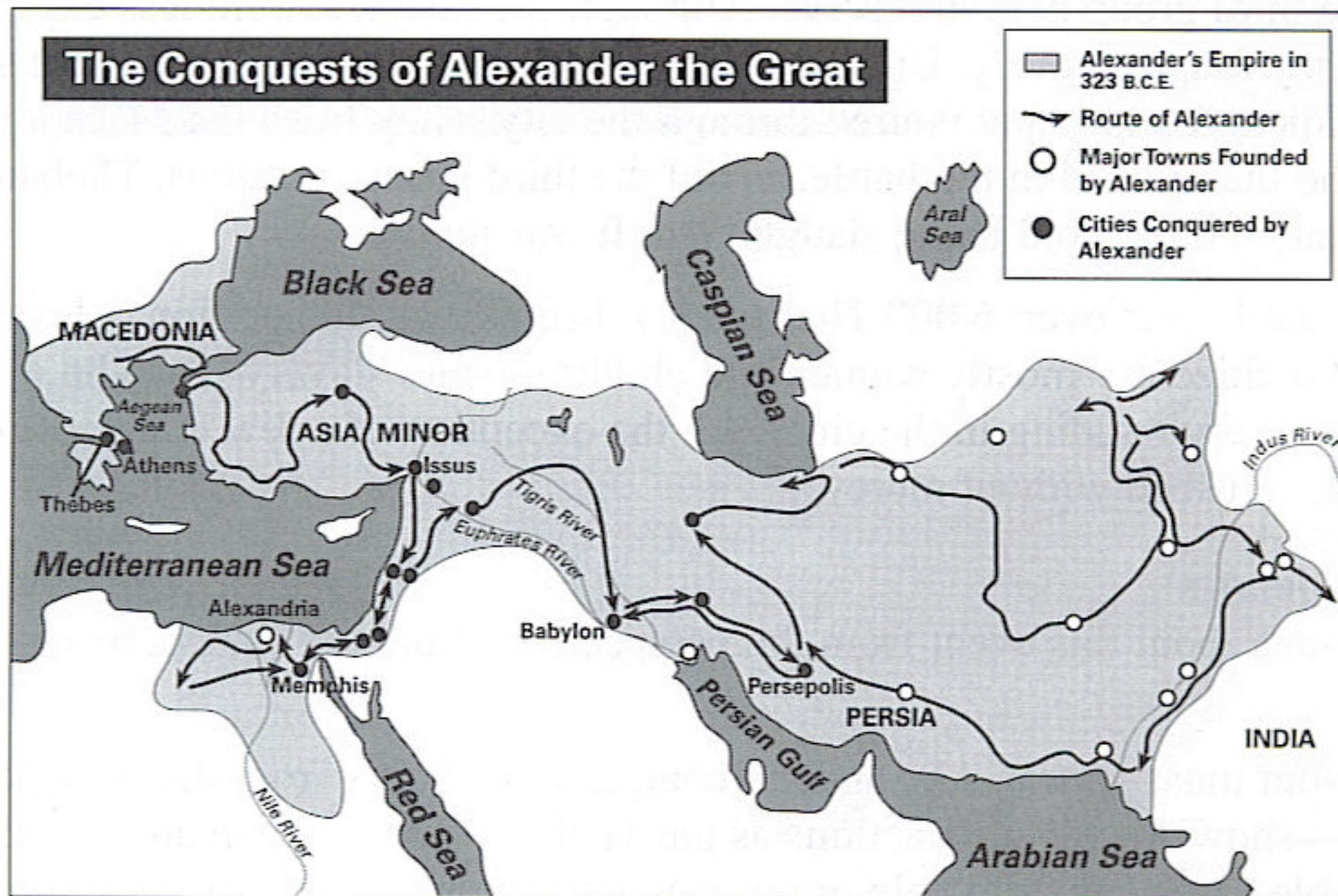


Information About Event A: Alexander in Thebes from the Perspective of Conquered



When Philip II of Macedonia was assassinated in 336 B.C.E., the Macedonian army immediately accepted Alexander as his father's rightful successor. News of Philip's death then traveled to the League of Corinth, the federation of Greek city-states that Philip had assembled after he conquered all of Greece. The league members elected Alexander to be Philip's successor as commander-in-chief. They gave him the power to raise troops from mainland Greece to make war against Persia—the most powerful empire in the ancient world at the time.

