

Alexander The Great

Author: Michelle Willis **Year:** 2016 **Artform:** Music
Subjects: **Grade:** 1st **Duration:** 30 minutes

OVERVIEW

Students will learn/solidify information about Alexander the Great through the study of a musical parody.

SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

- Computer and Projector
- White Board & Markers
- [Minus track for "I'm on Top of the World" by Imagine Dragons](#)

OBJECTIVES

1. I can hear repeated melodic themes in the music.
2. I can tell the difference between the verse and the chorus.
3. I can find the beat in the song.
4. I can recount historical facts about Alexander the Great after listening to a song parody that shares his information.

FINE ART STANDARDS

RESPOND

STANDARD 1.M.R.1:

Listen to and interact with a variety of contrasting music while recognizing steady beat, repeating patterns, and expressive elements.

INTEGRATED STANDARDS

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Alexander the Great

TEACHING AND TIMELINE

INTRODUCTION:

1. Ask students what they know about Alexander the Great from their classroom studies. Put all information they share on the board.
2. Tell students that one great way to remember facts about someone or something is to put it into a song. Introduce the word parody (an imitation of the style of a particular writer, artist, or genre) and tell them they will be learning more about Alexander the Great through a parody of *On Top of the World* by Imagine Dragons.

DEMONSTRATION:

1. Turn on the minus track and have students find the beat with patschen.
2. Ask them if the song is happy or sad (major/minor) and determine what



Statue of Alexander in Istanbul Archaeology Museum

instruments they hear (clapping, guitar, synthesized whistling, drums, keyboard).

3. Determine if the tempo is slow, medium or fast.

WORK PERIOD:

1. Sing the first verse (section) of the parody and review with the students what information was in that verse.
2. Sing the chorus. Compare and contrast the information given in the verse and the chorus.
3. Sing verse 2 of the song and review the content, then sing the chorus. See if the students can catch the fact that the chorus always says the same thing while the verse provides additional information, and the chorus is more of a general statement about Alexander while the verses give specific details.
4. Identify the section that is neither the verse nor the chorus (the bridge) and discuss the similarities and differences it has to the other sections.

CLOSURE/SUMMARY:

Review the chorus with the students and have them sing it whenever it's time in the song. If desired, come up with some fun actions to do along with the lyrics.



Alexander cuts the Gordian Knot

INTEGRATION INFORMATION

This connects with the Grade 1 Social Studies lessons on Alexander the Great.

HISTORICAL ELEMENT

- Born in 356 BC to Philip II and Olympias,
- Best friend was a black stallion named Bucephalis,
- Took two tests and passed by age 14 (kill a wild boar and kill a man),
- Played the lyre and the aulos,
- Was taught by Aristotle,
- Became regent in 340 BC at age 16,
- Sister was Cleopatra,
- Became king at age 20,
- Married 3 times,
- Cut through the Gordian knot in 334 BC and set to conquer Asia,
- A warrior and cruel taskmaster, pursued for India,
- Was worshipped as a Greek god in his lifetime,
- Defeated Persian Empire,
- Two armies revolted against him,
- Died at age 39 in 323 BC

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. Is this song in major (happy) or minor (sad)?
2. What is the tempo?

DIFFERENTIATION

What are the similarities/differences between the verses and the chorus, both with lyrics and with music?

VOCABULARY

- Parody & Lyrics
- Verse & Chorus
- Beat
- Tempo
- Major/minor
- Theme

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

1. Observe if students can keep a beat with patschen.
2. See how many facts students can name before and after the parody study



Byzantine Greek Alexander Manuscript Cataphract

OTHER INFORMATION

PARODY LYRICS

Born to mighty parents
Philip and Olympias, oh
The boy named Alexander came

He was an active child and
Ran and played with all the boys and
Dreamed of the day he'd get some fame

His best friend was a stallion
Bucephalis was black and strong
They would ride all over the hills and the
valleys

And Alexander said to the sky

I'll be king of the world—ay
I'll be king of the world—ay
Waiting for this for awhile now
Paying my dues to the dirt
I've been waiting to rule—ay
Been holding it in for awhile now—ay
Take it with me if I can
Been dreaming of this since a child
I'll be king of the world

At 14, he was tested
Killed a wild boar and bad guy
Proved he was worthy of his name

At 16, he was regent
Then at 18 he ruled Greece and
Traveled far and near fighting for fame

And Alexander said to the sky

I'll be king of the world—ay
I'll be king of the world—ay
Waiting for this for awhile now
Paying my dues to the dirt
I've been waiting to rule—ay
Been holding it in for awhile now—ay
Take it with me if I can
Been dreaming of this since a child
I'll be king of the world (sing this chorus again)

And though he died when he was 38
All people said that he was strong and great.
He is great, oh yeah, he is great.