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## Teacher Overview

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### SQ 4. How did the British gain, consolidate, and maintain power in India?



**Unit Essential Question(s):** How do nations seek power and at what cost? [Link to Unit](#)

**Supporting Question(s):** How did the British gain, consolidate, and maintain power in India?

**Objective(s):**

- **Contextualize** British imperialism in India.
- **Describe** how the British gained, consolidated, and maintained power in India.



## Vocabulary

The following words are introduced or reinforced in this lesson. Reference the unit vocabulary tracker for more information. [Click here](#) for the New Visions Global History glossary.

Word/Phrase (part of speech)	Definition
administer	to manage, take care of, or be in charge of
agriculture	farming
Bengal	a region consisting of the northeastern state of West Bengal in India and the neighboring country of Bangladesh. Bengal was formerly a province of India before India's division into India and Pakistan.

British	of or having to do with Great Britain or its people or language
British East India Company	a trading company that was given the exclusive right to trade with India from the British government in the 1600s and who expanded their power to control most of India until being replaced by the British government in 1858
British Empire	the collective name for the lands formerly ruled by the British monarch
cash crop	a crop grown for sale to others rather than for personal use
coastal	of, at, or near a coast
colony	an area under the control of another country or empire, usually far away
commercial	having to do with trade or business
confiscate	to take by the power of authority
conquest	the act of taking something or place by force
consolidate	to join together or combine
devastate	to destroy or ruin
direct control	or direct rule, a system of government in which a colony is controlled by a central government
dye	a substance that is used to give color to cloth, hair, or other materials
efficient	operating well without much waste
Emperor Jahangir	(1569-1627) a Mughal Emperor in India who was welcoming to British traders
famine	a great lack of food over a wide area
formidable	exceptionally difficult; daunting
gain	to get
Great Britain	the main island of the United Kingdom, located off the northwest coast of France and occupied by England, Scotland, and Wales; Great Britain
historical context	the events that led to an event; includes the time period and larger historical trends as well as causes
hospitality	the friendly, warm, and generous treatment of guests or strangers
imperial	having to do with an empire or an emperor
India	a country in southern Asia surrounded on three sides by the Indian Ocean
indigo	a plant with red or purple flowers from which this dye comes

maintain	to keep in good condition
manufactured goods	items produced from raw materials
Maxim Gun	(1884) the first machine gun
military	having to do with soldiers or armies
mint	to create money
monopoly	the control of trade or business by one company
Mughal Empire	(1526-1857) an Indian empire whose rulers were Muslim and claimed to be descended from Genghis Khan
populous	having a large number of people or things in an area
profit	the amount of money made by a business that is more than the amount of money used to create the business
profitable	money making
railway	a railroad
raw materials	an item (usually a natural resource) used to create manufactured goods
revolt	to rise up and fight against the government or other authority
riot	a violent disturbance caused by a large number of people
sepoy	in India, formerly, a native soldier who served in a European army, esp. the British army
Sepoy Rebellion	(1857-1858) was a revolt of soldiers employed by the British East India Company against the Company, also known as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, and the Indian Rebellion of 1857
shareholder	a person who owns shares of a business organization
South Asia	a region of Asia south of the Himalaya Mountains that includes the countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka
submerge	to put underwater or in some other liquid
swivel	a device that allows the object fastened or mounted to it to turn freely or pivot
telecommunication	the science, technology, or process of communicating over great distances, as by television, telephone, or radio
telegraph	a system by which messages may be sent by electronic means. The telegraph puts messages in code and sends them along wires.
textile	cloth, or woven fabric
transoceanic	across an ocean

treaty an agreement between countries

waive to stop a rule, law, or the like

## Formative Assessment Possible Responses

These responses represent possible answers to the formative assessment tasks in this lesson. They are not the only correct answers. Create your own list of possible responses before using this resource with students to anticipate student misconceptions and adjust your instruction.

