

Lesson 3: The Struggle Over Slavery

Vocabulary

free state a state in which slavery was not allowed

slave state a state in which slavery was allowed

states' rights the idea that states have the right to make choices about issues that affect them

Missouri Compromise a law that allowed Missouri to become a slave state if Maine became a free state

Fugitive Slave Law a law that said runaway slaves must be returned to their owners

Compromise of 1850 a law that allowed California to become a free state; in return, Northern states had to pass the Fugitive Slave Law

Kansas-Nebraska Act an act that let people in the Kansas Territory and the Nebraska Territory decide on whether they wanted to allow slavery

Missouri Compromise

In 1819 there were 11 **free states** and 11 **slave states**. The people of Missouri asked to become a state. They wanted Missouri to be a slave state. Southern states agreed with the people of Missouri. Northern states did not. Some Southern leaders believed in **states' rights**. These leaders also felt that states should decide whether to allow slavery. The **Missouri Compromise** was a solution. Missouri became a slave state, and Maine became a free state.

The Compromise of 1850

California asked to become a free state in 1849. Then there would be more free states than slave states. **The Compromise of 1850** was a plan to keep the country from being divided. It allowed California to become a free state. In return Northern states had to pass the **Fugitive Slave Law**. The compromise also affected people in the territories won from Mexico. These people could vote on whether they wanted to allow slavery.

“Bleeding Kansas”

In 1854 Nebraska was split into two territories—the Nebraska Territory and the Kansas Territory. Congress passed the **Kansas-Nebraska Act**. The people of Kansas voted for slavery.

A Divided Country

Other events caused a deeper split between the North and South. One was the court case of Dred Scott in 1857. Dred Scott was a slave. He claimed he was free. The Supreme Court ruled that he was not free. The court decided that African Americans had no rights. In 1859 an abolitionist named John Brown tried to lead an attack on slave owners in Virginia. He was caught and hanged.


A New Political Party

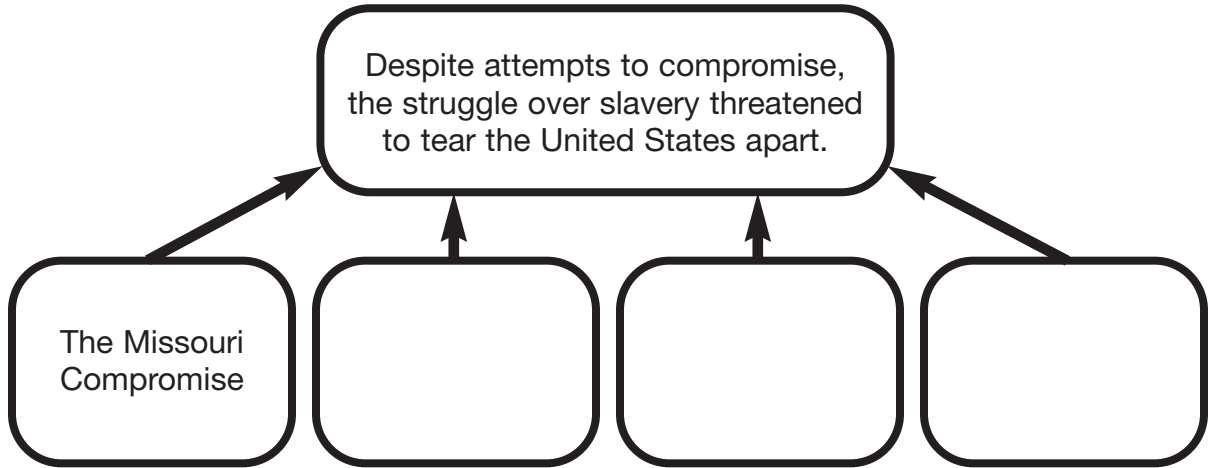
Ideas about slavery caused the Whig political party to split apart. Members of the Whigs who were against slavery helped form the Republican Party. Abraham Lincoln was a Republican. He was against slavery. Yet he did not want the country to go to war over slavery.

Lincoln Is Elected President

Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860. But he did not get any Southern electoral votes. Southerners were afraid that Lincoln would end slavery. They were also afraid that their opinions would not matter to the new government.

Lesson 3: Review

1.  **Main Idea and Details** Complete the graphic organizer to identify the events supporting the main idea of the lesson.



2. How did the Missouri Compromise keep the balance of free and slave states?

3. How did the Compromise of 1850 affect slavery in California and the territories gained from Mexico?

4. Who were Dred Scott and John Brown? How did their actions affect the split between North and South?

5. **Critical Thinking: Infer** What was more important to Abraham Lincoln, abolishing slavery or preserving the nation? Explain.
