

# Key Events in Alexander's Military Career

## Background Information About Alexander the Great

Alexander the Great was born in 356 B.C.E. in the kingdom of Macedonia, north of mainland Greece. Although he lived only to the age of 32, he ruled the largest empire the world had ever seen, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indus River. Alexander was a strong military leader, and he conquered many foreign lands with the powerful army his father had left to him. He failed to designate a legitimate heir to succeed him after his death. He died in Babylon (present-day Iraq) in 323 B.C.E. The divided empire he left behind quickly crumbled as various groups fought to control its vast lands.

### Event A: Alexander in Thebes

In 335 B.C.E., the Greek city-state of Thebes revolted and declared its independence from Macedonian rule. Alexander the Great, ruler of Macedonia and all of Greece, traveled to Thebes with 30,000 troops to crush the revolt. Alexander's forces were more experienced than the Thebans, and also greatly outnumbered them. While the Thebans fought with determination, Alexander's army eventually defeated them. After the battle, Alexander's troops destroyed the city.

### Event B: Alexander in Egypt

In 332 B.C.E., Alexander the Great and his forces arrived in Egypt. The Macedonian forces met no resistance when they entered the country, and the Egyptians enthroned Alexander as king, or *pharaoh*. In early 331 B.C.E., Alexander made a journey to a desert oasis, where he claimed the Oracle of Ammon identified him as the true son of the Greek God Zeus. Before he left Egypt, Alexander founded a new city northwest of Memphis, and named it after himself: Alexandria. The city later grew to become a center for culture and learning for several hundred years.

### Event C: Alexander in Persia

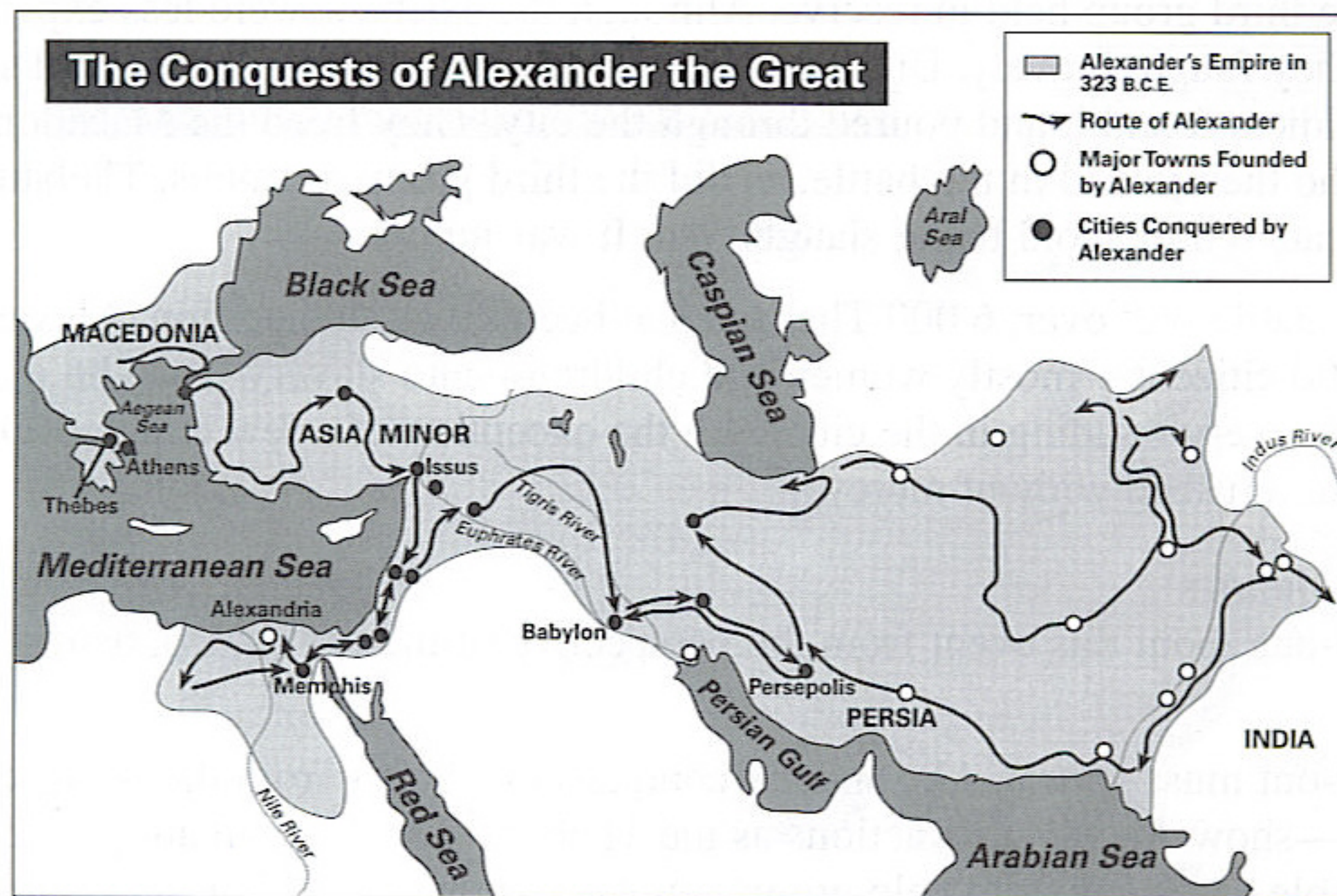
In 334 B.C.E., Alexander the Great set out to conquer the Persian Empire, the most powerful empire in the ancient world. Thousands of Macedonians and Persians were killed in the numerous battles in Persia. At the Battle of Issus, Alexander's forces defeated the Persian army led by King Darius III. After capturing and destroying the Persian capital of Persepolis, Alexander became the unquestioned ruler of the Persian empire. While he ruled, he appointed many Persians as governors in his conquered territories and allowed the Persians to continue practicing their customs and beliefs.

### Event D: Alexander in India

In 327 B.C.E., Alexander the Great led his forces across the Hindu Kush mountains and entered India. Over the next three years, his troops fought many battles to conquer various Indian rulers. Both the Macedonians and the Indians suffered heavy casualties. During his time in India, Alexander closely questioned the *Brahmins*, or holy men, to learn about Hinduism. After a victory at the Battle of the River Hydaspes, Alexander's troops began the long journey home to Macedonia.



