

# From Compromise to Conflict

TASK: prepare an illustrated graphic organizer of events leading to the outbreak of the American Civil War.

PROCEDURE:

1. Oops! The list below has lost its chronological order! Your first task is to rearrange the list so that it is in proper chronological order. Do this on the last page of this packet.

- John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry - October 1859
- Abraham Lincoln elected President - November 1860
- Kansas-Nebraska Act - May 1854
- Confederate troops attacked Fort Sumter; Civil War began - April 1861
- Uncle Tom's Cabin published - March 1852
- fighting broke out between pro-slavery and anti-slavery settlers in "Bleeding Kansas" - May 1856
- Lincoln-Douglas debates - August – October 1858
- Dred Scott decision - March 1857
- Republican Party formed - July 1854
- South Carolina seceded from the Union - December 1860
- Compromise of 1850 - September 1850
- Confederate States of America formed by seceding southern states - February 1861
- President Lincoln inaugurated - March 1861

*\*Be sure to have your work checked at this point!*

2. Next, study the summaries on the attached pages. Use your textbook and the various sources in your classroom to help you correctly match each summary with its correct event. If you read carefully, and think, there are clues in each summary to help you.

*\*Be sure to have your work checked at this point!*

3. Finally, create a poster-sized (at least 12" x 18") graphic organizer that shows the sequence of events leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861.
- Your poster could take many forms. Be creative and original, but be sure that your poster somehow shows all of the events in proper chronological order.
  - Your poster must have a title.
  - Your poster is to be illustrated. You could do this in several ways:
    - Build your graphic organizer into your illustration.
    - Have a separate small illustration for each event.
    - Decorate your graphic organizer with illustrations appropriate to the theme.
    - <http://www.mrvanduyne.com/CompConf/>

Your poster is due: \_\_\_\_\_

~ SUMMARIES ~

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

The people of the west needed a new railroad. Some wanted a southern route that would start in New Orleans and cross the southwest through the newly acquired Gadsden Purchase. Others wanted a more northern route. The leader of those favoring the northern route was Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Douglas wanted the new railroad to start in Chicago, in his home state, and cross some yet-unorganized territory in the Louisiana Purchase.

Douglas proposed a bill in Congress that would organize the land in question into two new territories, Kansas and Nebraska. In order for his bill to pass he needed to gain the support of southern members of Congress. Douglas proposed in this bill that “popular sovereignty” be used to decide whether or not slavery would be allowed in these new territories. When this bill passed it meant that slavery could then be allowed in land where it had been banned by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, because both Kansas and Nebraska were above the 36° 30’ line! In effect, then, Douglas’ plan overturned the Missouri Compromise and opened more land to slavery.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

Two men from Illinois were hoping to be elected to the Senate of the United States. One was already in office and running for reelection. He was a well-known Senator who had proposed the idea of allowing “popular sovereignty” to decide whether or not slavery would be allowed in territories organized from the Louisiana Purchase. The other man was a relatively unknown lawyer from Springfield, Illinois, who had served one term in the House of Representatives.

Before the election the two men held a series of debates. Slavery was the main issue they discussed. While the first man won the election, the second man won national fame with his belief that slavery was a “wrong,” and his desire to limit slavery to those areas of the U.S. where it already existed. Two years later, the second man would be elected President of the United States.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

This man was a member of the Republican Party, a party that was made up of people who wanted to abolish slavery or limit it to areas where it already existed. When he was elected President, the people of the South saw it as an attack by the North on their way of life.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

A radical abolitionist wanted to start a major slave revolt. He planned to arm slaves and help them win their freedom by killing their masters. To accomplish his goal he needed weapons, so he and his followers attacked and seized a government arsenal (a place where weapons are stored) in Virginia. The man hoped that slaves would hear of his attack and join him. He was wrong. No slave uprising took place, and the man and his followers were soon killed or captured. the man was put on trial, found guilty, and hanged. Abolitionists in the

North looked on this man as a hero who gave his life for his cause. People in the South looked on this man, and anyone who supported him, as a villain.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

The Kansas-Nebraska Act angered many Northerners. They were unhappy with the two main political parties of the time, the Whigs and the Democrats, because neither party had taken a strong stand against allowing slavery in land that had previously been closed to slavery. They joined together to form a new political party. One of the main goals of moderates in this new party was to limit slavery to where it already existed. Some radical members of this party called for the complete abolition of slavery.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

While he had been elected the previous November, President Lincoln did not officially take office until almost four months later. In his speech following the swearing-in ceremony he promised the South not to interfere with slavery where it already existed., and stated his position that no state could legally secede from the United States. All states would be expected to obey the laws of the United States.

Lincoln concluded by saying, “In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect, and defend it.”

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

Following the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act many people from both North and South began to move into the new territory of Kansas. Both sides, pro-slavery and anti-slavery, hoped to be able to gain a majority and win the vote as to whether or not Kansas would allow slavery when it became a state. The people on one side of this question obviously disliked people who held the opposite view. Eventually, fighting broke out between the two sides. In 1861 Kansas entered the Union as a “free” state, but in the meantime many people had been killed in the fighting.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

Lincoln had been elected President. This meant that the people of the North, using their larger population, had elected a person who was a member of a party that was openly against slavery. To many people in the South this was unacceptable. Rather than accept this situation the government of South Carolina voted to secede from, or “quit,” the United States. Other southern states soon did the same thing.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

A slave sued his owner hoping to win his freedom. He argued that since he had lived with his owner for a period of time in a territory that did not allow slavery, he should be a free person.

The case eventually reached the Supreme Court of the United States. That court ruled that because he was a slave he was not a citizen of the U.S. and had none of the rights of a citizen. Because he was not a citizen he had no right to sue his owner, and so he must remain a slave

The Supreme Court went even further. It said that slaves were “property,” just like a cow or a wagon. It ruled that the government had no right to deny citizens of their property, and therefore slave owners could not be forbidden to take their slaves into any territories belonging to the United States. The individual states could outlaw slavery within their borders, but the territories of the U.S. must be open equally to all citizens.

What this meant, in effect, was that all territories were open to slavery, including all the lands of the Louisiana Purchase. This decision outraged people in the North, and encouraged people in the South.

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

California wanted to become a free state. People in the North wanted this, while people in the South were against it.

Finally, a solution was found. In return for allowing California to enter the Union as a “free” state, Congress passed a stronger Fugitive Slave Act to help the slave owners in the South. The remainder of the Mexican Cession was divided into two large territories, Utah and New Mexico. The people of these territories were to decide for themselves whether or not to allow slavery when their territories became states. This idea was called “popular sovereignty.”

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

A book, a work of fiction, further divided North and South. The book portrayed slavery as an evil, and all slave owners as evil people who mistreated their slaves. Southerners were outraged by this book. Northerners mostly believed it gave a true picture of slavery. During the Civil War President Lincoln was introduced to Harriet Beecher Stowe, the person who wrote the book. He greeted her with the words, “...so this is the little lady who caused this great big war.”

**Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

Following the election of Abraham Lincoln as President, a number of states seceded from the Union. They joined together to form what they called a new nation, the Confederate States of America. Eventually a total of eleven states announced their secession from the United States and the membership in the new C.S.A. Jefferson Davis, a former U.S. Senator and Secretary of War, was elected as the first President of the Confederacy.

