

John Brown's Holy War



Politics and Slavery, part 3

ACTIVITY KEY

Rewrite = rewrite the sentence to make correct

Complete = write the correct answer that completes the idea

Cloze = underline the correct word in the reading

Text = define the word or revise a text feature

Interact = interact with media/text

Opinion = give your own opinion



= complete the interactive notebook and/or test

In 1859, John Brown and a group of 20 **abolitionists** attacked a federal **arsenal** in Harpers Ferry, Virginia. This arsenal was like a base for the army. In the arsenal, there were lots of weapons for the US army. John Brown planned on stealing the weapons and giving them to slaves in a nearby town. He wanted to start a slave revolt in Virginia. **John Brown wanted to start a slave insurrection.**

Arsenal means...

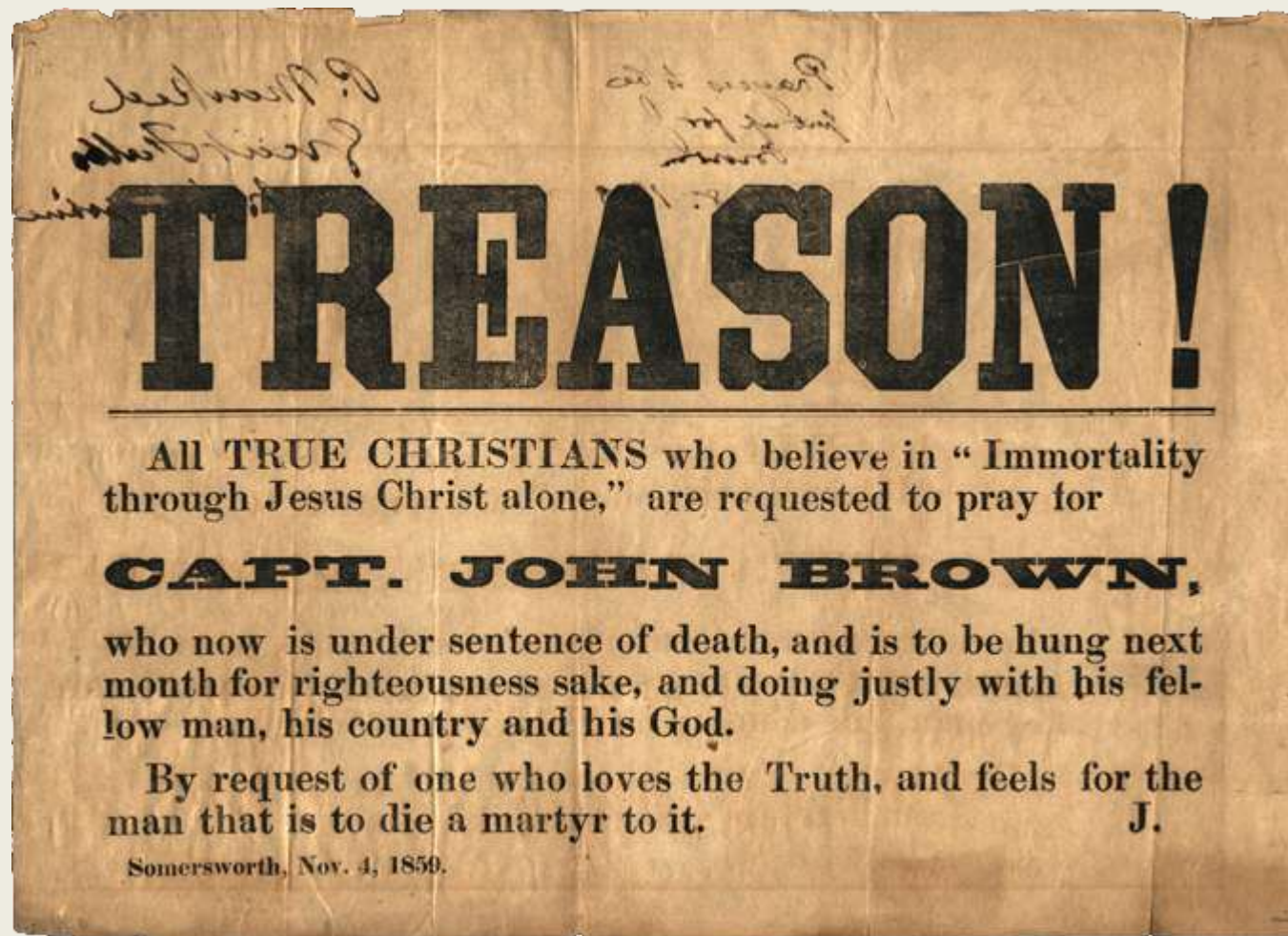
Abolitionist means...