## 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.

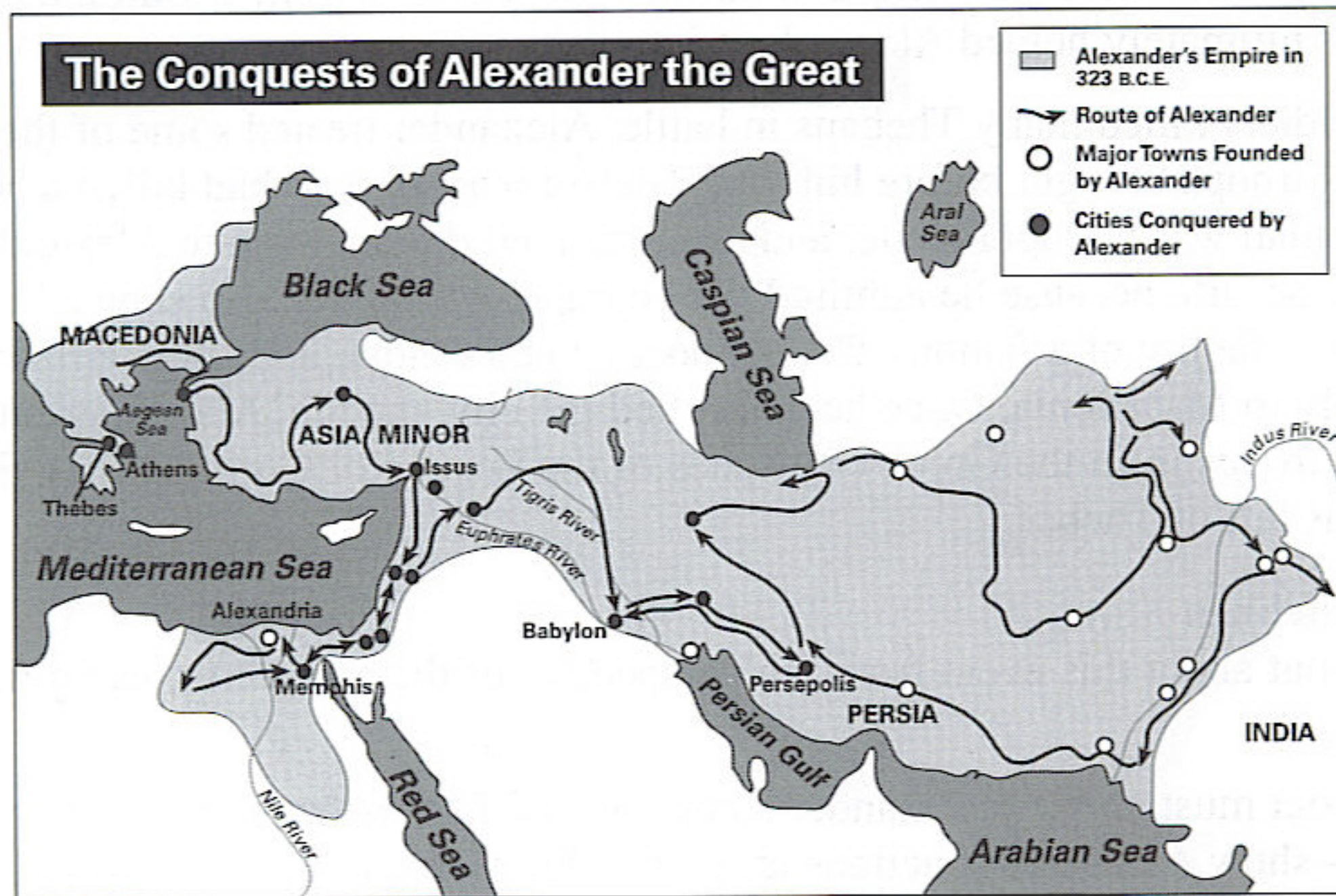
**Theban man:** Introduce yourself to the class as Pindar, a famous Theban poet. Describe how Philip II, Alexander's father, treated Thebes unfairly. Explain why Thebes did not support Alexander's leadership in the League of Corinth.

**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.



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



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 secure troops from mainland Greece to make war against Persia—the most powerful empire in the ancient world at the time.

However, the Greek city-state of Thebes was a reluctant participant in this plan. In 335 B.C.E., while Alexander was fighting some rebellious tribes in Macedonia, false reports of his death reached Thebes. The Thebans seized this opportunity to declare their independence from Macedonian rule. Alexander was furious. This direct challenge to his authority threatened his plans to unite Greece and conquer Persia. He marched his army south 240 miles to the gates of Thebes to crush the rebellion.

When Alexander arrived at Thebes, he had more than 30,000 troops at his command. Some of the troops came from Greek city-states in the League of Corinth. Alexander hoped his enormous army would convince the Thebans to ask for peace. He waited for three days, but the Thebans maintained their resistance. The Macedonians sent a message that any citizen of Thebes who wanted to could join Alexander's troops and share the peace that all of Greece enjoyed. The Thebans sent a message back that any Macedonians who wanted to could join *them* and overthrow the "tyrant of Greece." Alexander was stunned at the rebellious attitude of the Thebans—and was determined to defeat them.



An intense battle began. The Macedonians under Alexander were more experienced fighters and greatly outnumbered the Thebans. However, the citizens of Thebes were determined, and they fought long and hard. Alexander called in reserve troops, and they were assisted by other Macedonian troops who were stationed in a military post, or *garrison*, within the city. These combined forces ultimately helped Alexander triumph.

Although his soldiers killed many Thebans in battle, Alexander treated some of the rebels with compassion. His troops brought before him one Theban woman who had killed a Macedonian general. The woman was not apologetic, and she remained defiant even to Alexander. Still, he decided to spare her life because he admired her courage. Alexander also showed mercy to several priests, the family of a famous Theban poet named Pindar, and some citizens who remained friendly to Macedonia. Once he controlled the city, though, Alexander put its fate in the hands of his troops from the Greek city-states of the League of Corinth. They decided to destroy what was left of Thebes.

### **Act-It-Out Guidelines**

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

1. Your act-it-out must portray Alexander's conquest of Thebes from the perspective of the conqueror—show Alexander's actions in a favorable 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. Explain how the League of Corinth gave you the power to secure forces from mainland Greece to make war against Persia. Describe how you patiently waited for three days before attacking the rebellious Theban army.