### Event: *British Imperialism in India*

**Who?** British East India Company, British Government, Mughal Empire, Emperor Jahangir, Sepoys, King and Queen of England  
*individuals, groups of people, regions, nations involved*

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**When?** 1600- 1858- East India Company, 1858-1947 British Raj  
*date, year, era, "before \_\_," "after \_\_"*

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**Where?** India and surrounding regions  
*continents, regions, countries, geographic features nearby, describe the geography if relevant*

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**How?** The British made agreements with the Mughal Empire that allowed them to trade, then expanded their power and territory using military force including employing Indians, they also used the telegraph and railroad to keep control by quickly responding to uprisings  
*describe the process that took place*

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**Why?** To get raw materials for factories and to gain profit from selling finished goods to Indians  
*use words and phrases like "led to," "because," and so to show connections between events and to explain why*

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**Combined Contextualization:** The British colonized India starting in 1600 because of the desire to make a profit, first from the British East India Company and later the British government. India was known for its cotton, dyes, and textiles, which the British wanted to sell in Europe. The British East India company made an agreement with the Mughal Empire so they could trade in India, but they expanded their power and territories to take over the entire region. Because of the Industrial Revolution, the British wanted more control, more resources, and to sell their goods to Indians to make more money, so after a failed rebellion, the British government took over India in 1858.  
**Why did it happen when and where it happened?**  
*Combine your responses from above to contextualize the event.*

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## NYS Social Studies Framework

Key Idea	Conceptual Understandings	Content Specifications
10.4 IMPERIALISM: Western European interactions with Africa and Asia shifted from limited regional contacts along the coast to greater influence and connections throughout these regions. Competing industrialized states sought to	10.4a European industrialized states and Japan sought to play a dominant role in the world and to control natural resources for political, economic, and cultural reasons.	Students will trace how imperial powers politically and economically controlled territories and people, including direct and indirect rule in Africa (South Africa, Congo, and one other territory), India, Indochina, and spheres of influence in China.

control and transport raw materials and create new markets across the world. (Standards: 2, 3, 4; Themes: MOV, TCC, GEO, GOV, EXCH)

## Social Studies Practices

NYS Social Studies Practices	New Visions Student Social Studies Practices			
<p><b>Gathering, Using and Interpreting Evidence</b> (A2, A5)  <b>Chronological Reasoning and Causation</b> (B1)  <b>Comparison and Contextualization</b> (C5)  <b>Geographic Reasoning</b> (D1)</p>	 <p><b>Think Like a Geographer</b> Predict</p>	 <p><b>Contextualize</b></p>	 <p><b>Categorize</b></p>	 <p><b>Corroborate</b></p>

## NYS Common Core Learning Standards

Reading	Writing	Speaking and Listening
<p><b>Craft and Structure:</b>  <b>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4:</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.</p>	<p><b>Text Types &amp; Purposes:</b>  <b>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.1:</b> Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i>.</p>	<p><b>Comprehension and Collaboration:</b>  <b>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1:</b> Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p>

### Associated Classroom Posters

[Student Social Studies Practices Poster](#)  
[New Visions Enduring Issues Tips and List](#)

# How did the British gain, consolidate, and maintain power in India?

Objective:

- **Contextualize** British imperialism in India.
- **Describe** how the British gained, consolidated, and maintained power in India.



## Introduction

➔ **Directions:** Examine the maps below and complete the See-Think-Wonder chart.

Think Like a Geographer

South Asia in 1648



Source: Timemaps.com

South Asia in 1789



Source: Timemaps.com

South Asia in 1837



Source: Timemaps.com

South Asia in 1914



Source: Timemaps.com

### See

What do you see in the maps?

### Think

What do you think changed in India from the 17th to 20th centuries?

### Wonder

What questions do you have about the information in the maps?



Contextualize

## What was the historical context for British imperialism in India? How did the British gain, consolidate, and maintain power in India?

➡️**Directions:** Examine the map and text below. Answer the accompanying questions and annotate as you read by placing a “G” next to examples of methods that the British used to gain power in India, a “C” next to examples of methods they used to consolidate their power, and an “M” next to examples of methods used to maintain power, then add information to [this graphic organizer](#).



A map of the British Empire in 1921 when it was at its height. Its dominance of India started in the 1600s.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain.

The **British East India Company**, was granted a contract by Queen Elizabeth I of England on December 31, 1600, that allowed them to trade with India and the surrounding areas. The goal was to make money for the company’s shareholders and in 1608, the company established its first trading post in India.

