

# HISTORICAL ARGUMENTATION & PERIODIZATION... The End of Compromise

## Step #1 Read the question or prompt carefully:

Read the question three times and be able to paraphrase the question and know the essential task demanded by it.

Answering the question will be the central focus of your essay, and you want to be sure to **ATFP**: *Address The Full Prompt*.

**Prompt:** From the Constitution through Antebellum times, Americans sought to resolve their political disputes through compromise, yet by 1860 this no longer seemed possible. Identify and explain the turning point that marked the end of compromising over the issue of political power and slavery, and explain the reasons for the change.

## Step #2 Brainstorm on paper everything that comes to mind regarding the topic at hand. Aim for at least 5 specific things.

You may also review compromise notes for additional information (on the back of this page) but do not rely only on these compromises.

What do you know about the topic? What is the era/context? If it is a turning point, then what exactly changed? (*Turning point from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_?*)

Put this down on paper to get your brain generating ideas and content before writing the essay. Once you have ample information, categorize it by theme. (ABC)

## Step #3 Clarify your thesis/view and identify an opposing view. Make sure your thesis ATFP!

**Step #4 Write your introductory paragraph. USE THE FORMULA!** (see your writing guidelines if you do not remember the formula for periodization)

## ***Compromises to Save the Union***

*Review each compromise. Highlight cues.*

### **Great Compromise, 1787-9**

The Articles of Confederation, under which America operated from 1781-1787, provided that each state would be represented by one vote in Congress. When changes were being discussed for how states should be represented during the creation of a new Constitution, two plans were pushed forward. The Virginia Plan provided for representation to be based on the population of each state. On the other hand, the New Jersey Plan wanted equal representation for every state. The Great Compromise, also called the Connecticut Compromise, combined both plans. It was decided that there would be two chambers in Congress: the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate would be based on equal representation and the House would be based on population.

### **Three-Fifths Compromise, 1787-9**

Once it was decided that representation in the House of Representatives as to be based on population, delegates from Northern and Southern states had a difference of opinion on how slaves should be counted. Delegates for the Northern states where the economy did not rely heavily on slavery, felt that slaves should not be counted towards representation. This would provide the South with a greater number of representatives. On the other hand, Southern states fought for slaves to be counted in terms of representation. The compromise between the two became known as the three-fifths compromise because every five slaves would be counted as three individuals in terms of representation.

### **Commerce Compromise, 1787-9**

Northern interests wanted the government to be able to impose tariffs on goods in order to protect against foreign competition. However, the Southern states feared that tariffs on their goods would hurt the trade upon which they heavily relied. The compromise was for imports to be only allowed on imports from foreign countries and not exports from the US.

### **Slave Trade Compromise, 1787-9**

Those who opposed slavery in the northern states wanted to bring an end to the importation and sale of slaves. On the other hand, southern states felt that slavery was vital to their economy and did not want the government interfering in the slave trade. In the end, the North agreed to wait until 1808 before Congress would be able to ban the slave trade in the US. Importation ended in 1809, but by that time slavery was on the rise thanks to Eli Whitney's 1793 innovation: cotton gin, leading to expansion of plantation agriculture (King Cotton) across the Deep South.

### **Election of the President, 1787-9**

The Articles of Confederation did not provide for a Chief Executive of the United States. Therefore, when delegates decided that a president was necessary, there was a disagreement over how he or she should be elected to office. While some delegates felt that the president should be popularly elected, others feared that the electorate would not be informed enough to make a wide decision. They came up with other alternatives such as going through each state's Senate to elect the president. In the end, the two sides compromised with the creation of the Electoral College. Thus, the citizens vote for electors who then vote for the president.

### **Compromise of 1790**

Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, concerned his financial plan would fail and the young nation would fall apart as conflict intensified between Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian thought, hammered out the compromise which brought the Assumption Act (public credit; assumption of state debt) and the Residence Act (building the capital city in Southern territory of Virginia and Maryland. The compromise was a victory for Hamilton's financial plan which included a tariff and a national bank, but the political conflict over such issues would continue to divide the nation for generations.

### **Missouri Compromise 1820-PASSED**

Missouri would be admitted to the Union as a slave state. Maine would be admitted at the same time as a free state in order to maintain the balance between free and slave states. Slavery was declared illegal north of the 36°30' parallel west of Missouri. This compromised settled the dispute over slavery in the Louisiana Territory and maintained balanced representation with equal number of slave and free states.

### **The Nullification Crisis and Compromise Tariff of 1833-PASSED**

John C. Calhoun & his 1828 Exposition and Protest... proposed South Carolina (and other states hurt the by Tariff of 1828 –Tariff of Abominations) were not obligated by the U.S. Constitution to follow the law. South Carolina threatened to secede from the Union in its 1832 Nullification Ordinance. President Jackson responded with a threat to send troops (Force Act), but the Compromise Tariff of 1833 kept things together.

### **The Wilmot Proviso 1846 (and 1847 and 1848) – FAILED TO PASS**

This proviso passed the House but failed in the Senate twice (once in 1846 and once in 1847). If it had passed the Senate, it is very likely President Polk would have vetoed it. Had it passed, it would have banned slavery in any territory acquired from Mexico in the Mexican-American War. In 1848, an attempt to make it part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo also failed. Sectional conflict over slavery in the Southwest continued up to the Compromise of 1850.

### **Benton Compromise of 1845 – FAILED TO PASS**

This compromise aimed to soften political conflict between North and South over the annexation of Texas. The compromise passed the House and Senate but President Tyler and his successor President Polk ignored it – making it null and void - as Texas was brought in as a state and not as a territory. The original compromise would have divided Texas into a slave state (eastern portion) and a western territory that could eventually become a free state.

### **The Compromise of 1850-PASSED**

After the Mexican-American War, the United States gained territory in the West, and the slavery issue ignited again over the question of whether slavery would be allowed to exist in the new states and territories. The Compromise of 1850 was a series of bills in Congress which sought to settle the issue, and it did postpone the Civil War by a decade. But the compromise, which contained five major provisions, was destined to be a temporary solution. Settled Texas border, ended slave trade in D.C., California entered as free state, and stronger fugitive slave law passed.

### **The Kansas-Nebraska Act-PASSED**

The last major compromise that sought to hold the Union together, and it proved to be the most controversial. Engineered by Stephen A. Douglas the legislation inflamed conflict rather than quelling it. It called for popular sovereignty to replace the Missouri Compromise Line for the Kansas and Nebraska Territories. It was assumed by many that these two territories would come in as one slave and one free state. Newspaper editor, Horace Greeley, coined the term "Bleeding Kansas." to describe the outbreaks of violence in the territory and also in the Senate chamber (Brooks-Summer).

### **Crittenden Compromise, 1860 FAILED TO PASS**

This was one final attempt to prevent war as South Carolina seceded following the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860. Senator John Crittenden of Kentucky proposed this compromise which would have restored the 36°30' line established by the Missouri Compromise. This was futile since *Dred Scot vs. Sandford* in 1857 had declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional. This compromise sought to ease Southern angst by guaranteeing the continuation of slavery where it already existed, supported fugitive slave laws while also compensating slave-owners for runaway slaves, and pledged to enforce the laws prohibiting the African slave trade. It was defeated in both the House and Senate.

## Document Analysis & *Defending Your Thesis*

Analyze each document. Also, pull additional information to help you defend your thesis. Remember your task is NOT to describe or quote documents; your task IS to make inferences and **defend your thesis** with additional information. The first one is completed for you. If you do not remember the steps to analyzing documents, see page 1 of the Civil War document activity.

Source: Senator Henry Clay, speech to the Senate, February 12, 1833

I merely throw out these sentiments for the purpose of showing you that South Carolina, having declared her purpose to be this, to make an experiment whether, by a course of legislation, in a conventional form, or legislative form of enactment, she can defeat the execution of certain laws of the United States, I for one, will express my opinion that I believe it is utterly impracticable, whatever course of legislation she may choose to adopt, for her to succeed. . . . I say it is impossible that South Carolina ever desired for a moment to become a separate and independent state.