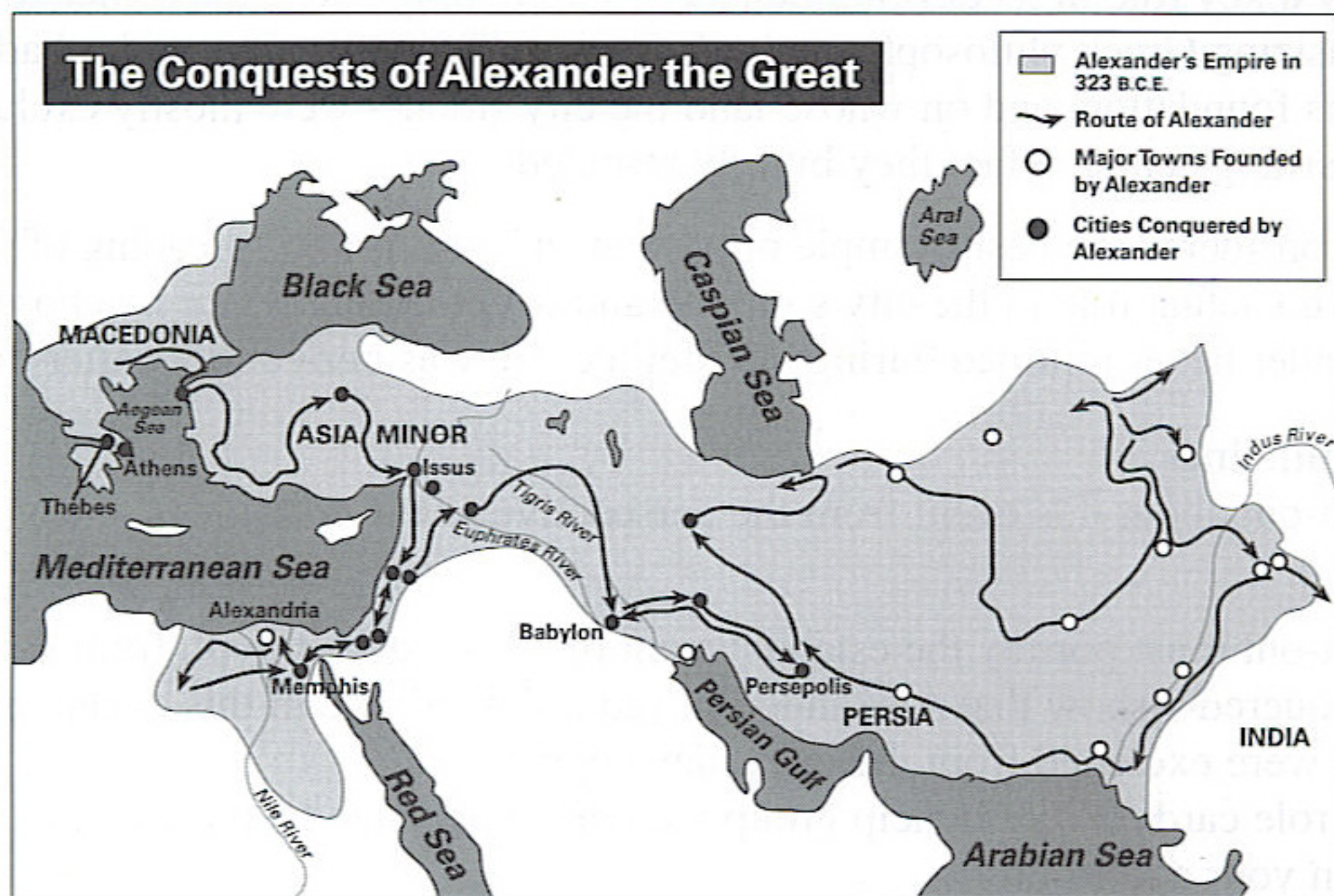
**Macedonian soldier:** Introduce yourself to the class as Craterus (pronounced kray-TER-uss), one of Alexander's close friends and advisors. Describe how Alexander defeated the determined Theban army. Tell the class that Alexander had to destroy Thebes because its defiance threatened his plans to unite Greece.

**Theban man:** Introduce yourself to the class as Pindar, a famous Theban poet. Explain how Alexander took control of Thebes despite fierce resistance by its inhabitants. Tell the class how Alexander showed mercy to you and your family.

**Theban woman:** Introduce yourself to the class as Timoclaea (pronounced tim-oh-KLAY-ah), a respected Theban woman. Explain why you were brought before Alexander. Tell the class that Alexander spared your life because he admired your courage.



## Information About Event B: Alexander in Egypt from the Perspective of Conquered



After two years in Asia Minor and the Near East, Alexander and his forces arrived in Egypt in 332 B.C.E. The Egyptian people greeted them with mixed feelings. On the one hand, many were relieved and welcomed the conqueror. They hoped he would be an improvement over the Persians, who had ruled Egypt for the previous 20 years, and had been harsh and at times incompetent. The Persians violated, or *desecrated*, Egyptian temples and sacred customs. Egyptians knew that Alexander respected Egyptian beliefs, including their Gods. However, they were also aware of his reputation as a cruel conqueror who slaughtered people and destroyed cities. With this in mind, the Persian governor, or *satrap*, of Egypt willingly surrendered power, and even offered Alexander silver and all his furniture.

In 331 B.C.E., Alexander decided to journey to the oasis of Siwah (SEE-wah) to visit a prophet. He arrived at the site of a famous Oracle of Amon (pronounced AH-mun)—the Egyptian King of the Gods. Many people portrayed the reception Alexander received at Siwah as a true “sign from the Gods.” However, no one knows what really happened during his visit to the oracle. Alexander never revealed exactly what the oracle privately told him. Alexander convinced himself, and many others, that he heard what he wanted to hear all along—that he was the true son of Zeus (or Ammon), King of the Gods. From that point on, Alexander began to encourage others to honor him as a God. This upset many of his followers, who did not believe in the mostly Eastern tradition of emperor worship.

Before Alexander left Egypt to pursue more conquests, he marked out the boundaries for a city near the Nile River, which he named after himself: Alexandria. Soon after Alexander decided to found the city, he designated a Greek architect and planner to build it. However, the Macedonian general Ptolemy I (pronounced TOL-eh-mee), Alexander’s successor as ruler of Egypt, was



actually responsible for much of the city's development. He moved his capital there from Memphis, and saw to it that the city grew as both a commercial port and a huge cultural center.

Although Alexandria became one of the ancient world's leading cities, the Egyptians were not allowed to play a key role in its development. The city mainly became a center for Greek culture, emphasizing Greek philosophy and scholarship. The Egyptians—who had helped build the city from its foundation, and on whose land the city stood—were mostly excluded from this magnificent learning center, a fact they bitterly resented.

Alexandria is considered the best example of Alexander's successful spreading of Greek culture. Yet, he played no actual role in the city's growth and development. Once he chose the site for the city, Alexander never returned during his lifetime. He was buried there after his death.

### **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 the establishment of Alexandria, Egypt, from the perspective of the conquered—show that Alexander played a limited role in this event and that the Egyptians were excluded from the city's development.
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 all of the silver and furniture you obtained from the Persian satrap. Tell the class how you left Egypt before Alexandria was constructed in order to pursue more conquests.