In the 1600s, the Mughal Empire, led by the emperor Jahangir, was in control of India. The Mughals preferred to work with the British over the Portuguese, who had sent their own trading ships to India. The British defeated the Portuguese in a naval battle in 1612, making them the most important European traders in India. As a result, the Mughal emperor signed a treaty that gave the British rights to live and build trading forts in Indian coastal cities. By 1647, the company had twenty-three posts and ninety employees in India. In 1634 the Mughal emperor extended his hospitality to the English traders to the region of Bengal, and in 1717 completely waived taxes on their trade. The company's mainstay businesses were by now in cotton, silk, indigo, saltpeter, and tea.

**1. What was the British East India Company? What was their goal in India? What did they trade?**

**2. How were the British initially treated by the Mughal government in India?**

Around 1670, King Charles II of England gave the British East India Company rights to run their territories in India as they saw fit. He gave them the power to mint money, command fortresses and troops, form alliances, make war and peace, and to enforce laws in the areas they controlled. With the freedom to manage its military affairs, the company rapidly raised its own armed forces in the 1680s. They hired local Indian soldiers, known as Sepoys, to fill most of the posts. By 1689 the company was arguably a "nation" in the Indian mainland, independently controlling and managing the areas of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, and possessing a formidable and intimidating military strength.

In 1757, the British East India Company turned from a trading organization with an army to protect its business to an imperial force that desired to expand its power and territory. For example, the company went to war with the Nawab of Bengal and took control of the region. Bengal came directly under the rule of the East India Company and the area's wealth went to the company instead of the people who lived there. Bengali farmers and craftsmen were forced to work for the Company with little payment, while the Company increased their taxes. The British East India Company continued its expansion through military conquest and treaties through the mid-1800s.

**3. What rights did King Charles grant the British East India Company in the 1670s? How did this change the Company's role in India?**

**4. Based on the situation in Bengal, what effects did British East India Company rule have on Indians?**



## Industrialization Changes British Interest in India

The Industrial Revolution in Great Britain sparked a new desire for colonies to supply raw materials for British factories. India was known for its cotton and crops like indigo that are used to make cloth and was a major source of raw materials for British textile factories. In addition, factory owners wanted new groups of people to sell their manufactured goods to for a profit. Industrialists hoped that India, with its large population, would be a profitable new market.

### 5. How did the Industrial Revolution in England change British interest in India?

## The British Government Takes Direct Control of India (1858-1947)

As a result of a two-year long revolt called the **Sepoy Rebellion** (more on this in a later lesson), in which Indian soldiers working for the British East India Company rebelled against them, the British government took control of the lands that the Company once ruled, making India an official colony of Great Britain. The British government exiled the last Mughal emperor and shot his sons. Cultural and religious centers were closed down, properties and estates of those participating in the uprising were confiscated. The British transformed the colonial government to a British model. British attitudes toward Indians shifted from relative openness to racism and British families and their servants lived in military homes at a distance from Indian settlements. The British took a more direct role in industry and agriculture as well, controlling what and how much was produced for the benefit of the British government, usually at the expense of Indian workers and farmers.

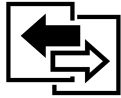
In the 19th and 20th centuries, Great Britain had the largest empire in the world. It was said that the British Empire was so expansive that the “sun never set” on it because it had so many colonies that no matter what time it was, part of the empire was lit with daylight. India was referred to as the “jewel of the empire” because it was the most populous and profitable British colony.

Source: Adapted from “East India Company,” Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/East-India-Company>;  
“British Imperial Power, 1858-1947,” Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/The-mutiny-and-great-revolt-of-1857-59#ref1189587>

### 6. What were the effects of the Sepoy Rebellion?



Categorize



Corroborate

## Document Analysis Activity: How did the British gain, consolidate, and maintain power in India?

➔**Directions:** Examine the documents on British power in India and annotate as you read by placing a “G” next to examples of methods that the British used to gain power in India, a “C” next to examples of methods they used to consolidate their power, and an “M” next to examples of methods used to maintain power and add information to [this graphic organizer](#).