Slave insurrection means..



John Brown wanted to start a slave revolt in Virginia. He attacked a federal arsenal. His plan didn't work. He was defeated and captured. He went to court. They sentenced him with **treason** against Virginia. He was punished with death by hanging. On the day of his hanging, he wrote: "I, John Brown am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with Blood." Purge means "cleaned," so the USA is guilty, and you have to clean it with blood.

Predict What do you think John Brown meant in his quote?



Interact What is this sign? Do you think they supported John Brown?

John Brown believed that the USA committed a crime. The crime was slavery. It was a sin against God. John Brown was very religious. He believed in a **higher-law** abolitionism. He believed that the higher law was God's law, and that slavery was a sin. Slavery was a bigger sin for John Brown than murdering slave-owners. John Brown came from the Puritan tradition in New England. In later paintings, John Brown is often pictured with crucifix.

Complete

1. John Brown believed that slavery was...
2. John Brown wanted to start a slave...
3. John Brown didn't believe in Constitutional Law, he believed in...
4. John Brown was hanged for the crime of...
5. John Brown believed that _____ was a bigger sin than murder.



This is from a famous 20th Century African-American artist about John Brown.

How does the artist show John Brown?

Abolitionists wanted to end slavery. Not all abolitionists believed that slavery was wrong. Some abolitionists believed that black people were inferior and should go back to Africa. But some abolitionists, like John Brown, who were from New England, believed from the early days that slavery was against God's law. John Brown understood the world in a Puritan tradition where there were chosen people and depraved people. Depraved means evil; John Brown believed in evil. Slavery was evil. Slave-owners were evil.

John Brown also believed in the **slave power conspiracy**. This is the idea that the Southerners will do anything to expand slavery. The new Republican Party emphasized this idea. **Even if they weren't abolitionists**, many Republicans like Abraham Lincoln believed that slavery needed to be stopped in the West. Slavery couldn't expand. So, when Bleeding Kansas happened, everyone felt like they should do something.

Rewrite

1. John Brown was a Catholic from the South.
2. John Brown believed that people are essentially good.

Complete

1. The idea that the South will do anything to expand slavery is called...
2. Abraham Lincoln wasn't an abolitionist, but...

Predict

If you aren't an abolitionist, can you be against slavery expanding? Where can you have slavery? Where can't you have slavery?

Bleeding Kansas was fighting between pro- and anti-slavery people in the territory of Kansas. It happened because of Stephen Douglas. Remember: Stephen Douglas wanted to use **popular sovereignty** for the Kansas-Nebraska territory. He didn't want slavery banned there because it was north of a line. In fact, he eliminated the Missouri Compromise line. So, people in Kansas would vote on slavery. But popular sovereignty in Kansas was a disaster.

Popular sovereignty didn't work in Kansas. It turned into a big gang war between pro-slavery ruffians and anti-slavery Jayhawkers. There were a few massacres on both sides. The Republicans called it Bleeding Kansas. They said: "See, look what slavery does to this country!"

Complete

1. The fighting in Kansas between pro- and anti-slavery forces is called...
2. Bleeding Kansas made many people believe the Southerners had too much influence, which is called...
3. Stephen Douglas' idea for Kansas-Nebraska was called _____ . The states had to vote on slave or free.
4. Popular sovereignty was a disaster because...

Before John Brown decided to start a slave revolt, he came to Bleeding Kansas. He heard about some killings of anti-slavery settlers. A group of these **free soilers** were killed. Free soilers wanted free land for free white people; they were against slavery. John Brown wanted revenge. John Brown and a group of abolitionists took swords and chopped up five pro-slavery settlers. He supposedly said something like: "Well, now we are even."

Complete

1. John Brown came to _____ for revenge.
2. John Brown killed some anti-slavery people with a _____. He chopped them up.
3. John Brown wanted revenge because some _____ were killed. These are people who want land for white people, not slave-owners.

Bleeding Kansas wasn't so violent, but it was a national sensation. Everyone was talking about it! **BUT.... Abolitionists, in general, weren't at all like John Brown.** They weren't violent. Most were intellectuals—thinkers not fighters. Most were from New England, which never had slavery and had strict Puritan morals.

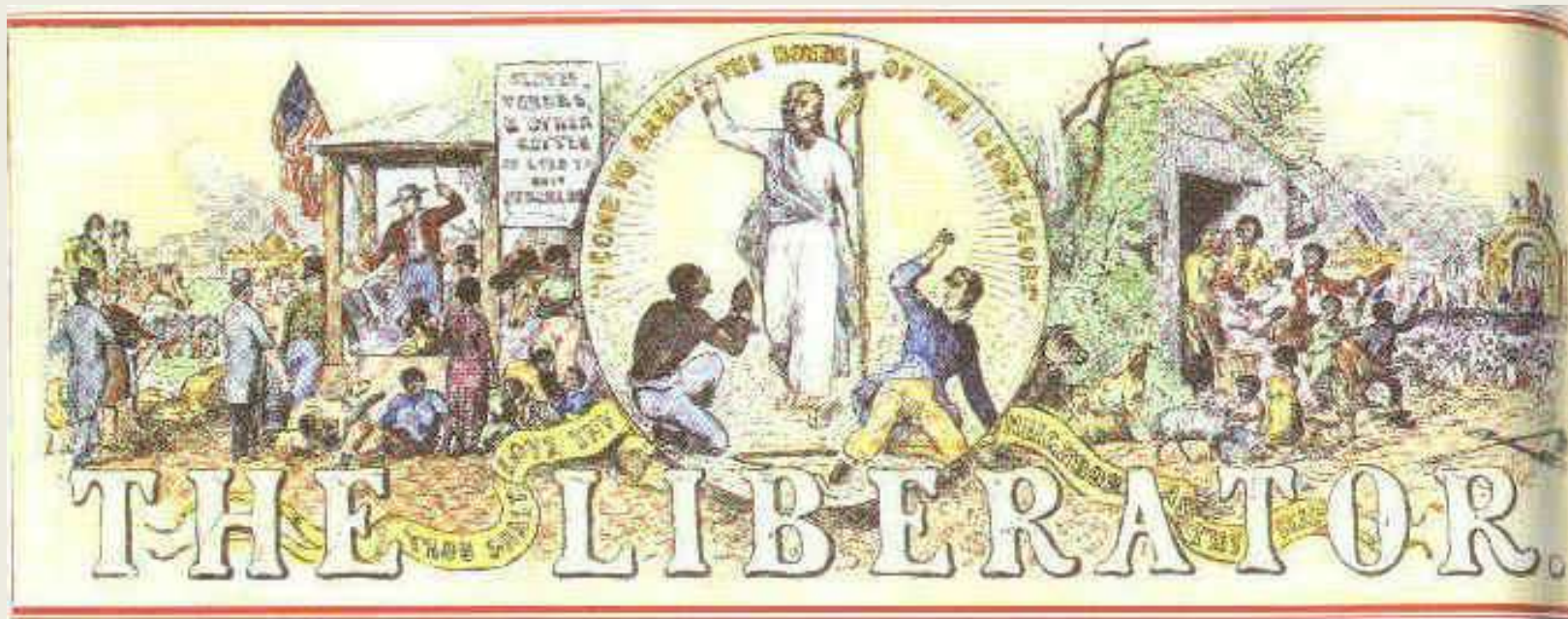
Most abolitionists were fierce with their words, but not their actions. In other words, when John Brown went and chopped pro-slavery people to pieces, they were a little surprised. They definitely weren't going to join John Brown. William Lloyd Garrison was an abolitionist who used fierce words. He wrote a newspaper called "The Liberator." He attacked the South. He blamed everyone for slavery. If you are in the North and you tolerate slavery, you are just as guilty. But Garrison wasn't willing to die for it, like John Brown. Nevertheless, Garrison was hated in the South.

