

# Student Organizer

## Scaffolded Version

### Part I: Timeline

**Directions:** Fill in the organizer for each event in the timeline. The first event has been done for you as an example. Use your own words to summarize the “So what?” section for each event.

#### 1820: Missouri Compromise (Example)

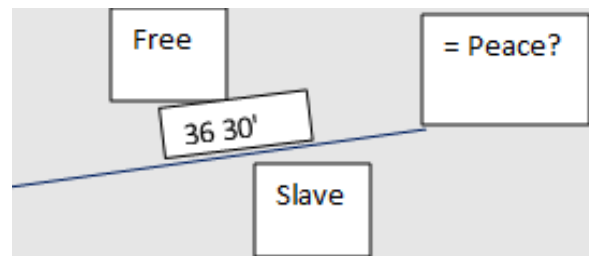
##### What happened?

Territory of the Louisiana Purchase was divided into two parts: slavery would be allowed south of latitude 36 degrees 30', but north of that line, slavery would be forbidden. Maine (previously a part of Massachusetts) would enter the Union as a free state and Missouri would enter as a slave state.

##### So what?

*As the U.S. expands its territory, the question about the expansion of slavery becomes contentious.*

##### Memory aid/Image



#### 1837: Senator John C. Calhoun defends slavery as a “positive good”

##### What happened?

John C. Calhoun of South Carolina made a speech claiming:

1. Slavery was not evil, but a “positive good” for the slave and the slaveholder
2. Southerners should not apologize for slavery.
3. Slavery was “indispensable to the peace and happiness” of both slave and slaveholder.
4. Slavery should be preferred to the wage labor used in the North.

##### So what?

##### Memory aid/Image

## 1846-1848: Mexican-American War

### What happened?

- On May 11, 1846, President James K. Polk asked Congress for a declaration of war against Mexico.
- Many northerners and opponents of slavery saw the war as an excuse for the expansion of slavery.
- In 1846, David Wilmot, a Pennsylvanian Congressman, introduced a proviso that proposed banning slavery in all territory the U.S. might gain in the war with Mexico.
- Although it never passed, the Wilmot Proviso would have overruled the Missouri Compromise from 1820 that allowed slavery south of the 36° 30' parallel.

### So what?

### Memory aid/Image

## 1845: William Lloyd Garrison denounces the U.S. Constitution as a “Covenant with death”

### What happened?

- William Lloyd Garrison, a social reformer and evangelical Christian, began the publication of an abolitionist newspaper to lay out his uncompromising anti-slavery views in 1831.
- Garrison called for immediate emancipation and supported disunion, because he wanted the North to be free of connection with the slaveholding South.
- Garrison condemned the Constitution, calling it “a covenant with death”, an “agreement with hell” and a “refuge of lies.”

### So what?

### Memory aid/Image

## 1850: Fugitive Slave Act is passed by Congress

### What happened?

- In 1850, California was admitted to the Union as a free state, upsetting a fragile balance of 15 slave states and 15 free states.
- Congress established a territorial government for New Mexico and Utah under “popular sovereignty” that allowed a territory to decide on slavery.
- The 1850 Fugitive Slave Act required northern law enforcement and legal entities to assist slave hunters in the recapture, detention, and return of runaways.
- It also denied accused fugitives a jury trial and the right to testify in their own defense.
- The slave trade, but not slavery, was abolished in Washington, D.C.

### Memory aid/Image

### So what?

## 1852: Frederick Douglass makes a speech asking, “What to the slave is the fourth of July?”

### What happened?

- Frederick Douglass, a famous abolitionist who himself was formerly enslaved, spoke to the Rochester, New York, Ladies Anti-Slavery Society on July 5, 1852.
- In his speech, Douglass mourned the Fourth of July because slavery had made a mockery of the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.
- However, he still believed in the ideas of the Declaration as “saving principles” and called on America to live up to them.