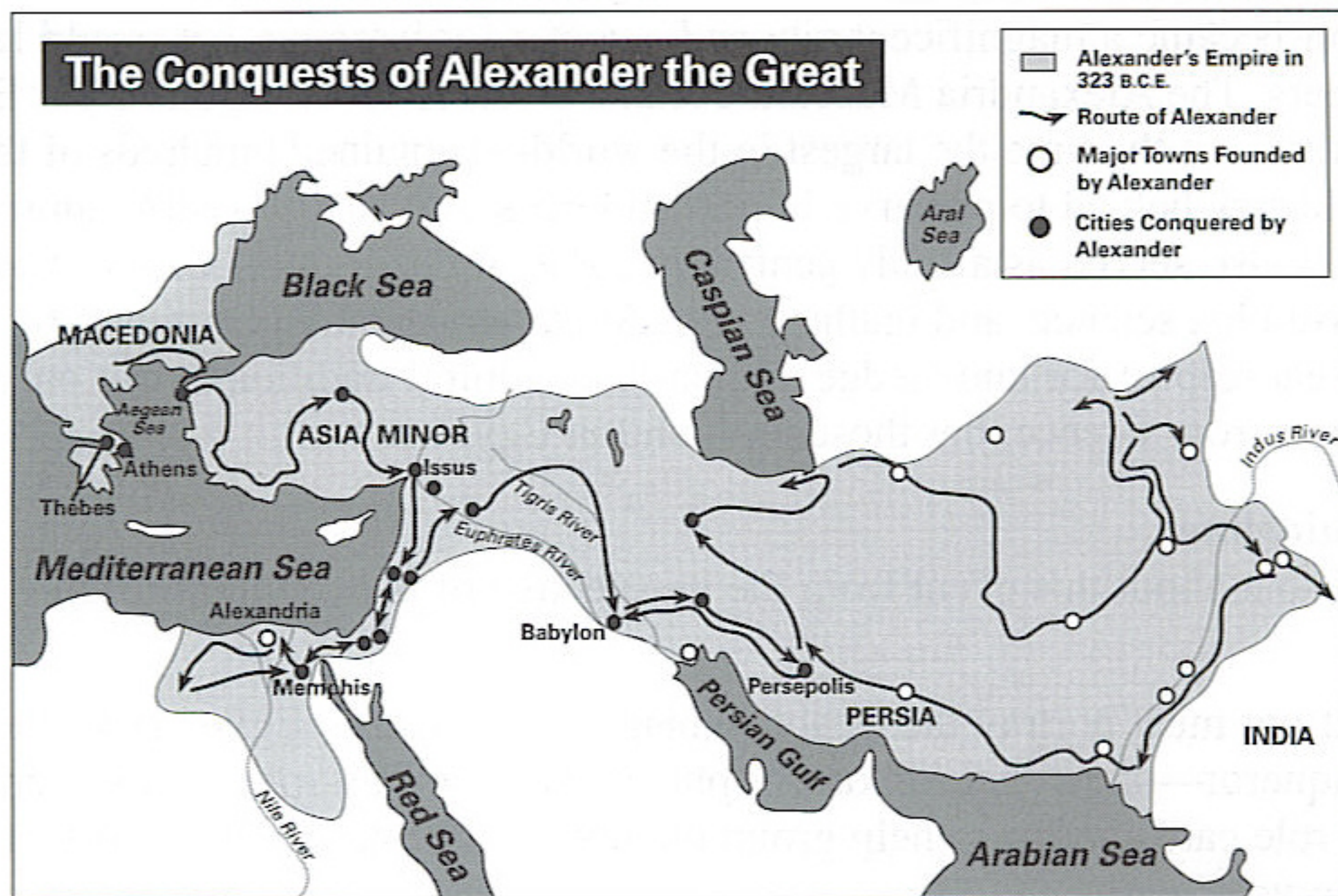
**Macedonian general:** Introduce yourself to the class as Seleucus (pronounced seh-LOO-kuss), one of Alexander's generals. Explain why no one really knows what happened during Alexander's journey to Siwah. Tell the class that Alexander upset many of his followers by claiming to be the son of Zeus.

**Egyptian architect:** Introduce yourself to the class as Ramose (pronounced RAH-mohs), an Egyptian architect. Explain that Ptolemy was actually responsible for much of Alexandria's development. Tell the class that Egyptians, despite their history of building magnificent monuments, were not consulted while Alexandria was being constructed.

**Egyptian scholar:** Introduce yourself to the class as Sety (pronounced SEH-tee), an Egyptian scholar. Explain why the Egyptians welcomed Alexander with mixed feelings. Tell the class that Egyptians were culturally excluded from Alexandria.



## Information About Event B: Alexander in Egypt from the Perspective of Conqueror



After two years in Asia Minor and the Near East, Alexander and his forces arrived in Egypt in 332 B.C.E. For the previous 20 years, the Persians had ruled Egypt, and the Egyptians welcomed Alexander more as a savior than an invader. The Egyptians believed that Alexander would show more respect for their religious practices and cultural traditions than the Persians had done. As a result, Alexander's troops met no resistance when they arrived at the city of Memphis, and the Egyptians treated him as a king, or *pharaoh*. It is believed that he may also have had a traditional Egyptian coronation ceremony.

In early 331 B.C.E., Alexander left most of his forces behind and set out on a religious journey to the oasis of Siwah (pronounced SEE-wah) to visit a prophet. He arrived at the site of a famous Oracle of Amon (pronounced AH-mun), the Egyptian King of the Gods. Historians believe Alexander was anxious to hear predictions from the oracle of success in future battles. They also believe he wanted to confirm that he was—as his mother had often told him—the true son of Zeus.

Alexander's visit to the oasis excited the Egyptian people. No pharaoh had ever visited the oasis. According to the legend, when Alexander arrived at the temple of the oracle, the oldest of the priests greeted him as Son of Ammon, and King. This greeting confirmed Alexander's belief that he was a true "Son of the King of the Gods." Alexander asked the oracle several questions, the most significant of which was whether he would indeed conquer the whole world. The answer was yes.

Before he left Egypt, Alexander laid the foundation for an important new city. He chose a site northwest of the city of Memphis, and named it after himself: Alexandria. Alexander chose this site because he believed the new city—located on the Egyptian coast—could develop into an



important port and trade center. Alexander helped lay the plans for his new city. He decided where the marketplace and the temples should be located. He also determined which Gods should have their temples in the city's foundation, and even allowed temples to be built honoring Egyptian Gods.

Alexandria later became a magnificent city and a center for learning that would last for hundreds of years. The Alexandria Museum became a center of Greek and Near Eastern culture. Its library—at the time the largest in the world—contained hundreds of thousands of volumes. The library helped to preserve important Greek and Near Eastern cultural achievements. It also served as a study center for some of the greatest Greek minds in literature, philosophy, science, and mathematics. Alexandria flourished in part because of Alexander's great respect for knowledge and various cultural traditions—not only those he brought with him from Greece, but those he found in Egypt as well.

### **Act-It-Out Guidelines**

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

1. Your act-it-out must portray the establishment of Alexandria, Egypt, from the perspective of the conqueror—show that Alexander played an important role in this event.
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. Describe how you were welcomed by the Egyptians when you first entered their country. Boast about your role in founding the city of Alexandria.

