On Trial: Alexander the Great

Hero or Villian?

Assignments to hand in: Alexander the Great: Hero/Villain Graphic Organizer & Persuasive POV Essay

Step 1: Introduction - Read the handout: Key Events in Alexander's Military Career and look at the map below.

This is a map of the conquests of Alexander the Great. The map shows the extent of Alexander's empire in 323 B.C.E. and indicates the major towns he founded and the cities he conquered.

Step 2: Graphic Organizer - Complete the Alexander the Great: Hero and Villain graphic organizer by looking at the pictures below and reading the corresponding handouts.

Event A: Alexander in Thebes

This is Alexander the Great on horseback during his conquest of Thebes. In the background, his soldiers are destroying one of the city's buildings. The Thebans in the foreground are asking him for mercy. Although Alexander destroyed much of Thebes and sold many of its citizens into slavery, he spared some of its inhabitants, including the women kneeling by his horse in this image.

Alexander from different perspectives: As the Conqueror & As the Conquered
Event B: Alexander in Egypt

This is Alexander and his troops marching in front of the Sphinx in Giza, after taking over Egypt. Prior to this conquest, Egypt was ruled by the Persian Empire. The people in the foreground are Persians who have just lost control of Egypt. They are chained to be taken away as captives by Alexander's troops.

Alexander from different perspectives:  As the Conqueror  &  As the Conquered

Event C: Alexander in Persia

This is part of a Roman mosaic showing Alexander and the Persian king, Darius III, meeting in the battle of Issus. Alexander appears on the far left, while Darius is shown in a chariot toward the center. Based on a Greek painting that dates to the fourth century B.C.E., this first-century C.E. mosaic is believed to be the most reliable representation of Alexander's appearance in existence.

Alexander's troops burning and looting the main palace in Persepolis, the capital of Persian Empire. When Alexander conquered the Persians, he burned many of the grand buildings in Persepolis and destroyed or stole many of its royal treasures.

Alexander from different perspectives:  As the Conqueror  &  As the Conquered

Event D: Alexander in India

Alexander the Great and his troops approaching the Indian king, Porus, along the River Hydaspes in India. Porus is offering his sword to Alexander as a gesture of surrender.

Alexander from different perspectives:  As the Conqueror  &  As the Conquered
Step 2: Prepping for the Trial

Class will be divided by Teacher

Each Team will need the following:

Alexander the Great (Hero/Defense Team)

2 Attorneys (Defense=Hero vs. Prosecution=Villain)

1 Witness per major event (at least 4 witnesses)

Remaining students will act as jury members (must choose a foreman, to issue verdict and explain reasoning why the jury’s decision)

*After deciding who will play what role, you need to start practicing and preparing your argument before the court.

*This involves: Opening statement (starting with the prosecution) explaining how you will build your case either for or against Alexander. Prepping witnesses to support your case.

*Each Attorney will be allowed to cross-examine the other team’s witnesses. Note-when cross-examining witnesses it is very important to listen and write down point of the opposing team that you want to attack.

*Each team will then have a closing argument to the court (starting with the prosecution)

*Jury Decision with foreman explanation= Hero or Villain after closing arguments

Final Step: POV (Point of View) Essay - Write a 5 paragraph essay on whether you believe Alexander was a Hero or a Villain. You must choose a side and defend your opinion. Use evidence from the student information cards and your educated opinion to back up your position.