### Document Set 1

The British used their military might and advanced technology to conquer and keep control of most parts of India. The British Indian Army was made up of roughly two-thirds Indian soldiers hired to defend the British East India Company and later the British government’s interests, and just one-third British soldiers. The British held the highest positions in the military.

With the addition of the Maxim Gun, the first widely used machine gun, the military was nearly unstoppable. The gun could fire bullet after bullet without reloading and could swivel from side to side.



British Indian Army soldiers, 1895.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain



Illustration of British Indian Army soldiers and their British commander, 1896.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain



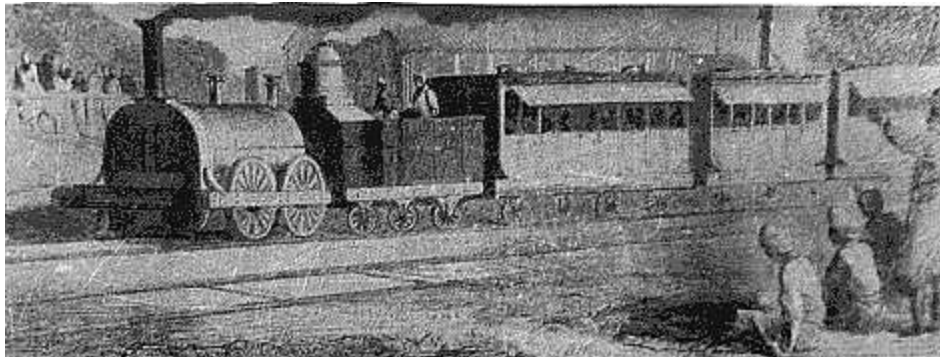
Maxim machine gun mounted on a Dundonald gun carriage, ca. 1890.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain

## Document Set 2

An enduring monument to British imperialism in India is the Indian railway system, which at the time of independence in 1947 had more track mileage than that of any European state and less than only the United States, Canada, and the Soviet Union. The first railway track was laid in India in 1850, and by 1915 India had better than forty thousand miles of track and approximately one hundred million railroad passengers per year. Indian railway building was supported by several powerful groups: British cotton manufacturers, for whom railways were a cheap and efficient way to get cotton to the coast for shipment to England; British industrialists, who supplied India with most of its rails, locomotives, moving stock [railroad cars], and equipment; colonial officials, who saw railroads as a way to move troops quickly to trouble spots and an essential part of the Indian postal system; and millions of Indians, who, rather to the surprise of the British, took to rail travel with great alacrity [enthusiasm]....

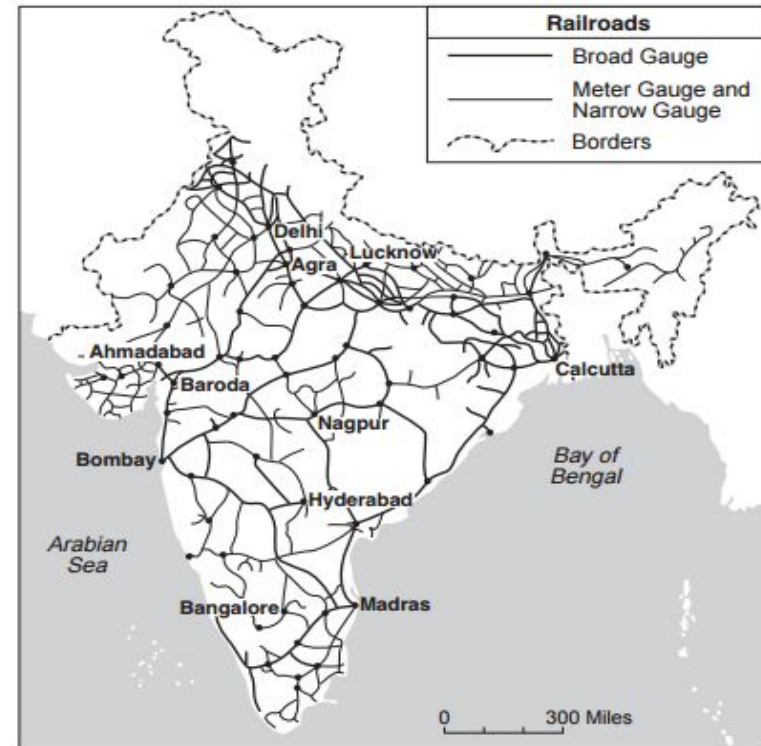
Source: Andrea and Overfield, *The Human Record: Sources of Global History*, Houghton Mifflin from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, January 2012.



The first railway train on the East Indian Railway, 1854. *The Illustrated London News*.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain

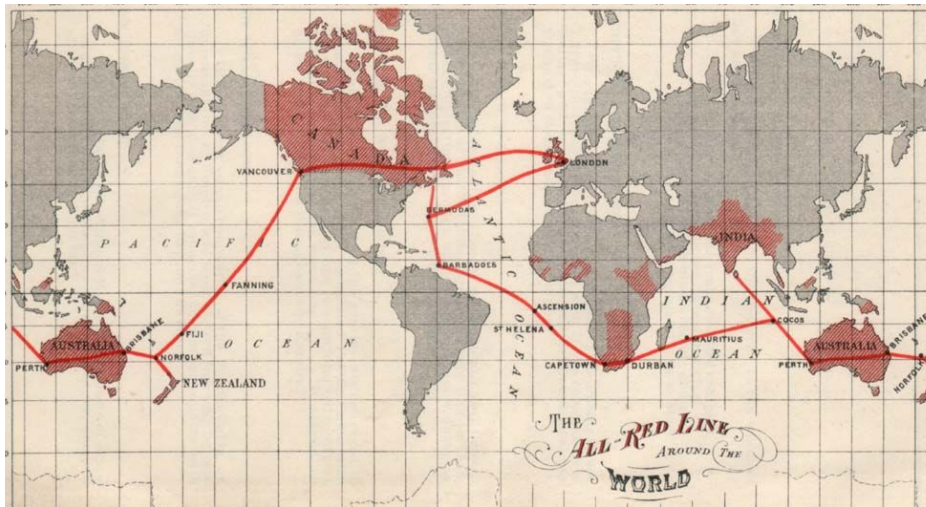
### Railroads Built During British Rule



Source: Ashok K. Dutt et al., *India in Maps*, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company (adapted) from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, June 2013.