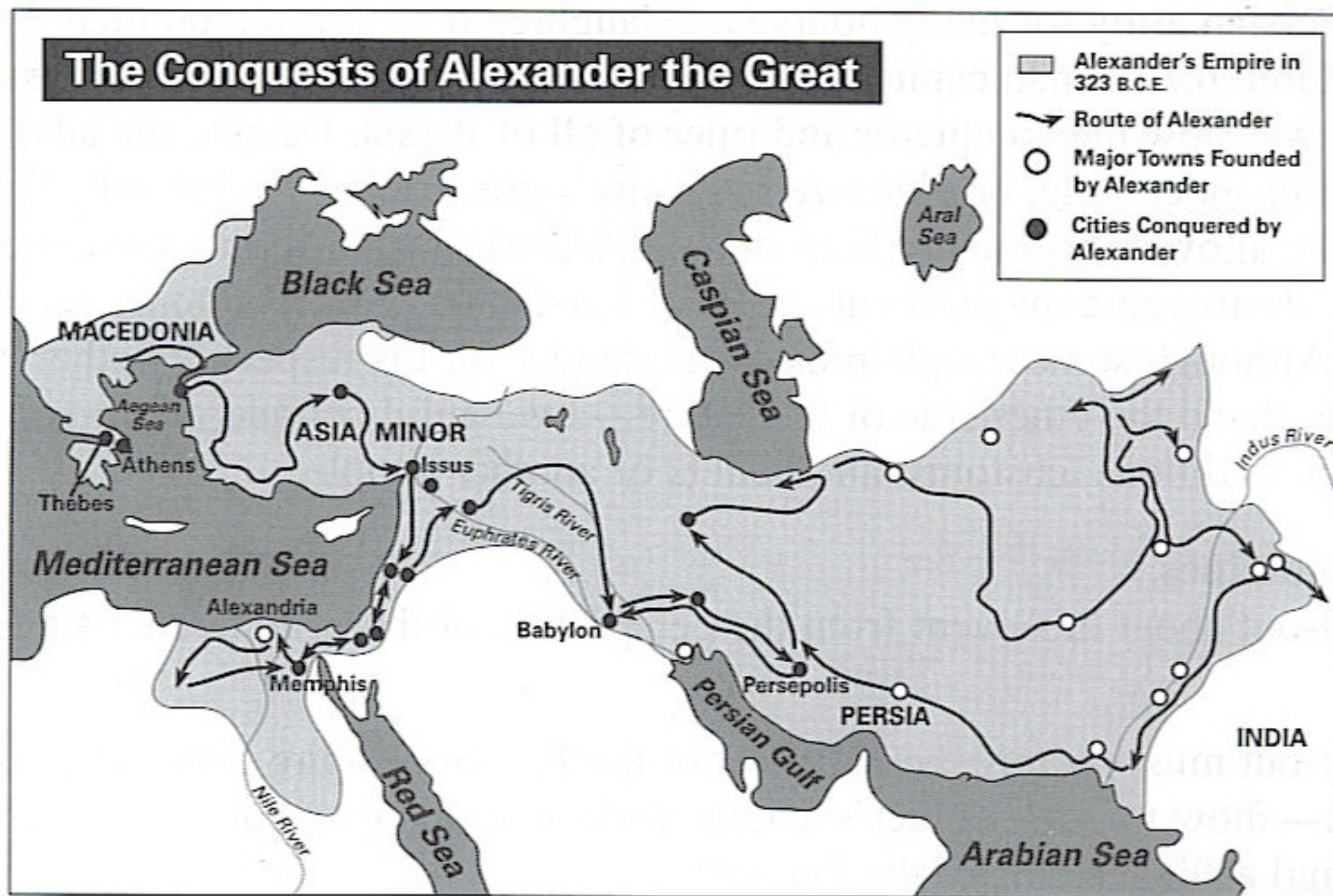
**Macedonian general:** Introduce yourself to the class as Ptolemy (pronounced TOL-eh-mee), one of Alexander's generals. Explain why Alexander thought he was destined to be the ruler of the whole world. Describe how Alexandria became a magnificent city and center for learning.

**Macedonian general:** Introduce yourself to the class as Paremenio (pronounced pah-reh-MEN-ee-oh), another of Alexander's generals. Tell the class that prior to Alexander's arrival, the Egyptians had been subjected to 20 years of harsh rule by the Persians. Boast about Alexander's wise decision to found Alexandria on the coast of Egypt.

**Egyptian priest:** Introduce yourself to the class as Hesire (pronounced heh-SEER), an Egyptian priest. Explain why the Egyptians enthroned Alexander as pharaoh. Describe how Alexander showed great respect for the religious practices of your people.



## Information About Event C: Alexander in Persia from the Perspective of Conquered



When Alexander the Great set out for Asia Minor in 334 B.C.E. with 35,000 troops, the Persian Empire was the largest in the world. Its territory stretched thousands of miles, across deserts and mountains, from Egypt to India.

The Persians knew that since the Persian Wars in the fifth century B.C.E., during which Persians destroyed many Greek cities, the Greeks had dreamed of revenge. However, by the time of Alexander the Great, Persia no longer posed a military threat to the Greeks. The only threat Persia posed to Greece was economic competition—the two were rivals for control of the trade routes in the eastern Mediterranean. Nevertheless, driven by revenge and his own burning desire to rule vast lands, Alexander set out to conquer Persia.

Alexander's military campaign against the Persian Empire was brutal and relentless. While some of his strategies were well planned, more often he relied on simple brute force against the Persians, without regard for the casualties they or his own troops might suffer. Alexander's chief strategy was often to create a line of troops heavily armed with javelins and spears, or a *phalanx* (pronounced FAL-anks), and charge directly at the enemy.

In one of the most famous battles—the Battle of Issus (pronounced ISS-uss) in 333 B.C.E.—Persian forces killed a great number of Alexander's troops, despite his strategies and tactics. Many historians believe that the Persians could have won this battle if their leader, King Darius III (pronounced DAHR-ee-yuss), had not panicked and fled the battlefield. Without him, the remainder of the Persian army scattered in retreat, leaving Alexander to claim victory.

In some cases, Alexander showed respect for the conquered Persians, appointing Persian governors to rule territories and allowing the Persian people to continue practicing their religious beliefs. However, Alexander also treated the people and territories he conquered in a



cruel and disrespectful manner. For example, when he attacked Tyre (pronounced TY-ur), a Phoenician island city belonging to the Persian Empire, the citizens fought back strongly for eight months. When Alexander finally captured the city, he was so furious that he sold most of the city's 30,000 people into slavery. During another battle, Alexander and his troops pursued the retreating Persian army for many hours and slaughtered nearly 40,000 men. Finally, Alexander captured the Persian capital of Persepolis (pronounced pur-SEP-oh-liss) without opposition. He was now the conqueror and ruler of all of Persia. Despite the advice of even his closest aides, Alexander stole, or *plundered*, the city's great riches for himself. Then, in a drunken state, he allowed his men to burn down the Great Palace and its surrounding temples. Alexander thus destroyed a magnificent center of Persian culture, traditions, and artistic achievements. Although some people praised Alexander for his respect for other cultures, the Persians saw firsthand the other side of his nature—a vengeful conqueror who often had a total disregard for the traditions, customs, and beliefs of another people.

### **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 the conquest of the Persian Empire from the perspective of the conquered—show that Alexander's actions reflected total disregard for the traditions, customs, and achievements of the Persians.
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. Explain why you wanted to conquer the Persian Empire, even though it was no longer a military threat to Greece. Brag to the class that you were in a drunken state when you ordered your forces to burn and loot Persepolis.

