

GRADE 9

HISTORY

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

In 359 B.C., Philip became the ruler of Macedonia, a little country north of Greece. He determined to capture Greece and use its resources to capture Persia. Athenian Demosthenes discovered the intentions of Philip and called for his country to prepare for war, but no one listened to him. Twenty-one years later, Philip had most of Greece in his power.

He organized the Hellenic League, consisting of the various Greek city-states he had conquered, and declared war on Persia in 337 B.C. Unfortunately for him, he was murdered before he was able to do what he had hoped, so his plans were carried out by his twenty-year-old son, Alexander.

At the age of 13, Alexander had become the private pupil of Aristotle. He was trained in his father's army and became skilled in the military and leadership. Under Aristotle's guidance, Alexander memorized Homer's *Iliad*. A deep love for Greece and her culture began to grow during the days of his youth. When his father died, he was ready to expand Macedonia.

In 334 B.C., Alexander crossed the Hellespont into Asia Minor to begin his conquest of Persia. His army consisted of about 35,000 soldiers from both Greece and Macedonia, as well as surveyors and engineers. Syria, Palestine, Tyre, and Gaza all fell to Alexander. Finally, Alexander gained the Persian Empire and became ruler over all the world, or at least what was known to be "all the world" at that time. His empire stretched from Greece and Egypt to the Indus River Valley.

By this time, Alexander was understandably homesick. On his way home, however, he stopped at the once magnificent Babylon to hold a feast of celebration. There, he died suddenly; he never reached home. He was only thirty-two years old.