

## **Pamela Huss – Jericho Middle School**

### **Unit: The Civil War**

#### **Lesson: The Compromise of 1850 and Bleeding Kansas (2 day lesson)**

**Aim:** How did extension of slavery into the western territories cause further tensions between the North and the South?

#### **Do Now: Real Life Scenario**

- The school is currently debating whether the wearing of bar/bat mitzvah clothing should be banned. Do you agree with this? Why or why not? If you answer no, propose a compromise that will please the school, the parents, and the students.
- Students will propose a compromise which will be debated. Teacher will play devil's advocate. Aim is to show how finding a compromise to please all sides is extremely difficult to find.

#### **Pivotal Questions:**

1. Why is it sometimes difficult for opposing groups to find a compromise which pleases all?
2. What were the various views on slavery in the western territories?
3. Was the question over the western territories only about slavery or was there a larger issue?
4. Why do you believe a compromise that pleased everyone was able to be reached in 1820, but 30 years later in 1850 the North and South could not come to an agreement?
5. Identify which parts of the Compromise of 1850 were supposed to please the North. Identify which were supposed to please the South. Were both sides truly satisfied?
6. If you were a member of Congress in 1850, what ideas would you propose be part of the Compromise of 1850?
7. Why are the events in Kansas in the early 1850's known as "Bleeding Kansas"?
8. How did Bleeding Kansas set a dangerous precedent for the nation?
9. Conclusion Question: How did extension of slavery into the western territories cause further tensions between the North and the South?

#### **Curriculum Materials:**

<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/sectionalism/lesson1/>

Missouri Compromise Map

<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/sectionalism/lesson3/>

Kansas Nebraska Map

<http://www.civilwarhome.com/kansasnebraska.htm>

Kansas Nebraska Information

<http://loc.harpweek.com/LCPoliticalCartoons/Disk6/5w/3b38367v5w.jpg>

Kansas Nebraska Political Cartoon

[http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lincolns/politics/map\\_shift\\_1854.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lincolns/politics/map_shift_1854.html)

U.S. Map

[http://www.americancivilwar.com/pictures/compromise\\_1850.html](http://www.americancivilwar.com/pictures/compromise_1850.html)

Compromise of 1850 Map

<http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-americanhistory/BleedingKansasFight.jpg>

Bleeding Kansas Image

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/seminar/unit4/sumner.html>

"Crimes Against Kansas" speech

[http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/minute/The\\_Caning\\_of\\_Senator\\_Charles\\_Sumner.htm](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/minute/The_Caning_of_Senator_Charles_Sumner.htm)

Attack on Charles Sumner

[www.unitedstreaming.com](http://www.unitedstreaming.com)

Bleeding Kansas and Compromise of 1850 videos

#### **Class Procedure:**

- Students will participate in the Do Now Activity: Real Life Scenario
- As a class students will review prior events which led to the lesson topics (Missouri Compromise, Mexican War, Wilmot Proviso, Free Soil Party, California applies for statehood)

- Class will be broken into 5 groups (Researching will most likely take up the remainder of the 1<sup>st</sup> class period. Reporting will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> class period)
  - o Each group will answer questions about their reading/document
    - Volunteer from each group will type answers into the SMART Board presentation
    - Groups will present their findings in front of the class (over series of 2 days)
  - o Groups:
    - Fugitive Slave Law
    - Compromise of 1850 (interactive map and video)
    - Kansas Nebraska Act (interactive map)
    - Bleeding Kansas (video)
    - Violence Spreads: Attack on Charles Sumner
- Vortex Conclusion Activity
  - o Compromise of 1850 vs. Bleeding Kansas