Rewrite

1. Abolitionists were generally violent, like John Brown.
2. Abolitionists were mostly from the South, where there were Puritans.
3. John Brown published a newsletter called The Liberator.

Context

1. Most abolitionists were **fierce with their words, but not their actions** means they...
2. William Lloyd Garrison believed that if you weren't against slavery, you were...



Interact: What images do you see about freedom in this banner?

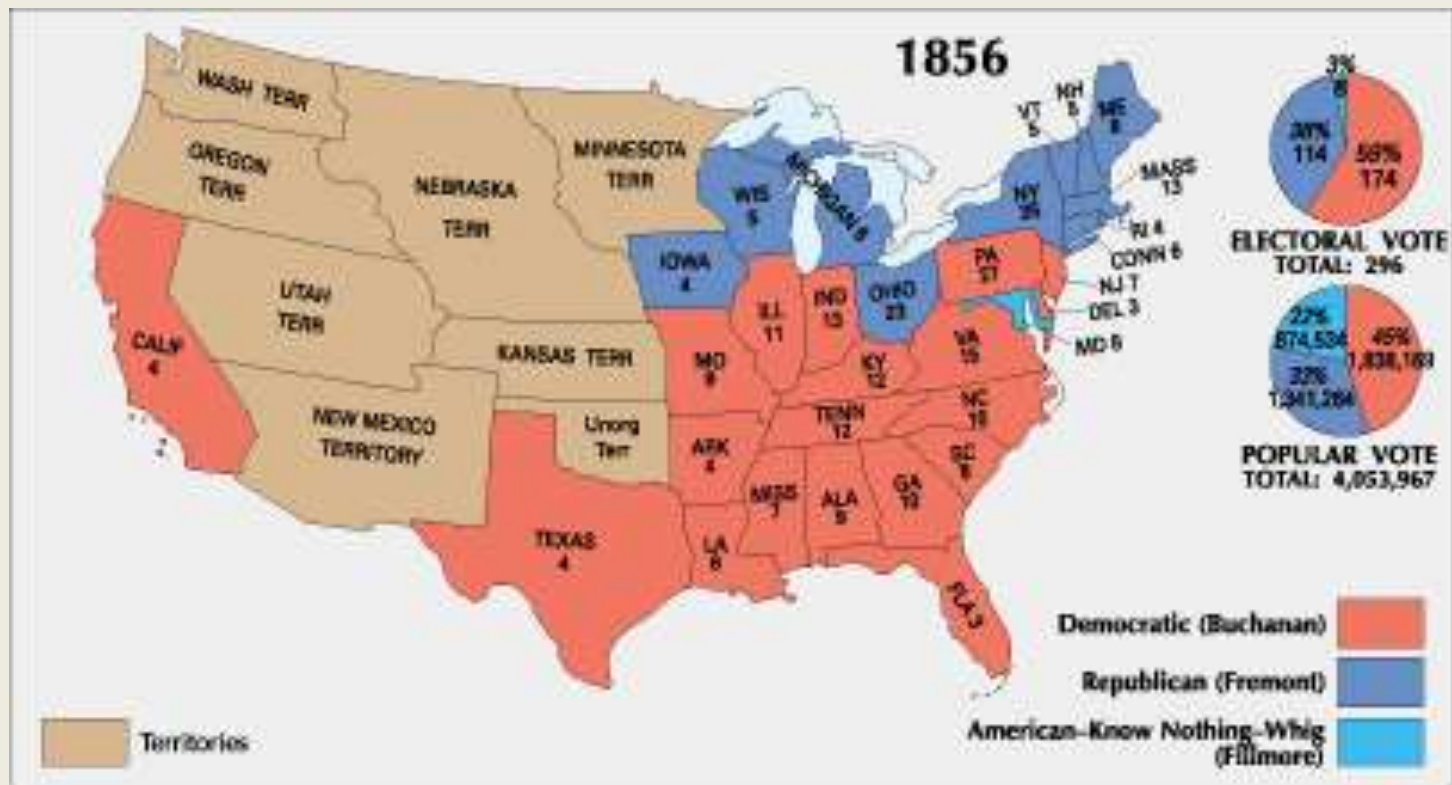


Interact: What does this say? Is this an abolitionist symbol or pro-slavery?