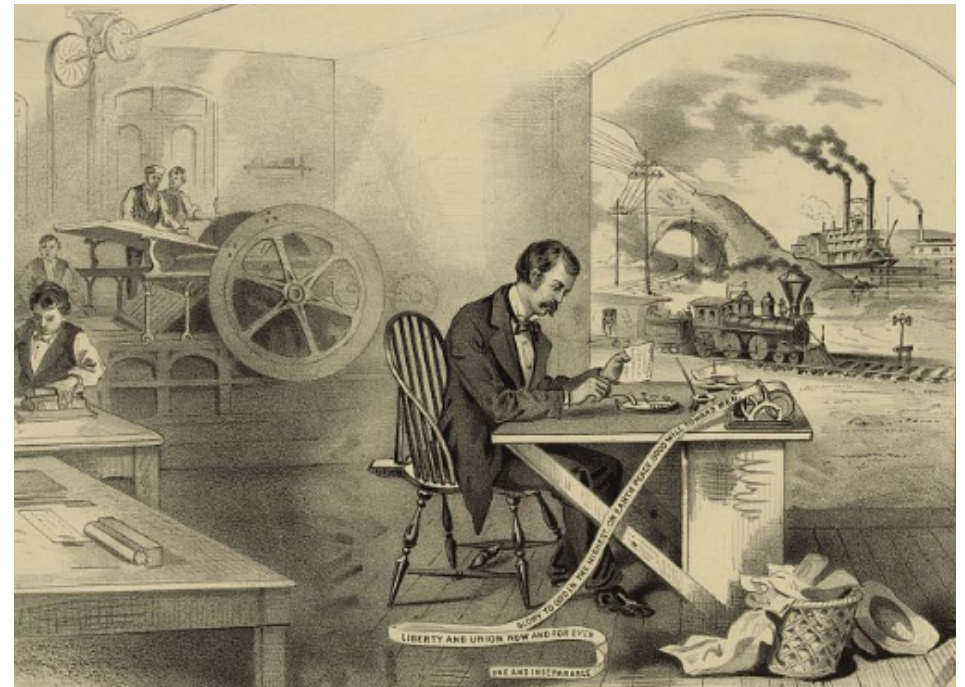
### Document Set 3

In what was sometimes called the “Second Industrial Revolution,” telecommunications technology advanced in the mid-late 1800s and early 1900s. The telegraph was invented, making it possible to communicate with people far away in very little time. At first, these technologies were only used for governmental and commercial reasons. The telegraph was integral to British control in India. The British put up lines all over the country connecting their military posts so they could relay information about needed supplies or emergencies. Before the telegraph, a message could only travel as fast as a train. With the telegraph, a message about a riot, for example, could be communicated while it was in progress and soldiers could be sent quickly to stop the revolt and gain control once again.



Map of the All Red Line as drawn in 1902 or 1903. The All Red Line was a telegraph line put up by the British government to connect all of its colonies around the world. It was submerged underwater for transoceanic connections.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain



The progress of the century - the lightning steam press, the electric telegraph, the locomotive, [and] the steamboat.

[Image](#) is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons and is Public Domain

## Document Set 4

The British East India Company's interest in India were commercial and under the British government, making money remained an important goal. The textile industry, in particular, made the British government and British companies very wealthy. They used Indian labor to grow and harvest the raw materials they needed to make cloth, like cotton to make the yarn, and plants like indigo to make dye. The British forced Indian farmers to grow "cash crops" like these instead of food that could be used to feed local populations. Later, when famine hit India those policies were identified as one of the possible causes.

The raw materials were then sent back to Britain and made into finished clothing. The British brought the manufactured goods back to India and sold them to Indians to make a profit. Indian businesses could not compete with cheap British-made goods so they closed down and the British were the only suppliers. The Indian economy was devastated by the effects of British manufacturing dominance. Before British rule, India produced about 17% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but afterwards, it was less than one percent.

"British Imperial Power, 1858-1947," Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/The-mutiny-and-great-revolt-of-1857-59#ref1189587>

Parker Thomas Moon (1892-1936) was an American political scientist who was a professor at Columbia University. The following excerpt is from a book he wrote entitled, *Imperialism and World Politics*.

... First and foremost among the active imperialist groups come certain business interests. Not the whole so-called "capitalist class," as many an earnest Socialist would have us believe, but only a minority of business interests are directly interested in imperialism. They are easily identified. To begin with, there are the exporters and manufacturers of certain goods used in colonies. The following figures of English exports to India tell the story.

### English Exports to India (Average 1920-1922)

Cotton goods and yarn . . . . .	£53,577,000
Iron and steel, tools, machinery, and locomotives . . . . .	37,423,000
Wagons, trucks, and automobiles . . . . .	4,274,000
Paper . . . . .	1,858,000
Brass goods. . . . .	1,813,000
Woolens . . . . .	1,600,000
Tobacco . . . . .	1,023,000
No other item over £1,000,000. . . . .	

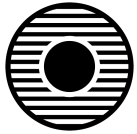
Source: Parker T. Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*, Macmillan Co., 1926 from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, June 2004.



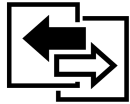
Source: Andrea and Overfield, *The Human Record*, Houghton Mifflin, 2001 from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, June 2004.

FA

## SQ 4. How did the British gain, consolidate, and maintain power in India?



Contextualize



Corroborate

➔Directions: Respond to the questions below to contextualize British imperialism in India and complete [this graphic organizer](#).

### Event: *British Imperialism in India*

#### Who?

*individuals, groups of people, regions, nations involved*

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#### When?

*date, year, era, "before \_\_," "after \_\_"*

---

#### Where?

*continents, regions, countries, geographic features nearby, describe the geography if relevant*

---

#### How?

*describe the process that took place*

---

#### Why?

*use words and phrases like "led to," "because," and so to show connections between events and to explain why*

---

#### Combined Contextualization:

**Why** did it happen **when** and **where** it happened?

*Combine your responses from above to contextualize the event.*

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