NYS Standard 3: Geography

NYS Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

### Standards:

NYS Standards 1: History of the United States and New York

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Worksheet # \_\_\_\_\_

Social Studies 7

## The Slavery Issue in the

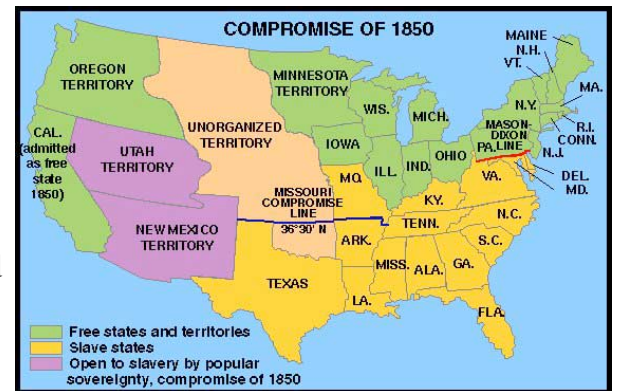


## Western Territories

**Directions:** Each group will be assigned a topic to study. Your group will be responsible for researching and reporting on your topic only. Please complete the questions for your topic in full sentences. Appoint several representatives from your group to write your answers into the SmartBoard presentation and to report your findings to the class.

## Group 1: Compromise of 1850

For a period of time following the 1820 Missouri Compromise, both slave and free states entered the Union peacefully. However when the Bear Flag Republic, California, requested admission to the United States as a free state in 1850, the balance of power in the Senate was once again threatened. The balance currently stood at 15 free, and 15 slave states. Many feared that if the nation could not come to a compromise on the California issue, the country would break apart.



The United States again turned to Henry Clay to find a compromise. Though frail and ill, the 73 year old Clay agreed to find a way for the Northern and Southern states to agree on the California issue. After seemingly endless speeches and months of debate, a compromise was finally found by Clay and Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas. Known as the **Compromise of 1850**, it had 5 parts:

1. California would enter as a free state
2. The states of New Mexico and Utah were created and could decide by popular sovereignty if they would be free or slave states.
3. Ended the slave trade in Washington, D.C.
4. Put into place a strict fugitive slave law
5. Settled a border dispute between Texas and Mexico

1. Why did California requesting admission to the United States once again raise the issue of free and slave states?

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2. What were the conditions of the Compromise of 1850?

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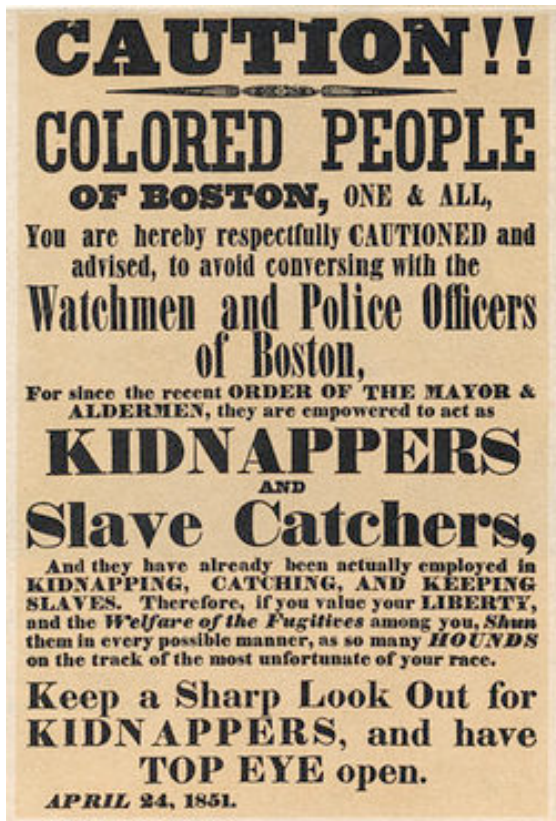
3. What do you think about Henry Clay's compromise? What might you add? What might you take away?