However, not all the Greek city-states supported him. More than the other city-states, Thebes in particular had reasons to resist Macedonian rule. Many Thebans were bitter about the treatment they had received from Alexander's father, King Philip II. When Philip conquered all of Greece in 338 B.C.E., he treated some cities more harshly than others. After defeating the Thebans, he held Theban prisoners for ransom or sold them into slavery. He executed the leaders of the Theban anti-Macedonian group, and established a new government under his control. In addition, Philip stationed a military post, or *garrison*, permanently in Thebes to help prevent future uprisings. Most Thebans expected no better treatment from Philip's successor. They viewed his son Alexander in the same light they viewed Philip—one tyrant was just replacing another.

Then in 335 B.C.E., Thebes seized an opportunity to declare its independence while Alexander was fighting a rebellion home in Macedonia. The Thebans prepared to defend their independence from Alexander and his 30,000 troops, who had set out to reconquer the city.

First, Theban forces surrounded and blocked off the Macedonian garrison. This prevented the garrison soldiers from fighting and the Macedonian troops from bringing in reinforcements and supplies. The Thebans also built an outer wall to the city and assigned part of their cavalry to

defend it. Slaves and resident aliens defended the city walls, while the main body of the Theban troops prepared to confront Macedonian troops outside the walls.

When Alexander arrived, he was met with strong resistance. He divided his troops into three groups, with the third group held in reserve. Although the Thebans were less experienced and outnumbered, they fought bravely. Unfortunately, they left a gate unguarded, and some Macedonian soldiers found it and poured through the city. They freed the Macedonian troops in the garrison, who then joined in the battle, as did the third group of troops. Theban troops and citizens alike scattered to avoid being slaughtered. It was no use.

By the time the battle was over, 6,000 Thebans had been killed. In addition, Alexander sold more than 20,000 citizens—mostly women and children—into slavery. Then he ordered his troops to destroy every building in the city, with the exception of a few temples. Once again, the Thebans were crushed without mercy.

Act-It-Out Guidelines

Create an act-it-out about this event from the perspective of the conquered, using these guidelines:

1. Your act-it-out must portray Alexander's conquest of Thebes from the perspective of the conquered—show Alexander's actions as the Thebans saw them, in an unfavorable manner.
2. Study the role cards below to help group members understand what information should be included in your act-it-out.
3. Brainstorm simple actions and lines of dialogue that will help you dramatically convey the information on the role cards.
4. Practice performing your act-it-out so that it incorporates all group members and can be presented in less than 2 minutes.

Role Cards

Alexander: Explain who you are. Boast about how your father, Philip II, executed the leaders of an anti-Macedonian group. Tell the class how you will conquer Thebes, no matter how many lives are lost in the process.

Theban man: Introduce yourself to the class as Pindar, a famous Theban poet. Describe how Philip II, Alexander's father, treated Thebes unfairly. Explain why Thebes did not support Alexander's leadership in the League of Corinth.

Theban child: Introduce yourself to the class as Cadmus, a Theban child. Describe how Alexander sold most of the Theban women and children into slavery. Tell the class how Alexander destroyed your home and most of Thebes.

Theban citizen: Introduce yourself to the class as Isodice (pronounced eye-SOD-ih-see), a respected Theban citizen. Tell the class that Alexander was able to conquer Thebes simply because he had more soldiers than the Thebans had. Describe how Alexander mercilessly slaughtered Theban soldiers, even those running from the battlefield.