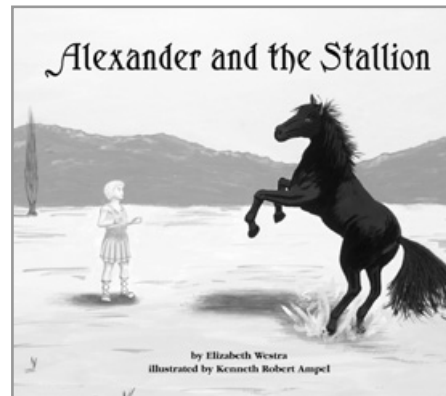


Alexander and the Stallion

Author Elizabeth Westra
 Illustrator Kenneth Robert Ampel
 16 pages ■ 434 words



Alexander and the Stallion

Em	Early				Fluent			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
					S		G I	

S = Shared G = Guided I = Independent

SYNOPSIS

As a young boy, Alexander the Great, exhibiting intelligence and bravery, tames a wild and beautiful horse that grown men are not able to train. The horse, Bucephalus, becomes Alexander's trusted war horse.

WHAT THE BOOK OFFERS

- Legend that can be confirmed with historical links
- Third person
- Past tense
- Map and extra historical information on inside back cover
- Pronunciation key in nonfiction note on inside back cover
- Unfamiliar vocabulary
- Unfamiliar content
- More complex sentence structure
- Use of dialogue to move the story along
- Longer text
- Geography
- Pictures support reader in establishing setting in history
- Examples of comma use to set off elements that interrupt or add information to a sentence
- Opportunity for decoding unfamiliar and longer words through syllabication

POSSIBLE SKILLS EMPHASIS

- More sophisticated content
- Establishing background for unfamiliar content using illustrations and reader's knowledge of the genre of legends
- Understanding historically based legends
- Using punctuation to aid fluency and comprehension—dialogue, commas
- Understanding new vocabulary in context
- Opportunity for character study
- Clues in story for reader that require reader involvement beyond literal interpretation
- Noticing author's use of adjectives—powerful word choice
- Opportunity to return to text to support discussion points

	Em	Early				Fluent			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
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Alexander and the Stallion (continued)

INTRODUCING THE BOOK

Cover and title page: *Where do you think the setting for this story might be?*

- Can students support each other with the connections they make, using the illustrations to predict the setting and time frame of the story?
- If students do not have some frame of reference, provide some support here.

FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION

- Break the text into the following pieces for silent reading, discussion, and/or summarizing.

- Through page 5: Stop to discuss students' predictions—were they accurate?

Pages 7 through 9: *What do you think about Alexander as a person? How does the author let us know about his character?*

Through page 11: *Based on Alexander's character, how do you think he is going to try to tame the horse? Do you think he will succeed?*

After reading page 15: *Find the clue the author gives the reader on page 14 to help the reader predict that the horse was afraid of his shadow. ("He kept the stallion facing the sun.") What else were you thinking at this point in the story?*

- Read and discuss page 16. Did students know that this was a story about a real person? Do they think the story itself is real or legend?

What parts are probably real? Can the nonfiction note help us figure that out?

- Read the nonfiction note for the historical information on which this legend is based.

FOLLOWING THE READING

- Character study: students revisit the book and list some characteristics of Alexander as a person, as seen through his actions and dialogue. Students can mark the spot they found in the book for group discussion or write a response for later sharing.

Writing connection: *How did the author let us know about the character of Alexander? What are the implications for our own writing? Write a short piece about someone you know, attempting to describe his or her character through action and dialogue rather than direct statements.*

Historical perspective: *Compare the map in the book with a map from present day. How much of the known world did Alexander conquer?*

Have students find other sources about Alexander and the ancient Greeks. *Using information learned from the text, compare and contrast differences in ways we live now versus Alexander's time.*