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## Group 2: Fugitive Slave Law



Until 1850, most Northerners had ignored a previous Fugitive Slave Law passed in the 1700's. As a result, fugitive slaves often lived as free citizens in northern cities. However the **Fugitive Slave Law of 1850**, passed as part of the Compromise of 1850, was much harder to ignore. It required all citizens to help catch runaway slaves. Any person caught aiding a runaway slave by providing shelter, food or any other form of assistance was liable to six months' imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine. On the other hand, officers capturing a fugitive slave were entitled to a monetary reward. This also encouraged some officers to kidnap free Negroes and sell them to slave-owners. People suspected of being a runaway slave could be arrested without warrant and turned over to a claimant on nothing more than his sworn testimony of ownership.

The new law also set up specialized courts that only handled cases of runaways. Judges overseeing these trials received \$10 for sending an accused runaway slave to the South. They received only \$5 for

setting them free. Some judges sent African Americans to South whether they were runaways or not. The Compromise of 1850 was meant to appease the North and the South, however the Fugitive Slave Law enraged many Northerners. It only served to convince more Northerners of the evils of slavery and increase feelings of sectionalism in the nation.

1. What were the conditions of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850?

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2. The Fugitive Slave Law, as part of the Compromise of 1850, was supposed to be part of a compromise that pleased both the North and the South. Which area was happy with the law and why? Which was unhappy with the law and why?

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3. Who is the "Caution" poster warning?

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Why are they being warned? Who is after them?

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What might happen if these people are caught?

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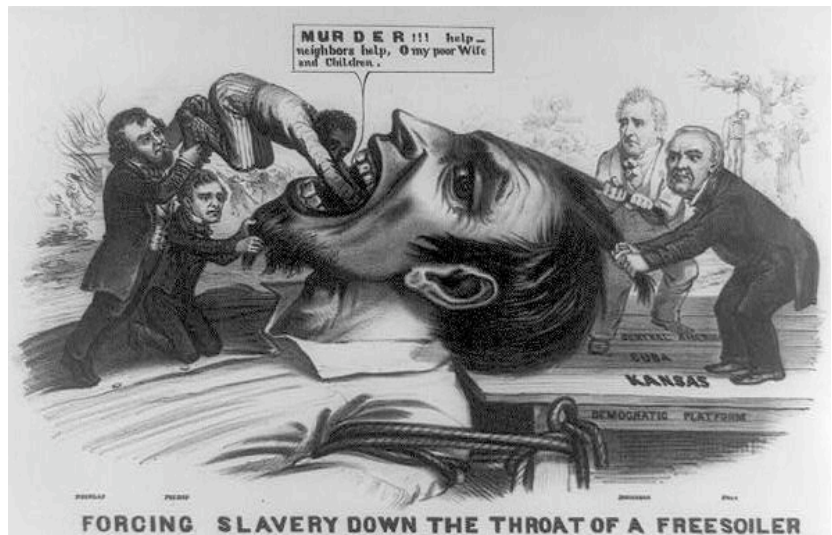
### Group 3: Kansas Nebraska Act (1854)

Officially titled "An Act to Organize the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas," this act repealed the Missouri Compromise (1820), which had outlawed slavery above the 36° 30' latitude in the Louisiana territories and reopened the national struggle over slavery in the western territories. In 1854, a bill to set up a government for the Nebraska Territory was introduced in Congress. Knowing that white southerners would not want to add another free state to the Union, it was proposed by Stephen Douglas that the Nebraska Territory be divided into two territories, **Kansas** and **Nebraska**. The settlers living in each territory would decide the issue of slavery by **popular sovereignty**, when the people are allowed to decide whether or not slavery will be permitted in their individual territories. This was known as the Kansas Nebraska Act.

Southern leaders especially supported the Kansas-Nebraska Act, sure that slave owners in neighboring states would move across the border to Kansas and vote for Kansas to become a slave state.

Northerners quickly opposed the new law. They argued that the Missouri Compromise had already banned slavery in Kansas and Nebraska. Slavery could

now spread to areas that had been free for more than 30 years. The Republican political party, committed to keeping slavery from spreading westward, was formed in 1854 as a result of Kansas Nebraska debates.



