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| <b>Course:</b> World History   | <b>Grade Level:</b> 8      |
| <b>Type:</b> Argumentative   | <b>Structure:</b> Analysis |
| <b>Teaching Task:</b> From a historical perspective, how “great” was Alexander as a military commander? After reading a variety of informational and persuasive texts, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position. |                            |
| <b>Performance Level:</b> Advanced   |                            |

### Alexander the GREAT!

It is a big controversy to decipher whether "Alexander the Great" was truly "great". Alexander, the young king of Macedonia, was the greatest military commander ever to lead an army into battle and is deserving of the title, Alexander the Great. This is proven by the numerous outstanding achievements on Alexander's part. First of all, he defeated several armies, some which were even quadruple the size of his army! Along with that, Alexander conquered large portions of land in a short period of time. Finally, Alexander also had magnificent leadership skills to help him get his army through any obstacle. Overall Alexander the Great is deserving of his title for many broad reasons.

For Alexander to not be called "great" is quite unrealistic because he defeated various armies and won every single battle he was ever in. Those who believe Alexander isn't great say, "His father, Phillip II, left him the best army in the Greek world." However, if you give a Nascar driver the fastest car, that doesn't mean he will know how to use it and will always win. Nevertheless, Alexander knew exactly how to control his army and lead them to almost impossible victories. A famous victory of Alexander is his famous victory at Tyre, which resulted from a sevenmonth siege of the ancient Phoenician city. Additionally, Alexander vanquished the Persians at Issus for a great win! But most astonishingly, he crushed Darius and his army of 200,000 at Gaugamela when he only had a mere 47,000. Darius also had chariots with deadly chains coming out of the wheels and cavalry wearing chain mail. Alexander caused Darius to flee, and soon after his army crumbled into not much of anything. Alexander's great determination and perseverance gave him the great victories, not the army his father left him.

Since Alexander vanquished every opponent he faced, he conquered much land. Within the short period of 13 years, Alexander conquered territories from the Mediterranean Sea all

the way to India. Today that means he would of taken over Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and most of India, which is the entire Persian Empire. Thus, he created countless new major cities, most of which were named after himself. For instance, the great city of Alexandria, which was the center for business and trade for most of the Mediterranean world at this time. It also housed the largest library in the ancient world. In other words, Alexander took over almost all of modern day southwest Asia in such a short length of time, and It is absurd that some believe this isn't considered great.

As a result of Alexander conquering so much land, he must have had excellent tactics as well. These strategies were obviously brilliant and worked almost 100 percent of the time. Alexander's leadership was considered to be the visionary leadership style. This style is taught all over the business and military world today. This leadership style known to be the "most effective of all styles because it communicates a sense of common purpose to people and resonates with their hearts and emotions." Alexander was a master of the visionary style and could inspire his men to accomplish things with determination, poise, passion and perseverance. Although those who say Alexander wasn't great say that Greek culture spread before his time, this is proven false. Alexander would not have been able to spread Greek culture without his superior leadership skills that separated him from the rest.

Alexander was a true military genius on and off the battlefield for several reasons. For instance, Napoleon was perhaps one of the few generals to even be considered in the same league as Alexander. Napoleon frequently compared himself to Alexander and humbled himself when he did so. Some stories share that Napoleon claimed to be quite disappointed because he could not even start to rule the world; however, the young Alexander had come exceptionally close to complete world domination. As well as Napoleon, Julius Caesar also felt anxiety to being compared to the amazing reputation of Alexander. It is said that Caesar felt much pressure to even being compared to having the same status as Alexander!

In conclusion, the greatness of Alexander is undeniable. Although there are a select few who believe otherwise, their theories have holes in them, so they do not make a clear argument. Alexander proved his greatness by winning almost every battle and defeating armies that were quadruple his size! Additionally, Alexander overtook great areas of land in a short period of time. Lastly, Alexander's magnificent leadership skills put the icing on the cake and put him above good and into great! The true military genius Alexander had separated him from most other, military generals and put him on top. His great conquests will never be forgotten,

and his story will be told as one of the only people to ever almost have world domination. Live on Alexander! Live on!

## Work Cited

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| Annotation            |     |  |
|-----------------------|-----|--|
| Focus                 | 4   | The writer responds to all parts of the prompt and argues in a clear and consistent manner that Alexander is deserving of his title, “The Great.”  |
| Reading/Research      | 4   | <p>The writer clearly demonstrates that the topic has been researched thoroughly through the use of details, specific examples, and quotes from the reading. The evidence presented throughout the paper is focused and helps to develop a coherent argument.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>But most astonishingly, he crushed Darius and his army of 200,000 at Gaugamela...</i></li> <li>• <i>This leadership style known to be the “most effective of all styles because it communicates a sense of common purpose...”</i></li> <li>• <i>As well as Napoleon, Julius Caesar also felt anxiety to being compared to the...</i></li> </ul>  |
| Controlling Idea      | 4   | The writer presents the argument with a clear thesis, and the view presented therein is woven throughout the essay: <i>Overall Alexander the Great is deserving of his title for many broad reasons.</i> The writer addresses an opposing viewpoint in the first body paragraph and effectively argues the point: <i>Those who believe Alexander isn’t great say, ‘His father, Phillip II, left him the best army in the Greek world. However, if you give a Nascar driver the fastest car, that doesn’t mean he will know how to use it and will always win.’</i> The writer addresses another opposing view in the third body paragraph and responds to that argument as well. The writer also references other leaders like Napoleon and Hitler and compares them with Alexander. |
| Development           | 4   | The writer crafts a convincing argument and develops it with the use of research, examples, and reasoning. The explanation of how much land Alexander actually controlled is made clear in its relevance to today’s geography: <i>Since Alexander vanquished every opponent he faced, he conquered much land. Within the short period of 13 years, Alexander conquered territories from the Mediterranean Sea all the way to India. Today that means he would of taken over Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and most of India, which is the entire Persian Empire.</i>  |
| Organization          | 4   | The essay is logically organized. The thesis statement sets up the organizational structure for the essay as follows: Alexander was truly great because he was “ <i>the greatest military commander,</i> ” he “ <i>conquered large portions of land,</i> ” and he “ <i>had magnificent leadership skills.</i> ” The writer moves fluidly through each point, using effective transitions to guide the reader between point and counterpoint: “ <i>First of all...</i> ”; “ <i>Along with that...</i> ”; “ <i>Nevertheless....</i> ”  |
| Conventions           | 3.5 | The writer demonstrates a solid command of Standard English. The tone of the essay is effective and appropriate. The writing could be improved by the use of citations within the text as well as an accurately formatted bibliography.  |
| Content Understanding | 4   | The writer demonstrates a deep understanding why Alexander is considered “great.” Relevant research is provided alongside detailed explanations that support the thesis. The writer understands that having a large army does not necessarily guarantee great leadership.  |

This student would benefit from feedback, discussion, and/or instruction in the following areas:

- Self and peer editing and to prevent basic grammatical errors (i.e. spelling, punctuation, spacing, omission of words, repetition).
- Use of parenthetical citations to cite evidence and proper formatting and punctuation in bibliography.