### Memory aid/Image

### So what?

## 1854: The Kansas-Nebraska Act is passed by Congress

### What happened?

- The bill empowered the inhabitants of the Kansas-Nebraska territory to decide the question of slavery for themselves, a concept known as “popular sovereignty.”
- The bill broke with the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which would have banned slavery in the territory.
- The bill led to violence in Kansas, as both pro and anti-slavery advocates rushed to the state to control the outcome and committed violence.
- The bill and resulting chaos continued to harden the sectional positions on the issue.

### Memory aid/Image

### So what?

## 1857: *Dred Scott v. Sandford* ruling issued by the Supreme Court

### What happened?

- An enslaved man, Dred Scott, sued his slaveholder for his freedom on the basis that he had lived in free territory and was therefore granted his freedom under the law.
- The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Chief Justice Robert Taney ultimately issued a decision with three major rulings.
  - African Americans were not citizens and could not be citizens and therefore had no right to sue in court.
  - Congress did not have the constitutional authority to ban slavery from the territories. Therefore, the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional.
  - Slaves were property under the Fifth Amendment, so no law could deprive slaveholders of their property.
- The verdict was widely denounced by abolitionists.

### Memory aid/Image

### So what?

**1858: First Debate for the Illinois Senate between Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln: Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858**

**What happened?**

- Senator Stephen Douglas, the mastermind behind the Kansas-Nebraska Act and proponent of "popular sovereignty" doctrine, was challenged for his seat in the Senate by Abraham Lincoln, a Republican.
- The debates between the two candidates attracted a lot of publicity.
- They spoke about slavery and the principles that held together the Union.
- Lincoln and Douglas had contrasting views on racial equality, the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and the doctrine of "popular sovereignty" versus a republic based upon natural rights.

**Memory aid/Image**

**So what?**

**STOP.**

**Move on to the Primary Source Handout. After reading the primary sources, return to the last three events on the timeline below.**

**1863: Emancipation Proclamation**

**What happened?**

- Using his war powers as Commander-in-Chief, President Lincoln issued a proclamation freeing the Confederacy's slaves (although not the border states' slaves because the president had no authority to do so) as a "military necessity".
- Lincoln therefore used his emergency presidential powers to eliminate slavery in a constitutional way.

**Memory aid/Image**

**So what?**

## 1863: General Order 143 Creates U.S. Bureau of Colored Troops

### What happened?

- President Lincoln's administration wrestled with authorizing African-American troops out of fear it would prompt the border states to secede.
- General Order 143 on May 22, 1863, created the United States Colored Troops.
- Roughly 179,000 African Americans served as soldiers in the U.S. Army, and another 19,000 served in the Navy by the end of the Civil War.

### Memory aid/Image

### So what?

- The Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery throughout the U.S. and banned it forever.
- After the Civil War, Congress required that the southern states approve the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments as a condition of their re-entry into the Union.

## 1865: Thirteenth Amendment Ratified

### What happened?

### Memory aid/Image

### So what?

## Part II: Final Analysis and Reflection

Based on the events in your organizer and your reading of the excerpts from the first Lincoln-Douglas debate, answer the following questions:

1. Think back to the first discussion in this activity:
  - a. **Moderation**, the avoidance of extremes, compromise, and **prudence**, using wisdom to choose how to best act in each situation, characterized the delegates' approach to slavery at the Constitutional Convention. Yet, the issue of slavery increasingly divided the nation from the Founding to the 1850s. Could a lasting compromise have been reached at any point from 1820 to 1858?
  - b. What events best typified the concepts of moderation, compromise, or prudence? What events most challenged these ideas?

2. How did differing constitutional visions lead to growing sectionalism over the question of slavery and its expansion?

3. How did the endurance of slavery challenge the American republic?

4. How did passage of the Thirteenth Amendment complete the story of slavery and the Founding? Explain.

5. What challenges might remain for African Americans after the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment?