could **untie** the Gordian **knot** would be the **ruler** of all of Asia. Alexander tried hard but could not untie it with his hands, so he **drew** out his **sword** and cut the knot in a **single stroke**.

DEFEAT OF DARIUS

In 333 Alexander met the Persian king Darius III at Isus in Syria. Darius lost the **battle** but was able to **flee**. Later in that year Alexander **reached** Egypt and **freed** it from Persian **rule**. The Egyptians welcomed Alexander made him their pharaoh. Near the **delta** of the Nile river he **founded** a new city and named it Alexandria. After that Alexander continued his **search** of King Darius. Both leaders met near the village of Gaugamela, which is in today's Iraq. There he **defeated** the Persian king. Darius was murdered by his own people and Alexander became the new **ruler** of Persia.



WORDS

- **although** =while
- **border** = the line that is between two countries
- **capital** = an important city where the government is
- **capture** = to take control of a place or country
- **celebrate** = to have fun at a special event
- **coffin** = a long box where a dead person is put
- **command** = to lead a group of soldiers
- **decide** =to choose to do something
- **effort** = try
- **empire** = group of countries that are controlled by one ruler
- **explore** = to travel to or around a place and try to find out something about it
- **feast** = a large meal where many people celebrate
- **further** =more
- **however** = but
- **independent** =to be free, to govern yourself
- **journey** = trip
- **push** = go, march
- **refuse** = to say that you will not do something
- **rule** =control, government
- **succeed** = to be the next person to rule
- **unify** = to bring together
- **weak** = not strong
- **wound** = an injury to your body

JOURNEY TO INDIA

From 329 to 326 Alexander led his army through the mountain regions of south-western Asia to the **borders** of India. He **explored** the Indus valley and wanted to **push** eastward as far as the Ganges River. **However** his soldiers became tired and **refused** to follow Alexander any **further**. In 325 Alexander **decided** to turn back. He built ships and some of his men sailed home. He **commanded** the others through the Asian desert but many of his soldiers died on their way home.

After returning to Persia he held a **feast** to **celebrate** the **capture** of the Persian **Empire**. As part of his **effort** to **unify** Persians and Macedonians, Alexander and 80 of his men married Persian women.

FINAL YEARS

In 323 B.C, Alexander went to Babylon, a city that he probably wanted to make the **capital** of his **empire**. Long marches and **wounds** made him **weaker** and weaker. He got fever, fell ill and died at the age of 33, thirteen years after he had become king. His body was put in a gold **coffin** in Alexandria, Egypt.

Although his half brother Philip III became king of Macedonia after his death, no one **succeeded** Alexander the Great in the **rule** of his great **empire**. His generals fought over the control of the region, which by the year 300 B.C. broke up into many small **independent** states.

ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE

