

# Alexandria

## 1. Who chose the site of Alexandria and in what year?

Alexander the Great in 331 B.C.

## 2. What were some of the outstanding qualities of this site?

- excellent agricultural land
- a fine harbor
- good anchorage
- a healthy climate
- fresh water
- nearby limestone quarries



## 3. Who succeeded Alexander?

Ptolemy, one of his generals whose descendents ruled Alexandria for the next 300 years until Cleopatra, the last of the Ptolemys, died and Egypt became a Roman province.

## 4. How did Alexandria compare to Rome?

It was about the same size, a million inhabitants.

## 5. What was responsible for the great success of Alexandria?

It was situated at a meeting place of the great trade routes and had an excellent harbor?

## 6. What was the most famous landmark in Alexandria?

The "Pharos", a lighthouse in the Great Harbor which was 440 feet high and welcomed ships as far away as 70 miles with its great beacon at night and pillar of smoke during the day.

## 7. Describe the main features of the city of Alexandria?

Alexandria was laid out in a grid system with its streets crossing each other at right angles. The main street was **Canopus Street** which was 100 feet wide.

Down by the **Great Harbor** was the **Royal Quarters** which covered a square mile and contained many temples, gardens, and administration buildings.

Inside the Royal Quarters was the great university known as the **Museum** which housed **The Great Library** and contained more than a half a million volumes. It also had lecture halls, laboratories, observatories, a park and a zoo.

West of the Royal Quarters was the **Caesareum**, a shrine begun by Cleopatra for Marc Antony and finished by the Emperor Augustus for himself. In front of the Caesareum were two obelisks, tall narrow pillars cut from a single slab of granite which now stand in London and New York City and are known as **Cleopatra's Needles**.

## 8. What type of people would you find in Alexandria?

Egyptians, Jews, Romans, Africans, Indians and Greeks.

## 9. Who were the most influential inhabitants in Alexandria?

**The Greeks**, who had built the city and ruled it for 300 years.

## 10. What was the official language of Alexandria?

**Greek**.

## 11. How did the diverse inhabitants of Alexandria get along?

Jealousy over the uneven distribution of rights and privileges resulted in constant strife which often broke out into riots, which had to be put down by the ruling Romans with force.

**\*\*\*This is not all you need to know. Re-read the reading.\*\*\***