

Vail School District
6th Grade
Writing Benchmark #1
Informational

DIRECTIONS:

Read the information and writing prompt below. Then use scratch paper for your prewriting/planning and your draft.

Alexander the Great

Excerpted from biography.com

Alexander the Great was born in the Pella region of Macedonia on July 20, 356 B.C., to parents King [Philip II of Macedon](#) and Queen Olympia, daughter of King Neoptolemus. The young prince and his sister were raised in Pella's royal court. Growing up, the dark-eyed and curly-headed Alexander hardly ever saw his father, who spent most of his time engaged in military campaigns and extra-marital affairs. Although Olympia served as a powerful role model for the boy, Alexander grew to resent his father's absence.

In the wake of his father's death, Alexander, then 19, was determined to seize the throne by any means necessary. He quickly garnered the support of the Macedonian Army, including the general and troops he had had fought with at Chaeronea.

Even though Alexander was the feudal king of Macedonia, he didn't obtain automatic control of the Corinthian League. In fact, the southern states of Greece were celebrating Philip II's death and expressed divided interests. As they launched independence movements, Alexander sent his army south and coerced the region of Thessaly into acknowledging him as the leader of the Corinthian League. Then during a meeting of league members at Thermopylae, Alexander elicited their acceptance of his leadership.

In 334, Alexander embarked on his Asiatic expedition, arriving in Troy that spring. Alexander then faced Persian King Darius III's army near the Granicus River; Darius' forces were swiftly defeated. By fall, Alexander and his army had made it across the southern coast of Asia Minor to Gordium, where they took the winter to rest. In the summer of 333, the troops of Alexander and Darius once again went head to head in battle at Issus. Although Alexander's army was outnumbered, he used his flair for military strategy to create formations that defeated the Persians again and caused Darius to flee. In November of 333, Alexander declared himself the king of Persia after capturing Darius and making him a fugitive.

Next up on Alexander's agenda was his campaign to conquer Egypt. After besieging Gaza on his way to Egypt, Alexander easily achieved his conquest; Egypt fell without resistance.

In 331, he created the city of Alexandria, designed as a hub for Greek culture and commerce. Later that year, Alexander defeated the Persians at the Battle of Gaugamela. With the collapse of the Persian Army, Alexander became "King of Babylon, King of Asia, King of the Four Quarters of the World."

In 328, Alexander defeated King Porus' armies in northern India. Finding himself impressed by Porus, Alexander reinstated him as king and won his loyalty and forgiveness.

While considering the conquests of Carthage and Rome, Alexander the Great died of malaria in Babylon, Persia (now Iran), on June 13, 323 B.C. He was just 32 years old.

Alexander of Macedon Biography

excerpted from www.historyofmacedonia.org

Alexander III the Great, the King of Macedonia and conqueror of the Persian Empire is considered one of the greatest military geniuses of all times. He was inspiration for later conquerors such as Hannibal the Carthaginian, the Roman's Pompey and Caesar, and Napoleon. Alexander was born in 356 BC in Pella, the ancient capital of Macedonia. He was son of Philip II, King of Macedonia, and Olympias, the princess of neighboring Epirus.

Alexander spent his childhood watching his father transforming Macedonia into a great military power, winning victory after victory on the battlefields throughout the Balkans. At age 12 he showed his equestrian skill to his father and all who were watching when he tamed Bucephalus, an unruly stallion horse, unable to be ridden and devouring the flesh of all who had tried. Plutarch writes:

"Philip and his friends looked on at first in silence and anxiety for the result, till seeing him turn at the end of his career, and come back rejoicing and triumphing for what he had performed, they all burst out into acclamations of applause; and his father shedding tears, it is said, for joy, kissed him as he came down from his horse, and in his transport said, 'O my son, look thee out a kingdom equal to and worthy of thyself, for Macedonia is too little for thee' " (Alex. 6.8.).

Alexander would ride Bucephalus in all of his major battles, together till the very end. When he was 13, Philip hired the Greek philosopher Aristotle to be Alexander's personal tutor. During the next three years Aristotle gave Alexander a training in rhetoric and literature and stimulated his interest in science, medicine, and philosophy, all of which became of importance in Alexander's later life.

In 340 BC, when Philip assembled a large Macedonian army and invaded Thrace, he left his 16 year old son with the power to rule Macedonia in his absence as regent, which shows that even at such young age Alexander was recognized as quite capable. But as

the Macedonian army advanced deep into Thrace, the Thracian tribe of Maedi bordering north-eastern Macedonia rebelled and posed a danger to the country. Alexander assembled an army, led it against the rebels, and with swift action defeated the Maedi, captured their stronghold, and renamed it after himself to Alexandropolis. Two years later in 338 BC, Philip gave his son a commanding post among the senior generals as the Macedonian army invaded Greece. At the Battle of Chaeronea the Greeks were defeated and Alexander displayed his bravery by destroying the elite Greek force, the Theban Secret Band. Some ancient historians recorded that the Macedonians won the battle thanks to his bravery.

PROMPT: Read both articles on the life of Alexander the Great. You have been assigned to write an expository essay that you will be reading out loud to your classmates that analyzes the reasoning behind why Alexander is known as “Alexander the Great”. Be sure to use evidence from these articles. Use the writing guide as a tool to help you.

Your essay should include:

- an introduction, body, and conclusion
- an explanation of your reasons with supporting details from the text
- content and selected details that are appropriate to audience

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