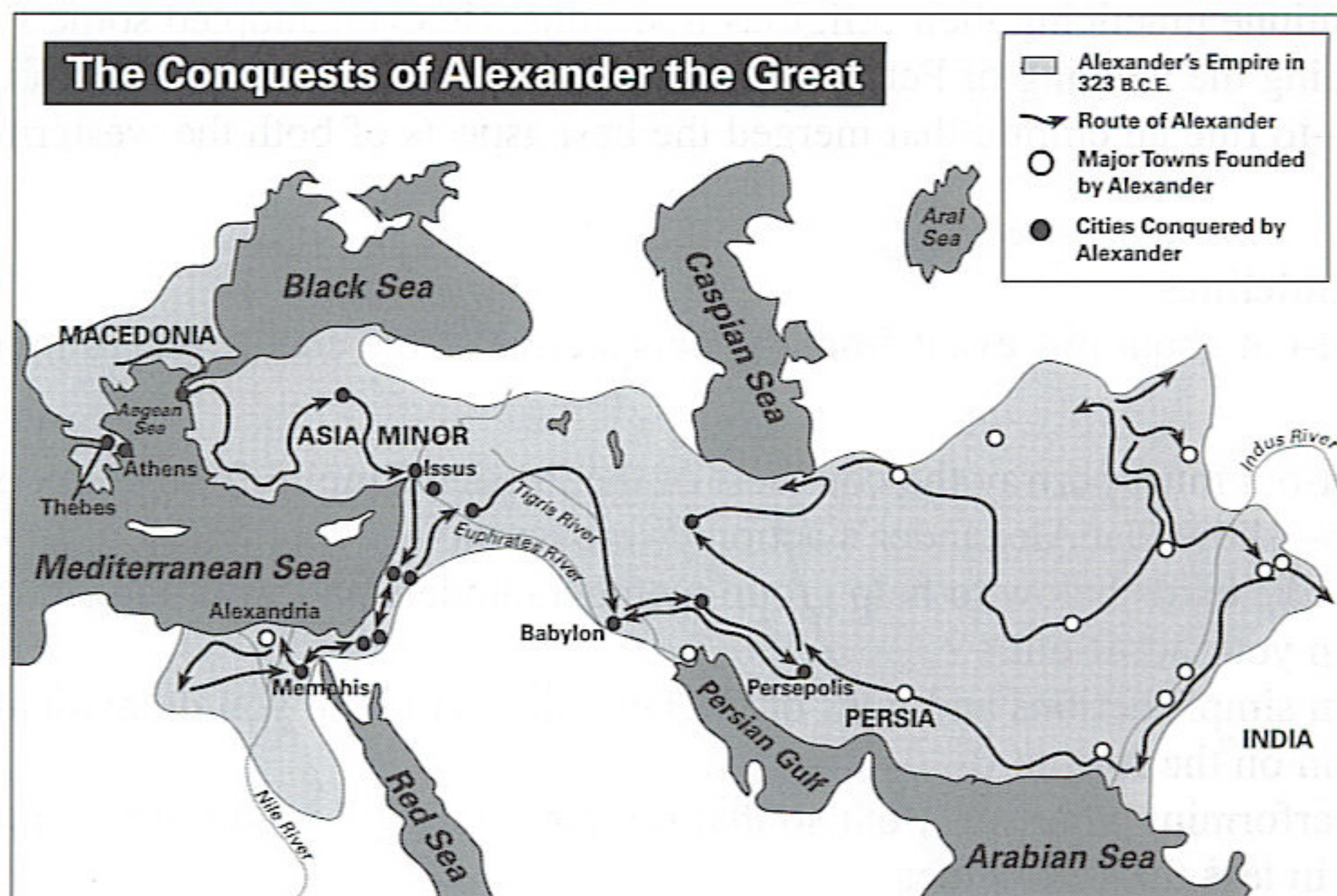
**Macedonian general:** Introduce yourself to the class as Perdiccas (pronounced purr-DEE-kahs), one of Alexander's generals. Explain how Alexander's strategy of charging directly at an enemy resulted in his forces suffering numerous casualties. Tell the class that had Darius not fled from Issus, the Persians would have won the battle.

**Resident of Tyre:** Introduce yourself to the class as Bardiya (pronounced BAR-dee-ah), a Persian resident of Tyre. Explain how Alexander lost his temper and sold most of Tyre's people into slavery. Tell the class that following the conquest of Tyre, Alexander's army slaughtered 40,000 Persian soldiers.

**Resident of Persepolis:** Introduce yourself to the class as Arsames (pronounced AR-sah-muss), a resident of Persepolis. Explain how Alexander allowed Persepolis to be burned and looted. Tell the class that Alexander's destruction of Persepolis reveals that he is nothing more than a vengeful conqueror.



## Information About Event C: Alexander in Persia from the Perspective of Conqueror



When Alexander the Great set out for Asia Minor in 334 B.C.E. with 35,000 troops, the Persian Empire was the largest in the world. Its territory stretched thousands of miles, across deserts and mountains, from Egypt to India. It had been the dream of Alexander's father, Philip II, to invade and conquer Persia. As ruler of all of Greece, Philip intended to avenge the destruction the Persians had inflicted upon Greece during the Persian Wars nearly 150 years earlier. In addition, the Persians were a strong rival for control of the profitable trade routes in the eastern Mediterranean. For these reasons—and because he was already thinking of ruling vast new lands—Alexander set out to fulfill his father's dream.

In his many victories against the Persians during the next several years, Alexander showed his military genius time and again. His use of superior tactics and skilled battle strategies helped him defeat Persian forces that sometimes had him outnumbered by two to one. This was especially true at the Battle of Issus (pronounced ISS-uss), a key turning point in Alexander's Persian campaign.

At the Battle of Issus in 333 B.C.E., the Persians—led by King Darius III (pronounced DAHR-ee-yuss)—had more than 70,000 troops. Alexander's forces numbered about 40,000. Prior to the battle, the two armies passed each other through separate mountain passes during the night. When Alexander realized what had happened, he ordered his men to double back. This maneuver trapped the Persian army with its back to the sea, in a "corner" where the northern and eastern Mediterranean coasts meet. Alexander then led a charge with his cavalry. Darius panicked and fled in his chariot, causing much of his army to flee with him. Alexander captured thousands of men and much of the Persian king's riches.



Within three years after the Battle of Issus, Alexander captured and destroyed the Persian capital of Persepolis (pronounced pur-SEP-oh-liss) and claimed the right to rule all of Persia. Yet he showed much respect for the conquered Persians. He appointed many Persian governors in the territories he conquered—governors who would now be loyal to *him*. He allowed many Persians to continue practicing their religious traditions. He even adopted some Persian customs himself, including the wearing of Persian clothing. Each of these actions was part of his ultimate goal—to rule an empire that merged the best aspects of both the western and eastern worlds.

### **Act-It-Out Guidelines**

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

1. Your act-it-out must portray the conquest of the Persian Empire from the perspective of the conqueror—show that Alexander's actions were heroic and tolerant.
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 you used superior tactics and skilled battle strategies to defeat larger Persian forces. Tell the class that you burned Persepolis to avenge the Persians for having destroyed so many Greek city-states during the Persian Wars. Explain why your conquest of Persia fulfilled your father's dream.

