

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA

## EGYPT AND THE SUEZ CANAL

**Directions:** Read the following information and consider the sources to complete the related activities.

Northern Africa had a long history of contact with European nations, even dating back to ancient times. However, true European imperialism began when Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt with his French forces in 1798. Napoleon invaded the region with thousands of troops and hundreds of war ships. As well, he brought along a group of scientists in order to study



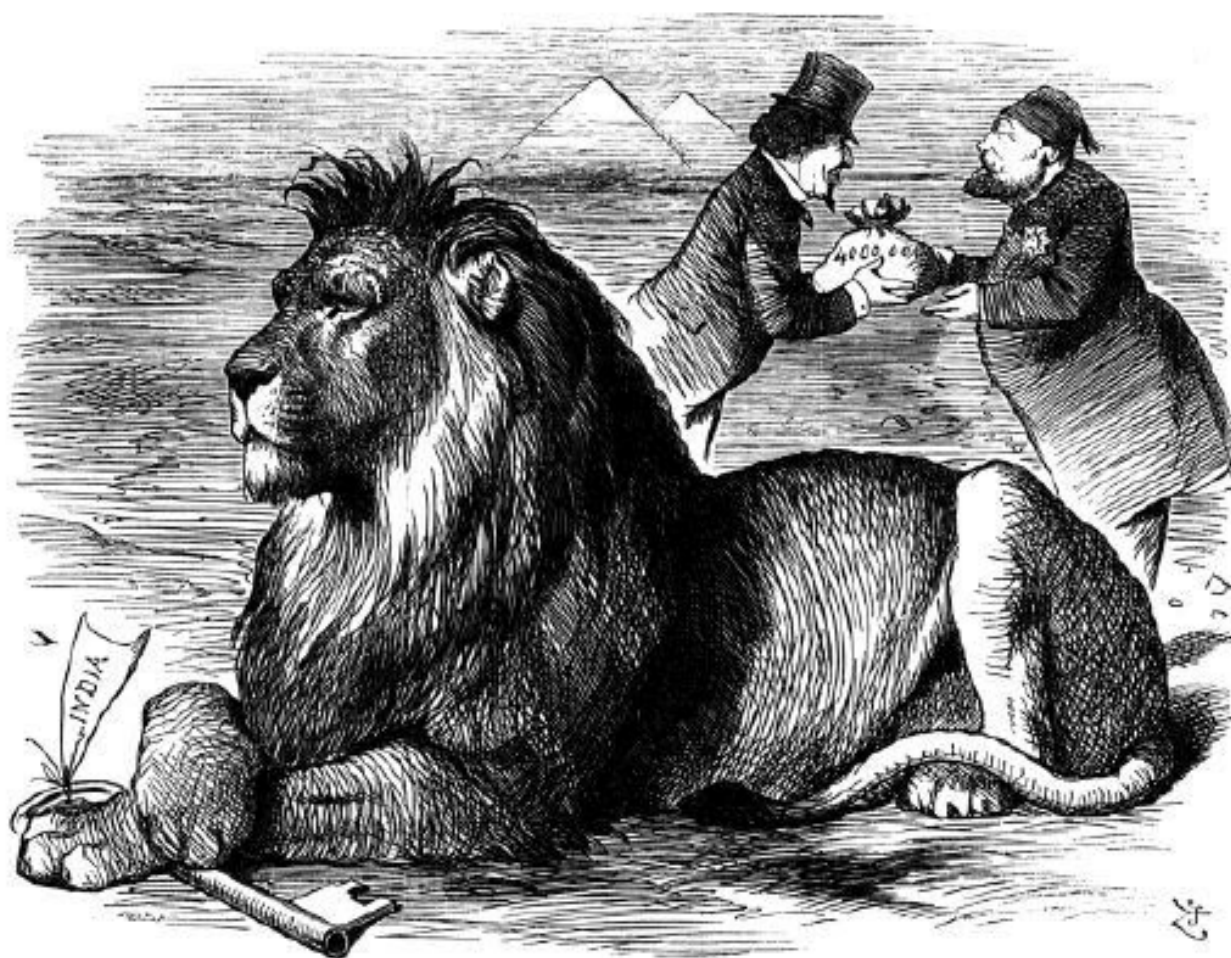
the culture and ancient artifacts of Egypt. Napoleon's goal was to invade Egypt in order to limit British influence in the region and promote French political and economic interests. Despite many victories, Napoleon and his troops were eventually forced to withdraw by the British army.

Other than Napoleon's earlier campaign, Europeans generally had little interest in Egypt until 1859 when the French began constructing the Suez Canal, which would connect the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea. Earlier Egyptian leaders had opposed the building of the canal because they feared it would lead to increased European influence in the region, however it was eventually approved. The European nations wanted to control the canal because it would allow for much shorter trips to Asia from Europe. Previously, ships would have to travel the entire way around Africa in order to make the journey to the Far East.

