Fighting the Greco-Persian Wars

What factors influenced the outcome of the Greco-Persian Wars?

Silently read the excerpt from a primary source below. The play describes the events that took place during one of the battles of the Greco-Persian Wars. Use what you've read to answer the questions below.

A Greek Play
Excerpt from The Persians
by Aeschylus

Messenger:  Know then, in numbers the barbaric fleet
            Was far superior: in ten squadrons, each
            Of thirty ships, Greece plough’d the deep; of these
            One held a distant station. Xerxes led
            A thousand ships; their number well I know;
            Two hundred more, and seven, that swept the seas
            With speediest sail: this was their full amount.
            And in the engagement seem’d we not secure
            Of victory? But unequal fortune sunk
            Our scale in fight, discomfiting our host.

- What imagery can you find in this primary source excerpt?

- What do the header, title, and author reveal about this piece?

- Does knowing the author’s background reveal any possible biases he may have?

- How can historians supplement works like this one?
Social Studies Vocabulary
As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers.

- Persian Empire
- Hellespont
- Greco-Persian Wars
- Darius
- Xerxes
- cavalry

Section 1

1. Color in the Persian Empire on the map and key below. Then use a different color for Greece.

The Persian Empire

2. How did the Persians build their empire?

3. How did King Darius rule the Persian Empire?

Section 2

What happened during the Ionian Revolt, and why was it important?
Section 3

1. Summarize the events that led to the Battle of Marathon and what happened at this battle.

2. Draw and label a simple illustration or symbol that shows why the battle was important.

3. Circle the factor that you think best explains why the Greeks won the Battle of Marathon. Then write one or two sentences explaining your choice.
   
   A. They were joined together as allies.
   B. They had better fighting equipment.
   C. They knew the geography of the area.
   D. They used clever military strategy.
1. Summarize the events that led to the Battle of Thermopylae and what happened at this battle.

2. Draw and label a simple illustration or symbol that shows why the battle was important.

3. Circle the factor that you think best explains why the Persians won the Battle of Thermopylae. Then write one or two sentences explaining your choice.
   A. They were joined together as allies.
   B. They had better fighting equipment.
   C. They knew the geography of the area.
   D. They used clever military strategy.
1. Summarize the events that led to the Battle of Salamis and what happened at this battle.

2. Draw and label a simple illustration or symbol that shows why the battle was important.

3. Circle the factor that you think best explains why the Greeks won the Battle of Salamis. Then write one or two sentences explaining your choice.
   A. They were joined together as allies.
   B. They had better fighting equipment.
   C. They knew the geography of the area.
   D. They used clever military strategy.
1. Summarize the events that led to the Battle of Plataea and what happened at this battle.

2. Draw and label a simple illustration or symbol that shows why the battle was important.

3. Circle the factor that you think best explains why the Greeks won the Battle of Plataea. Then write one or two sentences explaining your choice.
   A. They were joined together as allies.
   B. They had better fighting equipment.
   C. They knew the geography of the area.
   D. They used clever military strategy.

Listed below are four factors that contributed to a Greek victory in the Greco-Persian Wars. On the lines next to the letters, rank these factors from the most important (1) to the least important (4).
   _____ A. The Greeks were joined together as allies.
   _____ B. The Greeks had better fighting equipment.
   _____ C. The Greeks knew the geography of the area.
   _____ D. The Greeks used clever military strategy.

On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph justifying your choice for the most important factor.