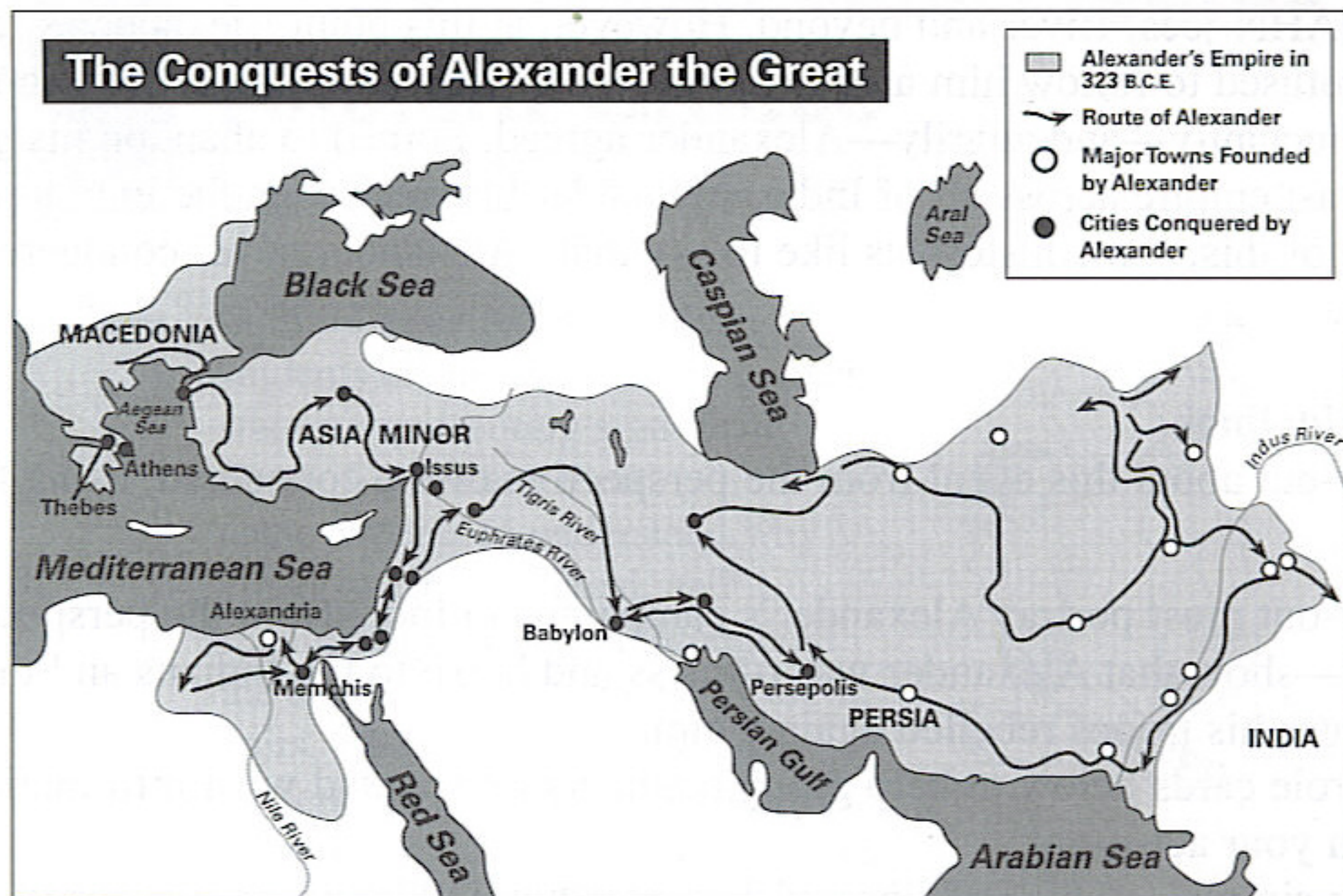
**Macedonian general:** Introduce yourself to the class as Hephaestion (pronounced heh-FES-tee-on), one of Alexander's trusted generals. Explain how Alexander defeated the Persians at Issus. Tell the class how Darius panicked and fled from the battlefield at Issus.

**Macedonian soldier:** Introduce yourself to the class as Diodorus (pronounced dy-OD-er-uss), one of Alexander's soldiers. Describe how Alexander showed great respect for the conquered Persians. Tell the class that to show his respect for Persian culture, Alexander wore Persian clothing.

**Persian satrap:** Introduce yourself to the class as Mazaeus (pronounced mah-ZAY-uss), a Persian *satrap*, or ruler. Explain how Alexander appointed many Persians, such as yourself, to act as governors in the areas he conquered. Tell the class that Alexander allowed many Persians to continue practicing their religious traditions.



## Information About Event D: Alexander in India from the Perspective of Conquered



By the year 327 B.C.E., Alexander the Great had conquered all of Greece, Egypt, and the Persian Empire. Still, he was not satisfied. In that year, Alexander led his troops over the Hindu Kush mountains down into the plain by the Indus River. The Greeks called this region India. (Many of Alexander's campaigns took place within the boundaries of modern-day Pakistan.)

Alexander and his forces spent the next three years in India. They fought many battles, conquered many territories, and suffered heavy losses. Many Indian kings strongly resisted Alexander's attempts to bring India under his empire. They used every means they had—including new elements of warfare such as elephants—to fight the heavily armed Macedonian forces. One brave king named Porus (pronounced POR-uss) nearly led his troops to victory over Alexander, despite being outnumbered and surrounded.

By the fall of 326 B.C.E, Alexander's armies had already fought and defeated many Indian rulers. The forces then began a movement west and south into the Punjab (pronounced POON-jahb) region. They found resistance wherever they went—and met it with total ruthlessness. In town after town, when natives resisted or tried to flee, the Macedonian forces adopted a single tactic: slaughter all males, and enslave all women and children.

In one nine-month period, Alexander's forces traveled down the Indus River—and killed as many as 80,000 people. The Macedonians were especially harsh in dealing with the *Brahmins*, the Indian holy men who often advised and encouraged the Indian kings to resist Alexander. When his forces were able to capture Brahmins, Alexander would often question them closely, trying to learn as much as he could about Hinduism, the Indian religion. However, then Alexander had them executed for encouraging the Indian kings to resist his rule.



By the end of 326 B.C.E., Alexander and his men had been conquering territories and foreign lands for more than eight years. They had journeyed thousands of miles. They often traveled for months in brutal heat across deserts, and in horrible snow and cold over mountains. Now, Alexander was intent on traveling east into the deepest part of India—all the way to the Ganges (pronounced GAHN-jees) River and beyond. However, at this point Alexander's forces turned on him. They refused to follow him any farther, and demanded that the army turn around and head home. Reluctantly—and angrily—Alexander agreed. Forced to abandon his goal of spreading his vast empire across all of India, Alexander bitterly began the long journey toward home. Because of this, some historians like to say that “Alexander never conquered India; it conquered him.”

### **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 campaigns in India from the perspective of the conquered—show that Alexander was ruthless and harsh to the Indians and that he left India because his troops rebelled against him.
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. Tell the class that you remained unsatisfied, even after conquering Greece, Egypt, and the Persian Empire. Describe how you felt when your soldiers refused to follow you beyond the Ganges River.