Between 1859 and 1869 a French company built the Suez Canal. At first, Egyptians maintained control of it but as Britain sought a shorter route to its colony in India, it began to try to influence and control the canal. Britain would come to view the Suez Canal as the "lifeline of the British Empire." By 1870, the British began to assume control over the Suez Canal.



The Egyptian government was facing a severe economic crisis and Britain used the opportunity to intervene militarily. Claiming it was working to protect European interests in the area, Britain made Egypt a protectorate of the British Empire and placed its troops inside of Egypt in 1882.



(Above) A lion is often used as a symbol to represent Britain and its Colonial Empire.

**Directions:** Complete the following based on the previous reading.

1. Who invaded France in 1798?
2. Besides soldiers, who else did the French forces bring with them in 1798? Why?
3. Why did France want to invade Egypt at the time?
4. Why did Europeans begin to show more interest in Egypt after 1859?
5. Which European nation built the Suez Canal in Egypt?
6. Why had Egyptian leaders opposed the creation of the Suez Canal?
7. Why was the Suez Canal so important to the European nations?
8. Why did Britain consider the Suez Canal the “lifeline of the British Empire”?
9. According to the reading, which two European nations mainly competed for control of the canal the most?



On the map above:

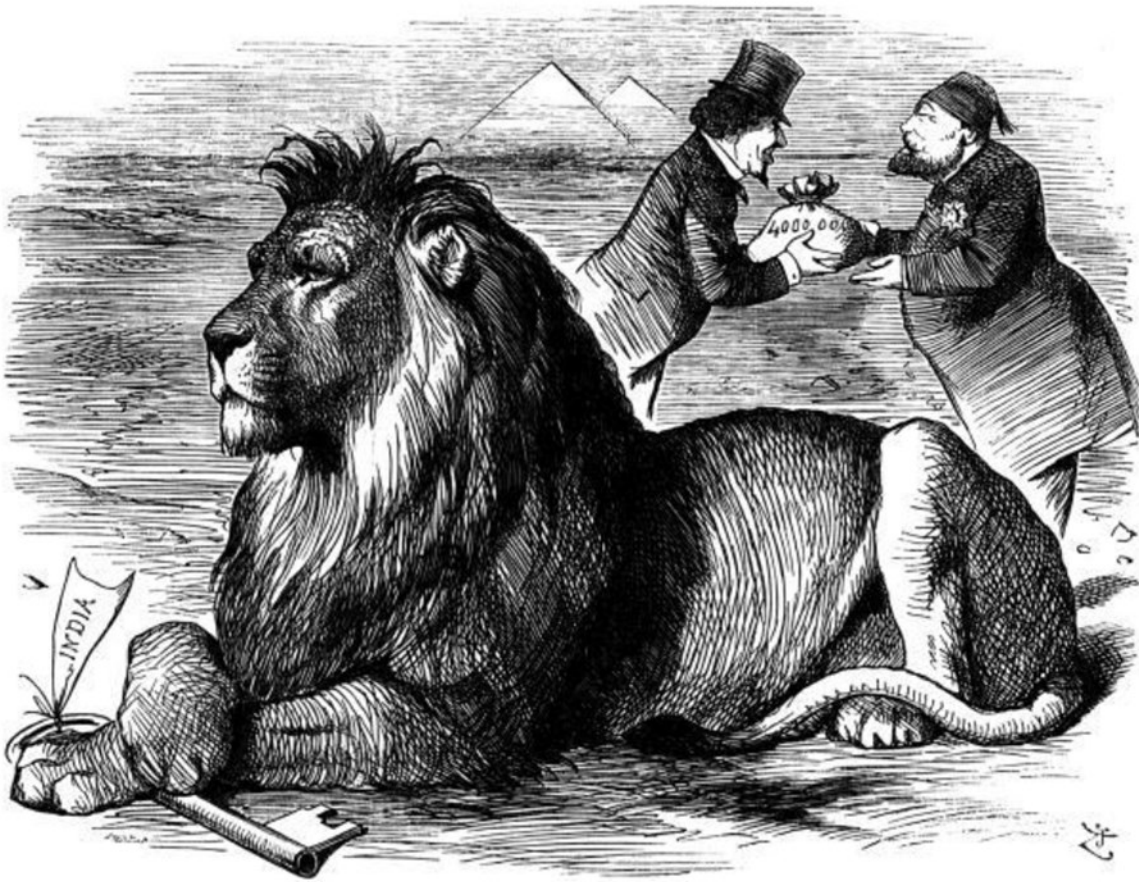
-Label: Britain, Egypt, India, France, Mediterranean Sea, Middle East, Italy, Indian Ocean, Russia, Red Sea, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Constantinople

-Identify where the Suez Canal is located

Name:

Homework

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*(Above) A lion is often used as a symbol to represent Britain and its Colonial Empire.*

a. Label at least 4 symbols present in the cartoon and explain what each represents.

b. What people are present in the cartoon and what are they doing?

c. What is the overall message of the cartoon?