

Alexander The Great Music/Drama Unit (Years 4-8)

Introduction

The original class for this drama were learning about “Heroes of the Ancient Civilisations” with their class teacher. I liked the idea of focusing on Alexander the Great because of the very many modern day countries he travelled through from his Greek kingdom all the way to India, and this provided the opportunity of exploring the music of a variety of different cultures. The Indian Wedding Dance referred to in the Possible Strategies was based on one we found in a book/video in the school library.

Content	Possible Strategies	Resources
Creative Writing/Drama/Music	★ Students Create music or drama about one aspect of Alexander The Great's Life - see sheets	Alexander info snippets sheets Classroom percussion instruments
Musical Performance	★ Sing Alexander Song ★ Sing Indian music (Wedding Dance) with percussion/body percussion	Alexander song - copies or overhead Wedding Dance music
Music/ Drama performance	★ Perform all of above to each other and to an audience	Instruments and props
Performance Evaluation	★ Class evaluation of own performance and that of other group. Note potential improvements for next time	Evaluation sheets
Listening/Music Appreciation	★ Listening Activity with music from countries visited by Alexander The Great	Listening Tape and Activity Sheets
Movement/ Dance	★ Create Indian Wedding Dance Dance with Class	CD or tape

Alexander The Great Concert - Order

Caitlin	Good Morning Everyone! We are members of Alexander The Great's mighty army, and would like to present a short concert of music and drama about our great leader and his life.
Dominic	First of all please listen to the beginning of our song which tells how he became our leader
	SONG - Verse 1 & Chorus
Caitlin	Different platoons from our army will now re-enact some of Alexander's famous battles and demonstrate one of the war cries they used to fire themselves up for battle.
	Composing Group 1
	Composing Group 2
Dominic	Now listen to the next verse of our song, which tells about Alexander, the hero Achilles and the god Dionysis
	SONG - Verse 2 & Chorus
Caitlin	Our next two platoons will perform music and a play about the mythical hero Achilles and the God Dionysis. Alexander thought that he was descended from Achilles, and Alexander's mother worshipped Dionysis.
	Composing Group 3
	Composing Group 4
Dominic	Now listen to the last part of our song. By the end of our long campaign through Asia we were missing our families, but Alexander wanted to keep going as far as India.
	SONG - Verse 3 & Chorus
Caitlin	To finish our concert we will perform some music we heard in India
	Composing Group 5
	SONG - Chorus

Music To Entertain Alexander the Great

Composing Group 1.

Alexander The Great was a ruler of Macedonia (part of Greece) in the 4th century BC.
He was a great warrior and led numerous campaigns and expeditions into Asia.
Compose a song or chant cataloguing some of Alexander's conquests.

Composing Group 2.

Compose a Battle Song for Alexander's warriors
to sing or chant as they head off on another campaign.

Composing Group 3.

Many of Macedonia's citizens worshipped the God Dionysus at the time of Alexander,
including his own mother Olympias.
Dionysus was a God connected with entertainment and enjoyment.
Compose music to be played at a ceremony honouring the God Dionysus.

Composing Group 4.

Alexander is said to have slept with a copy of Homer's Ilyad under his pillow.
This book tells the story of the mythical hero Achilles.
Alexander thought himself to be descended from Achilles.
Prepare a short musical drama about Achilles.

Composing Group 5.

One of Alexander's expeditions took him into India.
Learn something about Indian music.
Learn to play and sing a piece of Indian music.

Alexander Song

Philip our king he died the other day
What a great king he was ★★
We were his army - fought the enemy
We hardly had a loss ★★★

Alexander his son is now our leader
What a great king he'll be ★★
We know he is a great warrior
He'll fight on land or sea ★★★

Achilles is his great hero
We have him on our side ★★
We worship our Gods with songs and music
As we travel far and wide ★★★

Alexander has plans to rule the world
Greece is too small for him ★★
Darius of Persia will bow before us
Egypt is ours to win ★★★

We've been away for four years now
Travelling on the road ★★
I want to see my wife and family
It's time to go back home. ★★★
Alexander though aims for immortality
He wants to carry on ★★
Now he wants us to head for India
Where no Western man has gone. ★★★

Follow him, we'll follow him
Wherever he may lead us
Follow him, we'll follow him,
Wherever he may go

Alexander Alexander
The Great he is our leader
Alexander, Alexander
He is our leader now

Follow him, we'll follow him
Wherever he may lead us
Follow him, we'll follow him,
Wherever he may go

Alexander Alexander
The Great he is our leader
Alexander, Alexander
He is our leader now

So we'll follow him, we'll follow him
Wherever he may lead us
Follow him, we'll follow him,
Wherever he may go

Alexander Alexander
The Great he is our leader
Alexander, Alexander
He is our leader now

★ In the first performance of this song, the performers added claps on the stars, each clap being worth one beat.

A recording of the song is here: https://youtu.be/tle_or1mZq4