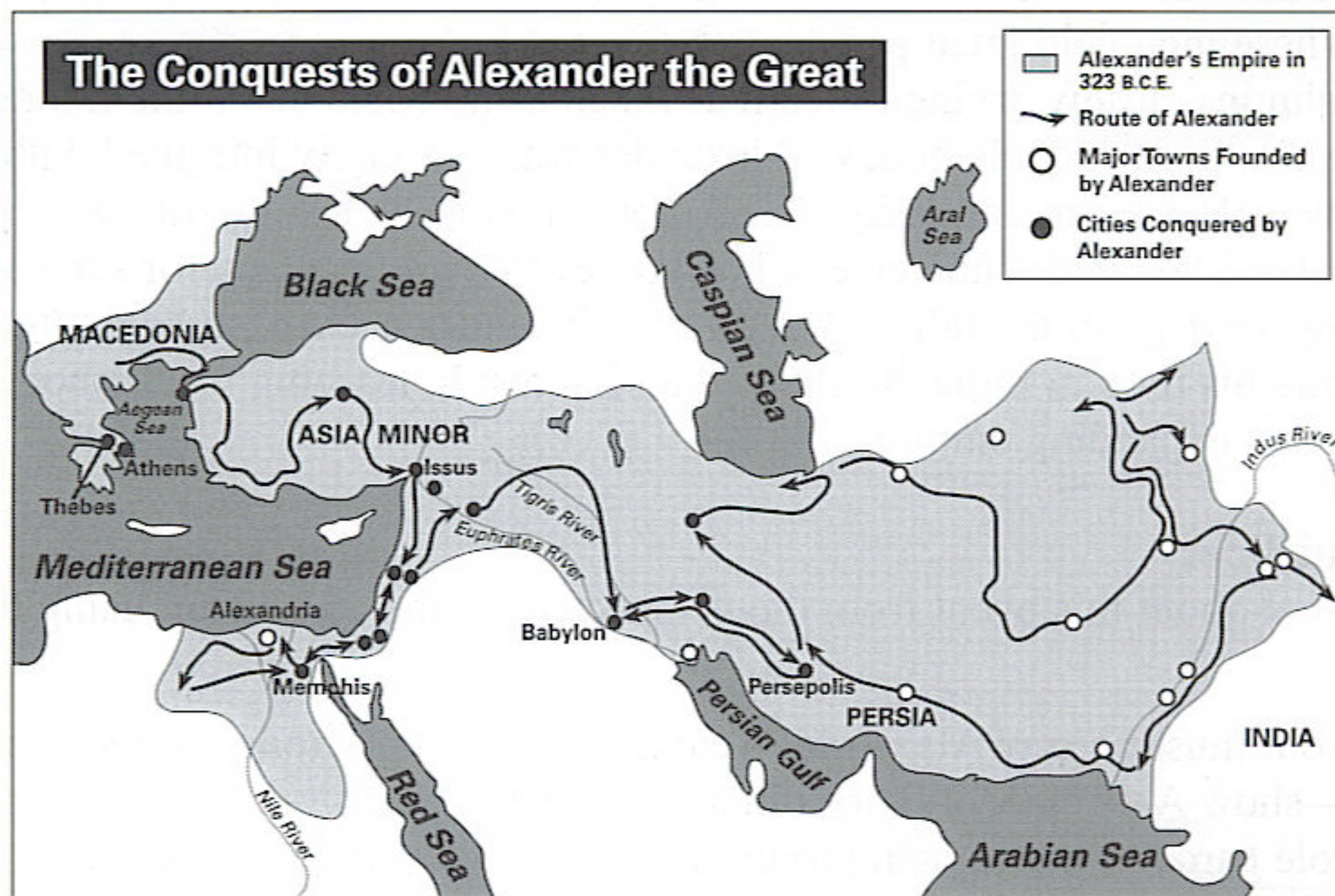
**Macedonian commander:** Tell the class that you are Coenus (pronounced KEE-nuss), one of Alexander's most dependable commanders. Describe the conditions under which Alexander's army was forced to travel and fight. Tell the class that after the campaigns in India, most of Alexander's army had lost faith in his ability to lead.

**Indian king:** Introduce yourself to the class as Porus, a powerful Indian king. Describe how you bravely used every means of warfare to resist Alexander's forces and nearly led your troops to victory. Tell the class that Alexander never conquered India, it conquered him.

**Indian Brahmin:** Introduce yourself to the class as Yajna (pronounced YAHJ-nah), an Indian holy man. Describe how Alexander's forces treated Indians living in the Punjab. Tell the class that in one nine-month period, Alexander's forces killed as many as 80,000 people. Explain how Alexander mistreated many of your fellow Brahmins.



## Information About Event D: Alexander in India from the Perspective of Conqueror



For years Alexander had heard fantastic stories about the lands east of Persia. Intrigued by these tales, in 327 B.C.E., he led his troops over the Hindu Kush mountains into the plains by the Indus River. The Greeks called this region India. (Many of Alexander's campaigns took place within the boundaries of modern-day Pakistan.) As Alexander made his way farther east, some local rulers willingly submitted to him and paid him tribute. Then, in the summer of 326 B.C.E., Alexander faced a shrewd and brilliant Indian king named Porus (pronounced POR-uss). This leader came armed with a large military force and a fearsome new war "machine"—elephants.

The two forces met at the River Hydaspes (pronounced hy-DASS-pehz). Alexander's troops had never battled an army with elephants. At first the troops could not even cross the river. Porus stationed his elephants all across the river's eastern bank, and the beasts frightened the Macedonians' horses. Porus also believed that Alexander could not cross because the battle took place during the *monsoon* season, when heavy rainfall was expected every day.

The major battle that followed proved to be Alexander's military masterpiece. Alexander divided his forces into three groups. He took one group far upstream, using the heavy rains to conceal his movements. He quickly crossed the river, and surprised the enemy with a full-scale attack. With his cavalry force, he attacked from two directions along Porus's line of foot soldiers, cavalry, and elephants. Then Alexander sent another group of cavalry to attack the Indian forces from the rear. As the cavalry attacked, they killed many of the elephants' riders and drove the animals back into the Indian forces. The riderless elephants panicked. They began to cause more destruction to Porus's forces than to Alexander's. Finally, Alexander sent in his infantry to finish the job. The Indian troops were surrounded and could not fight back.



effectively. Porus gave himself up personally to Alexander. Alexander rewarded his bravery by granting Porus's wish to rule Indian territory—in Alexander's name.

After the Battle of the River Hydaspes, Alexander continued to move farther east. During the conquests that followed, he often came across Indian holy men, called *Brahmins* (pronounced BRAH-minz). These men held great power with various Indian kings. Alexander would question the Brahmins closely, trying to learn as much as he could about the Indian religion known as *Hinduism*. Some people believe Alexander was especially intrigued with the similarities between Hinduism and early Greek thought. One such similarity was belief in the existence of a natural law in the universe, a law that even a great conqueror such as Alexander could not disobey, or *defy*. In the fall of 326 B.C.E., Alexander decided to begin the journey home. Still, during his time in India, he showed an interest in learning much about the land he wished to add to his expanding empire.

### **Act-It-Out Guidelines**

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

1. Your act-it-out must portray Alexander's campaigns in India from the perspective of the conqueror—show Alexander's actions in a favorable 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. Explain why you were anxious to lead your forces into India. Boast about how you defeated King Porus's forces at the River Hydaspes.

**Macedonian soldier:** Introduce yourself to the class as Nearchus (pronounced nee-AR-kuss), one of Alexander's soldiers. Explain how Alexander displayed great courage in leading the Macedonian army over the Hindu Kush mountains. Tell the class that when Alexander reached India, he had traveled over 2,000 miles from his home in Macedonia.

**Indian king:** Introduce yourself to the class as Porus, an Indian king. Tell the class that Alexander was the first military leader to defeat your army of elephants. Explain how Alexander rewarded your bravery by allowing you to continue ruling Indian territory.

**Indian Brahmin:** Introduce yourself to the class as Garji (pronounced GAR-jee), an Indian holy man. Describe how Alexander questioned you to learn more about Hinduism. Explain how Alexander was intrigued by the similarities between Hinduism and early Greek thought.