1. Describe the conditions of the Kansas Nebraska Act.

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2. Why did Southerners support the Act? Why did Northerners oppose it?

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3. What is happening in the political cartoon shown above? How did events such as the one depicted in the cartoon increase tensions between the North and the South?

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## Group 4: Bleeding Kansas

As a result of the controversial Kansas Nebraska Act, which opened up the territories of Kansas and Nebraska to slavery through popular sovereignty (where the people vote whether or not to allow slavery), Kansas now became a battleground over the slavery question. Instead of deciding the issue of slavery on election day, proslavery and anti-slavery forces sent settlers pouring into Kansas to physically fight for control of the territory. Proslavery bands from Missouri known as Border Ruffians often rode across the border to battle anti-slavery forces in Kansas. During the local elections of 1855, hundreds of Border Ruffians crossed into Kansas and voted illegally, elected a proslavery legislature. The legislature quickly passed laws to support slavery, such as the one which stated that speaking out against slavery was a crime punishable by two years of hard labor.



**Bleeding Kansas.**

Anti-slavery settlers refused to accept these laws. Two rival governments sprang up, propelling Kansas into chaos. This chaos soon turned violent. In 1856 a band of proslavery men raided the town of Lawrence, an anti-slavery stronghold. Attackers destroyed home and Free Soil newspapers. In retaliation, abolitionists, led by **John Brown**, attacked and killed five proslavery settlers in the town of Pottawatomie Creek. These killings sparked even more violence. By the mid 1850's, more than 200 people had been killed over the issue of slavery in Kansas. As a result, newspapers began calling the territory

1. How did Kansas become a battleground over the slavery question in the western territories?

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2. How did proslavery groups gain control of Kansas? What did they do to quickly exert their power?

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3. Why did the area become known as “Bleeding Kansas?”

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## Group 5: Violence Spreads: Attack in the Senate

As tensions rose between pro and anti slavery factions in Kansas, the debate over popular sovereignty and slavery in the western territories continued in the U.S. Senate. **Charles Sumner**, an abolitionist Senator from Massachusetts, gave a speech entitled “Crimes Against Kansas,” which blamed two Democratic senators for the violence which was spreading across the territory. Sumner saved his most personal verbal attack for Andrew Butler of South Carolina:

Has he read the history of "the State" which he represents? He cannot surely have forgotten its shameful imbecility (great stupidity) from Slavery, confessed throughout the Revolution, followed by its more shameful assumptions for Slavery since. He cannot have forgotten its wretched persistence in the slave-trade as the very apple of its eye, and the condition of its participation in the Union....

Though Butler was not in the Senate chamber the day Sumner made his explosive speech, word of Sumner’s accusations quickly spread. Several days after the speech, as Sumner sat writing letters at his desk in the Senate chamber, South Carolina Representative Preston Brooks entered the room. Brooks, a relative of Senator Butler, quickly enacted his revenge on Sumner. Brooks slammed his metal-topped cane onto the unsuspecting Sumner's head. Brooks struck Sumner repeatedly with his heavy cane. Stuck under his heavy desk, Sumner endured the brutal attack for more than a minute before lurching up the aisle, where he finally collapsed, unconscious. Brooks calmly left the room without being stopped by the stunned onlookers. Both Brooks and Sumner became overnight heroes to their respective regions. It was three years before Sumner was able to resume his duties in the Senate.



1. What is Charles Sumner accusing Andrew Butler of in the excerpt of his “Crimes Against Kansas” speech?

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2. Why did Sumner become a hero in the North after his brutal attack by Brooks? Why did Brooks become a hero in the South because of his cane attack on Sumner?

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3. While Sumner was attacked because of his personal words against the South Carolina Senator Butler, what larger conflict does the attack represent? Why is this attack an omen of things to come for the United States?

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