John Brown and William Lloyd Garrison were both from New England. Again, New England never had slavery because the soil was bad for farming; more importantly, the Puritan tradition of New England believed in evil and wasn't tolerant of it. These abolitionists never really had a political party that represented them. For decades they were part of the Whig Party. But the Whigs tried to ignore slavery because they depended on pro-business Southerners and people in the frontier. Remember: the Whigs couldn't agree on anything besides they hated Andrew Jackson. When the Republican Party formed, the abolitionists found a voice.

Complete

1. Abolitionists were mostly located in _____ because of bad soil and the _____ religious tradition.
2. The Whig Party never took a stand on the issue of...
3. Abolitionists mostly joined the new party called the _____



The Republicans are blue. What part of the USA do they dominate?

The Republicans were a coalition of **abolitionists** and **free soilers**. A **coalition** is a group that doesn't agree on everything, but they join together. Abraham Lincoln was a Republican who didn't want the abolition of slavery. He wanted to stop the expansion of slavery. But there were Republicans who were abolitionists. One example is Charles Sumner, again, from New England. He was a Republican and an abolitionist.

Coalition means...

Complete

The Republicans are a coalition of _____ and _____.

Charles Sumner was a Senator who wanted to provoke the South. He wrote a long speech about the “crimes” in Kansas. Remember: the Republicans used “Bleeding Kansas” as their rallying point. In other words, they made speeches about Bleeding Kansas and the slave power conspiracy to get support. Sumner wrote a speech where he basically said: “The senator from South Carolina has a whore and her name is slavery.” The speech was very emotional and filled with sexual imagery. Abolitionists often emphasized that rape was part of Southern slave culture. They did this to discredit or prove wrong the idea that slavery was good for black people, who couldn’t take care of themselves. Sumner was trying to start a fight! And he did...

Charles Sumner was signing copies of his speech in the Senate when a representative from the South caught him and beat him with a cane. Charles Sumner was beaten for giving a speech against slavery. The man who beat him became a hero in the South; Charles Sumner became a hero in the North.

Complete

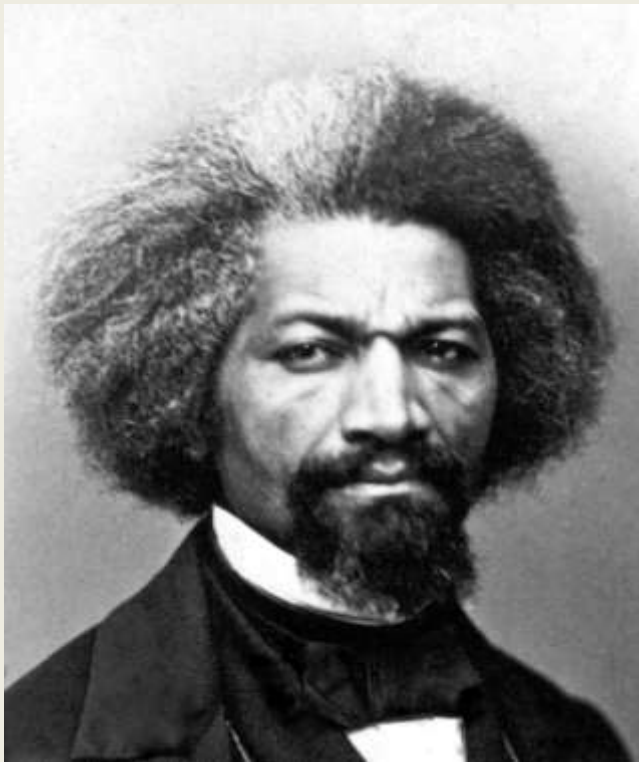
1. Charles Sumner was a _____ Senator. (What party?)
2. Sumner was an _____. He was against slavery.
3. He gave a speech about the problems in the territory of _____.
4. How did Sumner provoke (made angry) a Southern Senator?
5. What happened after Sumner gave the speech?

