**#8—Crash Course World History**

**Alexander the Great**

1. Alexander of Macedon, born in 356 BCE, died in 323 BCE at the ripe old age of \_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Alexander was the son of King \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ II, and when just 13 years old he tamed a horse no one else could ride named Bucephalus, which impressed his father so much he said: “*Oh thy son, look thee at a kingdom equal to and worthy of thyself, for Macedonia is too little for thee.*”
3. Let’s to look at Alexander of Macedon’s story by examining three possible definitions of greatness.

* **First**, maybe Alexander was great because of his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He conquered a lot of territory. He destroyed the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Empire. He conquered all the land the Persians had held including Egypt, and then marched toward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, stopping at the Indus River. Also, Alexander was a really good general, although historians disagree over whether his tactics were truly brilliant or if his army just happened to have better \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, specifically these extra long \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_called sarissas.
* That said, Alexander wasn’t very good at what we might now call \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-building. Alexander specialized in the tearing down of things, but he wasn’t so great at the building up of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to replace the things he’d torn down. And that’s why, pretty soon after his death, the Greek Empire broke into three empires, called the Hellenistic Kingdoms.
* Each was ruled by one of Alexander’s generals, and they became important dynasties. The Antigones in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and Macedonia, the Ptolemies in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the Selucids in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, all of which lasted longer than Alexander’s empire.
* A **second** greatness: maybe Alexander was great because he had an enormous \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the world after his death. After Alexander of Macedon died, everyone from the Romans to Napoleon loved him, and he was an important \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ model for many generals throughout history. But his main post-death legacy may be that he introduced the Persian idea of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the Greco-Roman world, which would become a pretty big deal.
* Alexander also built a number of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on his route that became big deals after his death, and it’s easy to spot them because he named most of them after himself and one after his horse.
* The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Egypt became a major center of learning in the classical world, and was home to the most amazing library ever, which Julius Caesar probably “accidentally” burned down while trying to conquer Egypt.
* Plus, the dead Alexander had a huge impact on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He gave the region its common language, Greek, which facilitated conversations and commerce.
* A **third** definition of greatness: Maybe Alexander is great because of his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Since no accounts of his life were written while he lived, embellishment was easy, and maybe that’s where true greatness lies.

1. So in Alexander the Great we have a story about a man who united the world while riding a magical horse only he could tame across \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ where it magically rained for him so that he could chase down his mortal enemy (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) and then leave in his wake a more enlightened world and a gorgeous, murderous wife (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_).
2. In short, Alexander was great because others decided he was great. Because they chose to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and emulate him.