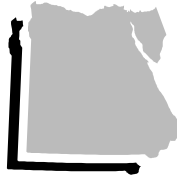


# “CROWDED CAIRO”



Name: _____
Date: _____
Period: _____

**Directions:** Read the article and then answer the following questions.

## “Right there” Questions:

1. Cairo’s population nearly doubled in \_\_\_\_\_ years.
2. As of the time this article was published, what was Cairo’s population? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is Cairo’s population density? \_\_\_\_\_ people per square mile
4. What is the City of the Dead? Why do people live there? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_ are poisonous snakes that have become a dangerous nuisance in Cairo.

**“Think and answer:”** (Answer these questions in complete sentences on the back or on a separate sheet of paper.)

6. Imagine what it must be like to live in the City of the Dead. What do you think would make your life most difficult?
7. What other kinds of problems can a high population density (meaning that there are a lot of people in a small place) lead to? List and explain at least two.
8. In your opinion, what can be done to solve the housing shortage in Cairo? Propose at least one solution.
9. As of December, Iowa’s unemployment rate (meaning the percentage of the population that did not have a job) was 5.7%. As of the date this article was published, Cairo’s unemployment rate was 20%. A lack of jobs is a concern in both areas. What might be done to create more jobs in Iowa? How about Cairo?
10. Iowa’s population density is approximately 52.7 people per square mile. Cairo’s population density is much higher! (See #3 above.) How might your life be different if Iowa’s population density was the same as Cairo’s?

**CASE STUDY**

**UNIT**

**Environmental Case Study**

**Crowded Cairo**

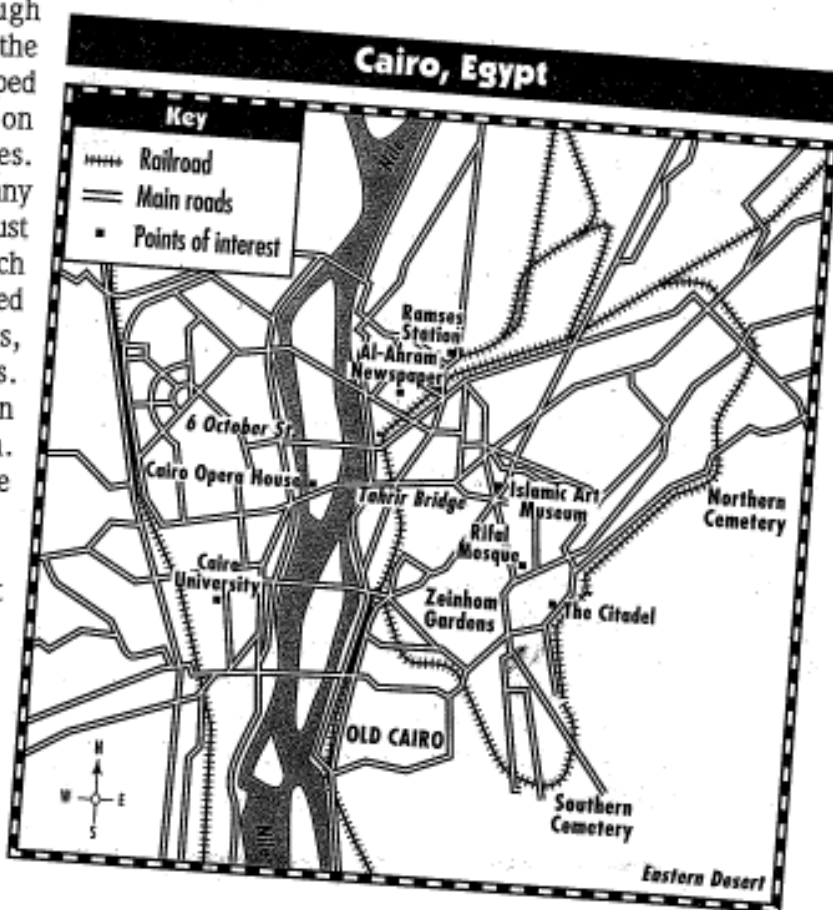
**Overview**

**P**eople in Egypt are on the move from the countryside to the city. This movement makes Cairo, Egypt, one of the fastest growing cities in the world. Before the migration increased, Cairo was already the largest city in Southwest Asia and the center of the Arab world. Yet Cairo's population has nearly doubled in the last 15 years. This rapid increase in the number of people is causing severe problems.

Originally the city of Cairo began as two separate settlements along the Nile River. As more and more people moved into the settlements, the two centers gradually grew together. Today, there are more than 13 million people living in the greater metropolitan area in or near Cairo. The city now has a population density of 75,000 people per square mile.

Cairo does not have enough housing. Many new arrivals to the city live in overcrowded, cramped apartments, in rooftop sheds, on boats, and even in cemeteries. There are not enough jobs. Many people are unemployed and must live in poverty. There is too much traffic. Cairo's streets are choked with cars, buses, motorcycles, bicycles, and donkey carts. Because of the traffic, the air in Cairo is thick with pollution. Cairo is also widely thought to be the noisiest city in the world.

The total population of Egypt is close to 56 million people. Most Egyptians live along the Nile River. The population of Egypt is increasing rapidly, at a rate of about 2½ percent each year. So the land along the river is becoming too crowded for all the new families. Many families have moved to the cities with the hope of finding work.



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## CASE STUDY

## UNIT

## Environmental Case Study

**Crowded Cairo**

**No Space** All over the city of Cairo there are extremes of wealth and poverty. Attractive residential areas sit right next to large slums. There is little space to build more housing. New apartments are being built on the roofs of older buildings.

Ninety percent of Cairo's residents originally came from villages. In the 1960s these people were encouraged to keep their village ways. President Nasser wanted them to maintain their Egyptian way of life in a city once controlled by foreigners. As a result, in some city neighborhoods, goats are a common sight.

**Unemployment** Since there are not enough jobs for everyone, people often work part-time and share jobs. Others remain unemployed. Total unemployment runs about 20 percent. Unemployment is especially high for young, inexperienced workers.

People who have rowboats can fish for a living in the Nile River. But the living they make is a poor one, and the work is hard. One family member may row the boat for as many as eight hours while another casts fishing nets. Also, fishing families usually have to live in their boats.

**Life in the City of the Dead** People new to the city who have no other place to live build makeshift huts. These often appear on the roofs of other buildings or on someone else's land. The poorest people find space in two cemeteries on the outskirts of the city. They build huts in the spaces between the tombs. This housing area is known as the City of the Dead.

The City of the Dead began as temporary shelter for hundreds of people. There are no other places for people to move, so the city of Cairo began supplying the gigantic graveyards with water and electricity. Small factories and other businesses have also sprung up alongside the graves. They offer employment to some of the residents.

**"It's A Fact"**

1. Since 1981 Egypt's population has increased by 15 million people, which equals the combined total population of Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon.
2. Snake charmers make a living in Cairo as pest exterminators. The cobra, a poisonous snake, has become a major—and dangerous—nuisance to Cairo residents. Snake charmers go from door to door offering to rid homes and businesses of cobras for a small fee.
3. Cairo has its own subway, called the Metro. The trains run on a 26-mile route parallel to the Nile River. Near the city, most of the passengers are office workers. In the outer areas, riders often transport baskets of farm produce and live poultry.