Why did Sumner use sexual imagery in his speech?



What does this show?

Not all abolitionists were from New England. Not all abolitionists were white. Frederick Douglass was an abolitionist who was born a slave. Frederick Douglass was born a slave in Maryland. His master's wife taught him to read and write. Later, he ran away and lived in freedom. He gave many speeches in Massachusetts and worked with William Lloyd Garrison. When the Civil War started, he encouraged free blacks to join the army.



In what ways was Frederick Douglass different than abolitionists?

In what ways was Frederick Douglass different than other slaves?

Frederick Douglas was safe in his freedom in the North. But two things happened in the 1850s that made Northerners, and especially free blacks, very nervous. There was a law called the Fugitive Slave Act. It gave Southerners the right to capture their escaped slaves, if they escaped north. Then came the Dred Scott decision, which was shocking.

Underline the two “events” in the 1850s that changed the Northern view.

Slaves didn't passively accept slavery. In other words, they fought back in many ways. There were two famous slave revolts in Virginia, for example. Gabriel Prosser and Nat Turner led slave revolts that ended in white slave-owner being killed. Southern slave-owners were terrified of these revolts. But they were even more terrified of the **underground railroad**.

The **underground railroad** was a system of paths from the South to the North. It was a way for escaped slaves to safely make themselves to freedom. Southerners hated the **underground railroad** because it encouraged slaves to escape. Slaves were so valuable, so the South feared their escape. The most famous figure of the **underground railroad** was Harriet Tubman. There was a huge reward on her head: This means, whoever captured her would get a lot of money. Nobody ever captured her.

Rewrite

1. Slaves passively accepted slavery.
2. Gabriel Prosser and Nat Turner had two famous slave revolts in South Carolina.
3. More slaves had revolts than escaped.

Complete

4. Slaves escaped from the South to the North through the....
5. The woman associated with Underground Railroad is...
6. The two men associated with Slave Revolts in Virginia are...

Southerners hated the **underground railroad**. They hated that once slaves got North, they won their freedom. They didn't think it was fair. So, in 1850 this changed. **The Compromise of 1850s strengthened the Fugitive Slave Act**. They made it stronger, and so whites could easily come to the North and accuse blacks of being slaves. The blacks could appeal, but the judges were corruptible. Suddenly, blacks weren't safe anywhere. You could escape slavery, but then brought back and made a slave again. But the Dred Scott case was even more surprising.

Complete

1. The Fugitive Slave Act made it possible for Southerners to...
2. Blacks didn't feel safe anywhere in the United States because...

The Dred Scott case was a Supreme Court case. There was a slave named Dred Scott who lived with his owner in Missouri. Missouri was a slave state. His owner went to Minnesota, which was a free state, and lived for four years. A free state should be a free state—in other words, you shouldn't be legally a slave if your owner takes you to Minnesota to live. Dred Scott was later sold to another man and went back to Missouri. But abolitionists wanted to take this to the highest court in the land. They wanted to know: “Does free state really mean free?”

Complete

1. Dred Scott was a _____ in Missouri.
2. His owner moved to _____, a free state.
3. Dred Scott should have been free because he lived...
4. The Dred Scott case went to the highest court, or the _____

The Supreme Court was dominated by Southerners. There are eight Supreme Court justices (another word for judge), and five of them were slave owners. They made a ruling that said three things:

- Dred Scott was a slave. He was property. "Once a slave, always a slave."
- People descended from Africa (all blacks) can never be citizens, so they don't have the right to even have this Supreme Court Case. "Don't waste our time."
- Congress actually doesn't have the power to make free states. Property is protected by the 5th amendment. "Missouri Compromise, Popular Sovereignty, etc. isn't legal."

So, to summarize, the Supreme Court of the United States said: "There is no such thing as a free state, and blacks can never be citizens."

Rewrite

1. The Supreme Court judges were mostly from the North.
2. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Dred Scott.
3. They ruled that blacks could be citizens.
4. They ruled that Congress could make laws about free and slave states.
5. They ruled that all blacks are free according to the 5th Amendment.

In your own words...

-Without cutting & pasting, what three things did the Dred Scott case decide?

