

Student Organizer

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.	Memory aid/Image
So what? <i>As the U.S. expands its territory, the question about the expansion of slavery becomes contentious.</i>	

1837: Senator John C. Calhoun defends slavery as a “positive good”	
What happened?	Memory aid/Image
So what?	

1846-1848: Mexican-American War

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

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

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

1850: Fugitive Slave Act is passed by Congress

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

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

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

1854: The Kansas-Nebraska Act is passed by Congress

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

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

What happened?

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?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

STOP.

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

1863: Emancipation Proclamation

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

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

What happened?

Memory aid/Image

So what?

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?