



Alexander the Great, Part I

11A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Review what students learned in the previous lesson. You may wish to ask the following questions:

- Who were Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle?
- How were these philosophers connected?
- What is philosophy?
- Why are Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle remembered thousands of years after they lived?

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Remind students that at the end of the last read-aloud, they heard that Aristotle started a school, and that one of his students was an astonishing boy who would carry Aristotle's ideas the farthest of all. Ask: "Does anyone remember the little boy's name?" Tell students the title of today's read-aloud, and have them think about who Alexander the Great was and how he received this name.

Prompt discussion with the following questions:

- Why do you think Alexander was called Alexander the Great?
- What do you think made Alexander the Great different from other men of his time?
- What do you think Alexander the Great looked like? Do you think he was a large man or a small man? Do you think he received this name because of his size or because of how he lived his life?

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to find out if their predictions are correct and to learn more about this man named Alexander the Great.



Alexander the Great, Part I

← Show image 11A-1: King Philip looking at map; Alexander playing

1 [Show Macedonia on Poster 1.] At this time, Macedonia was not a part of ancient Greece.

2 What are conflicts? Why was King Philip not involved in the Greek conflicts?

3 What was King Philip's plan? Do you think it will work?

4 or powerful

5 Does this sentence give you a hint of what is going to happen?



← Show image 11A-2: Young Alexander training to fight

6 Why do you think Alexander practiced so much? Do you think he believed that "practice makes perfect"?

7 What does it mean if Alexander was a prince?

8 Do you think all of Alexander's practice helped him succeed?

To the north of the Greek city-states and of Mount Olympus lay the territory known as Macedonia (*MASS-uh-DOE-nee-uh*).¹ The Macedonian king, Philip the Second, watched and waited as the Greek city-states struggled among themselves for power and wealth after the Persian wars. It seemed that they could work together brilliantly when they faced a common enemy such as Persia, but afterward they would go back to competing against one another. Away from all these conflicts, King Philip grew stronger.²

King Philip of Macedonia had a plan: he would let the rest of the Greeks wear themselves out fighting one another, and then he would lead his army south to unite all of Greece beneath his command.³

Philip also had a son whom he expected to follow in his steps and take over the throne one day. The boy was a bold, handsome, curly-haired youngster named Alexander. At first, Philip was a bit disappointed when it became clear that Alexander would not grow up to be a tall, strapping⁴ fellow like his father. Philip wondered, "How can someone Alexander's size become a great warrior and commander like . . . well, like me?" He soon realized that he had nothing to worry about.⁵

Alexander was determined to be the best at everything he did. He constantly practiced with sword and spear, hour after hour.⁶ Even full-grown soldiers told one another, "Keep your guard up when you practice against Prince Alexander, or you will find his sword point at your throat."⁷ Alexander trained himself to swim in icy rivers and run for miles without stopping. He became an excellent wrestler and a champion horseman, and was constantly challenging other riders.⁸

- 9 Do you remember who Aristotle was? Why do you think King Philip wanted his son to study with him?



← **Show image 11A-3: Alexander learning from Aristotle**

Alexander came to love and honor the wise Aristotle, and tried to learn all that he could from him. Pleased with his student, Aristotle taught the prince more than science and mathematics. He also tried to pass along all that the Greeks, especially the Athenians, had learned about leading a civilized and well-balanced life.¹⁰ Alexander also loved to study the poems of Pindar.

- 10 Was living a balanced life important to Aristotle?

- 11 Do you remember another famous philosopher who shared this idea? (Plato)

Alexander listened when Aristotle taught him the importance of observing and studying facts before making decisions.¹¹ However, the prince's energetic nature caused him to use this lesson in ways far different from those that the quiet scientist had imagined.



← **Show image 11A-4: Alexander observing the wild Bucephalus**

One famous example occurred when Alexander was in his early teens and set his eyes on a magnificent horse named Bucephalus (byu-SEF-uh-lus).¹² Alexander told his father's groomsmen, "That is the horse I want to ride."

- 12 If the horse was magnificent, was it ordinary or grand?

The head groomsmen bowed. "I am sorry, your highness, I cannot let you—for your own safety. No one can ride Bucephalus. One of our greatest horsemen tried yesterday, and even he broke his leg."¹³

- 13 Do you think Alexander will ride this magnificent horse?

Alexander realized he would have to use his mind as well as his muscles to **tame** the horse.¹⁴ "I must think this through," he told himself. He watched as one rider after another led the huge horse out to the wooden fence and tried to mount the saddle. Alexander noticed something no one else had seen. The prince realized, "Why, the big fellow is frightened each time he sees his own shadow moving before him on the ground. He becomes so nervous that he throws off anyone who tries to ride him."¹⁵

- 14 In this case *tame* means to make gentle or obedient. The word *tame* can also be used to describe an animal that's not wild.

- 15 What caused the horse to see his shadow? What do you think will happen next?



← **Show image 11A-5: Alexander riding a calmed Bucephalus**

Alexander took some sugar out to the horse. “Here, boy, eat this,” he said, and he turned Bucephalus around in the other direction so that he was facing the sun and could not see his own shadow. Then Alexander easily climbed into the saddle. Everyone was amazed. Alexander rode the huge horse all afternoon. Even King Philip came out to watch, grinning at his son. “He’s not so bad!” called Alexander, grinning back. Finally, Bucephalus trusted Alexander so much that the boy could lead him to do anything—even with his shadow in front of him.¹⁶ Bucephalus became Alexander’s horse, and Alexander so loved the horse that later he named a city after him.

16 [Point to the shadow in the image]



← **Show image 11A-6: Alexander riding at the front of his army**

Soon Alexander was leading troops into battle for his father. He developed a habit that stayed with him all his life: He always rode in the front line of fighters. The soldiers were proud of their brave prince and loved him for taking risks as great as those he asked them to take. A number of times when a battle might have been lost, Alexander would yell, “Charge!” and ride ahead. His **devoted** soldiers would think, “We cannot let him be killed or captured!”¹⁷ They had no choice but to follow him and win the battle, for they knew Alexander would never **retreat**.¹⁸

17 *Devoted* means having strong loyalty or commitment. Why do you think the soldiers were so devoted to Alexander?

18 *Retreat* means to withdraw or go back. Why do you think Alexander would never retreat?

19 or enemy

At last King Philip felt that he and his son were ready to conquer the Greeks who were south of Macedonia. Then, by a stroke of good luck, they found a better way. Their old foe,¹⁹ Persia, once again came after the Greek cities. Philip told the other leaders of Greece, “I will lead you against Persia.” A few protested, but Philip and Alexander quickly invaded their cities and conquered them by force. People in the other city-states, weakened by war, were afraid to go up against the powerful Macedonian army.²⁰

20 So, did King Philip get what he wanted?



← **Show image 11A-7: Alexander as king at the head of his army**

And then King Philip died. At the age of twenty, Alexander became king of Macedonia. Although young in years, Alexander led his army through Greece, fighting and conquering when he needed to, and accepting surrender when he could. He generously gave gifts to the peoples and cities that welcomed him, while giving no mercy to those who opposed him.²¹

At last, all of Greece hailed Alexander as their king.

But Greece was not enough for the **ambitious** king.²² He put one of his trusted advisors in charge of Greece and announced, “It is time to end the Persian threat once and for all and to call Persia my own.” With that, Alexander set out on his greatest adventure.²³

21 or went against him

22 If you are ambitious, you have a strong desire for success. What do you think ambitious King Alexander is going to do?

23 Now that Alexander has conquered the Greek city-states, who does he want to conquer next? You’ll hear about that adventure in the next read-aloud.

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions about Alexander the Great correct? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Inferential* Alexander was not a large man like his father, but he still became a successful fighter. How did he do this? (He trained constantly as a runner and swimmer, practiced constantly with sword and spear, and became a great horseman and wrestler.)
3. *Literal* What important lesson did Alexander learn from Aristotle? (Aristotle taught him the importance of observing and studying facts before making decisions.)
4. *Inferential* What observation did Alexander make about the wild horse, Bucephalus? (He realized the horse was afraid of his shadow.) What clever idea did he use to tame the horse? (He turned the horse’s face into the sun so that he would not see his shadow and be afraid, and he offered him sugar to win his favor.)
5. *Inferential* Why did Alexander’s father ask Aristotle to teach his son? (because he believed Aristotle was a great philosopher)

6. *Inferential* Why did Alexander’s devoted soldiers think he was a brave fighter? (He would ride in the front of his army and take the same risks he asked of his men; he never retreated or gave up a fight.)
7. *Evaluative* How were Alexander’s actions an example of the saying “practice what you preach”? (Alexander acted in the same way that he asked his men to act.)
8. *Inferential* What are some adjectives you could use to describe Alexander? (*ambitious, clever, intelligent, etc.*)
9. *Evaluative* What is the most interesting thing you heard about Alexander the Great? (Answers may vary.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a couple of questions. I will give you a minute to think about the questions, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the questions. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

10. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* Have you, like Alexander, ever solved a problem by first observing things and then coming up with a clever idea? What was the problem and what was your idea? (Answers may vary.)
11. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these remaining questions.]

Word Work: Tame

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Alexander realized he would have to use his mind and his muscles to *tame* the horse.”
2. Say the word *tame* with me.
3. *Tame* means to make gentle or obedient.
4. Some animals are impossible to tame and should remain in nature.
5. Have you ever seen someone tame an animal or ever tried to tame one yourself? Try to use the word *tame* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I saw someone tame a _____ once,” or “I tried to tame a _____ once.”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word *tame*?

Use a *Making Choices* activity for follow-up. Directions: You have heard that the word *tame* means to make gentle or obedient. I will describe a situation. If what I describe is an example of something you could tame, say, “I can tame it.” If what I describe is an example of something you could not tame, say, “I cannot tame it.” (Answers may vary for all.)

1. a litter of kittens sleeping in a box
2. a nest of baby birds chirping in a tree
3. gorillas in the jungle
4. a lost dog scratching at your door
5. lizards sunbathing in the desert



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



Alexander the Great, Part I

11B

Extensions

20 minutes

Civilization Chart (Instructional Master 1B-1, optional)

Note: Be sure to save The Ancient Greek Civilization Chart for future reference, as it will also be used in the Grade 2 *Greek Myths* domain.

Show students Image Card 25 (Alexander the Great), and ask them what they see and what they remember about this leader. Ask students which square this Image Card should go in. Have a volunteer place the Image Card in the “Leaders” square. Tell students that they are going to hear more about this leader in the next read-aloud.

Review with students what is already on the Civilization Chart, and have them discuss what they remember about each image.

- ✈ Above and Beyond: You may wish to have some students complete Instructional Master 1B-1 on their own by drawing pictures and/or writing words in each square.

Writing a Fictional Narrative: Draft (Instructional Masters 10B-1 and 11B-1)

Tell students that with their help you are going to write the draft of the narrative paragraph. [You may wish to intentionally make some mistakes so that in the next lesson you may demonstrate how to edit them.] Review with students the brainstorming map that was previously created. Encourage students to add any new ideas they may have after hearing about Alexander the Great. If they haven’t done so already, have students choose a name for the character.

Copy Instructional Master 11B-1 onto chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Tell students that together they are going to write five sentences. Tell them that this is a common number of sentences for a paragraph with an introductory and concluding

sentence. Explain that the first sentence should be an introductory sentence to tell who their made-up character is and where s/he lives—e.g., “Linus is a king who lives in Sparta.” Write the introductory sentence in the first rectangle. Explain that the next three sentences should describe the character and how s/he spends his or her time in ancient Greece—e.g., “Linus has a wife, Queen Agatha, and two children, Petros and Rachael. Linus spends his days meeting with his councilmen, making laws, and training with his soldiers. Sometimes, he has to fight bravely in battles and is often away from home.” Write these three sentences in the second, third, and fourth rectangles. Tell students that the final sentence should be a concluding sentence that reminds the reader of what the paragraph is about and that wraps up the story—e.g., “King Linus is proud to lead the warriors of Sparta.” Write this sentence in the last rectangle.

Remind students that most narratives, or stories, are made up of many paragraphs. Tell students that they are writing only one paragraph because they are still learning the writing process, and that once they learn how to write a narrative, they will be able to write many paragraphs that will include many things that happen in the plot.

Tell students that they will review and edit their narrative paragraph the next time you meet.

 Above and Beyond: You may wish to have some students use Instructional Master 11B-1 to complete this exercise on their own.