-The 5th amendment says that the government can't mess with life, liberty, and property.... What does this have to do with Dred Scott?

**Missouri's Dred Scott Case 1846
-1857
How It Relates To The Moors**



Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857)

"..... We think they [people of African ancestry] are . . . not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word "citizens" in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States. . . ."

**— Chief Justice Roger B. Taney
speaking for the majority**

"People from Africa weren't supposed to be included as citizens in the Constitution"

This was shocking! In theory, this meant that they could have slavery in the streets of New York or small towns of New England. The Dred Scott case said: **“Congress cannot make ‘free states.’ Blacks are property. You can’t prohibit property.”**

It showed many Northerners that slavery couldn’t be stopped without a fight. Abraham Lincoln, who wasn’t an abolitionist, made a famous speech about Dred Scott where he said: **“A house divided against itself can’t stand.”** He predicted that the USA would either have to be all slave or all free, but it can’t be half and half. Southerners never forgot this line!

The idea that blacks couldn’t be citizens was less shocking! **Many white people still believed that blacks were inferior.** This common idea slowly changes.

Complete

1. The Dred Scott case said that slaves are _____ and don't have rights.
2. Slavery could exist anywhere in the United States because of...
3. Abraham Lincoln made a speech about the Dred Scott case. He said: "A house divided against itself cannot _____."
4. The House divided speech was a symbol for the division between the _____ and the _____ over slavery.
5. Abraham Lincoln said that the USA can't stay half-slave and half-free. He means that...

Predict Abraham Lincoln wasn't an abolitionist, but he said that the USA can't stay half-free and half-slave. Why did the Southerners never forget this line?



The Southern “**slave power**” seemed to be accomplishing all of its goals through Congress and the Supreme Court. Even though they had fewer Senators and Representatives, it felt like the United States might become a slave nation. The abolitionists felt this the most, so when John Brown went to Kansas with his swords, many people secretly supported him.

When John Brown later decided to bring his “holy war” to Virginia and attack the federal arsenal, he received plenty of donations. He bought boxes and boxes of metal spears to give the slaves. They could impale their slave-owners and their supporters. He received boxes of “Beecher Bibles,” which was a code for rifles. They were named for the Beecher family, which was a famous abolitionist family.

Complete

1. John Brown’s fight against slavery was a _____ because he thought slavery was against God’s laws.
2. He received donations from other abolitionists, including _____ to give to the slaves.
3. Beecher Bibles were _____ named for a famous family.

The Beecher that we know most today is **Harriet Beecher Stowe**. She was one of the Beecher family of New England—famous for being abolitionists. She wrote the book “**Uncle Tom’s Cabin.**” This book showed slavery as a violent and cruel system. There were long descriptions of beatings. Abolitionists had been talking about violence for years; however, they did it in an intellectual language. In other words, it was hard for the common people to understand. Uncle Tom’s Cabin was easy to read; they also made a play version of it that was popular. Many Northerners felt responsible for slavery because of Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Abraham Lincoln later called Beecher Stowe: “The little lady who started the big war.”

Opinion Why do you think Harriet Beecher Stowe is the most famous of the Beecher family?

Quick Review “Who am I?”

-“I am famous because I am a white abolitionist who used violence to make a holy war against slavery.” _____

-“I was a New England newspaper editor who wrote the Liberator. I used fierce words against slavery.” _____

-“I was a black woman who moved people North to South in the underground railroad.”

-“I wrote a book called Uncle Tom’s Cabin that enraged the North against the South because of bad treatment of slaves.” _____

-“I was a Radical Republican who gave a speech against slavery. I got physically beaten because of it.” _____

-“I gave a speech against the future of slavery called ‘A House Divided.’ Even though I wasn’t an abolitionist, the South never forgot my speech.” _____

John Brown hanged for his crimes. His slave revolt wasn't successful. But he captivated the nation. For many in the South, John Brown was a terrorist. For many in the North, he was a martyr who died for the cause. Ignoring the "wolf" of slavery was impossible. Violence was in the near future for the United States.

Complete

1. What happened to John Brown?
2. What does it mean—you can't ignore the wolf anymore?

What are some characteristics of abolitionists?

How are abolitionists different from free soilers?