*The context of Clay's 1833 speech is the conclusion of the Nullification Crisis. Henry Clay's point of view was that South Carolina desired political power to change law not to truly leave the union.*

*Nationalism won over sectionalism as South Carolina remained part of the union. The Compromise succeeded in avoiding war, and thus was not a major turning point toward disunion.*

Source: "Declaration of the National Anti-Slavery Convention," first annual report of the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1834

[W]e believe and affirm:

That every American citizen who retains a human being in involuntary bondage as his property is (according to Scripture) a MAN STEALER.

That the slaves ought instantly to be set free. . . .

That all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are . . . , before God, utterly null and void, being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative. . . .

[T]hat no compensation should be given to the planters emancipating their slaves. . . . [That], if compensation is to be given at all, it should be given to the outraged and guiltless slaves and not to those who have plundered and abused them.

[That] we concede the Congress under the present national compact, has no right to interfere with any of the slave states, in relation to this momentous subject [slavery]. But we maintain that Congress has a right . . . to suppress the domestic slave trade between the several states, and to abolish slavery in those portions of our territory which the Constitution has placed under its [Congress's] exclusive jurisdiction.

## Document Analysis & *Defending Your Thesis*

Source: Resolution of the Pinckney Committee, House of Representatives, May 18, 1836

And whereas it is extremely important and desirable, that the agitation of this subject should be finally arrested, for the purpose of restoring tranquillity to the public mind, your committee respectfully recommend the adoption of the following additional resolution:

All petitions, memorials, resolutions, propositions, or papers relating in any way or to any extent whatsoever, to the subject of slavery or the abolition of slavery, shall without being either printed or referred, be laid on the table and that no further action whatever shall be had thereon.

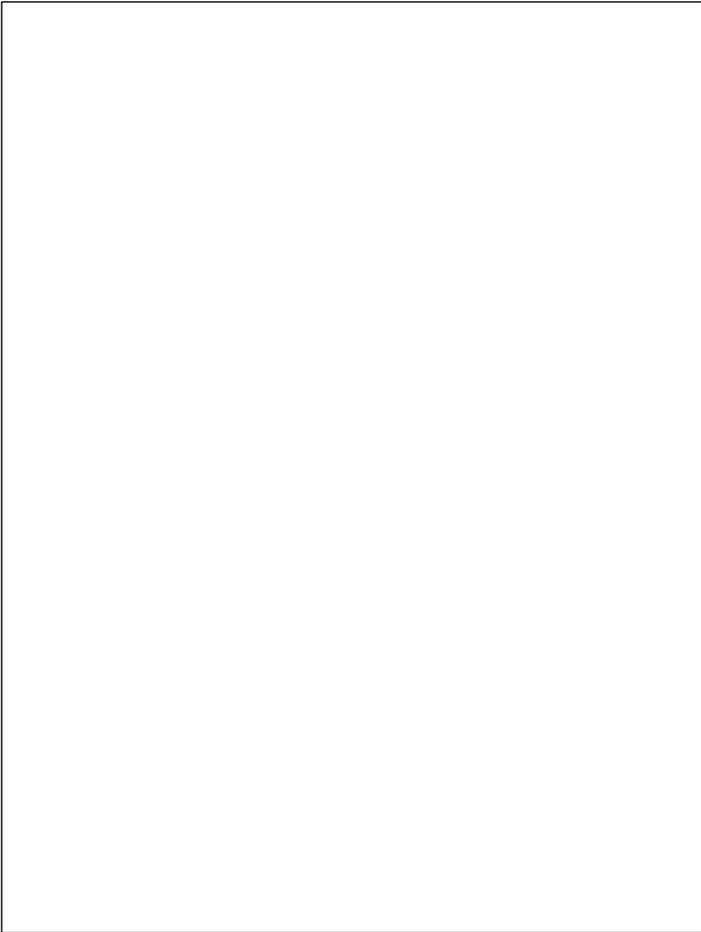
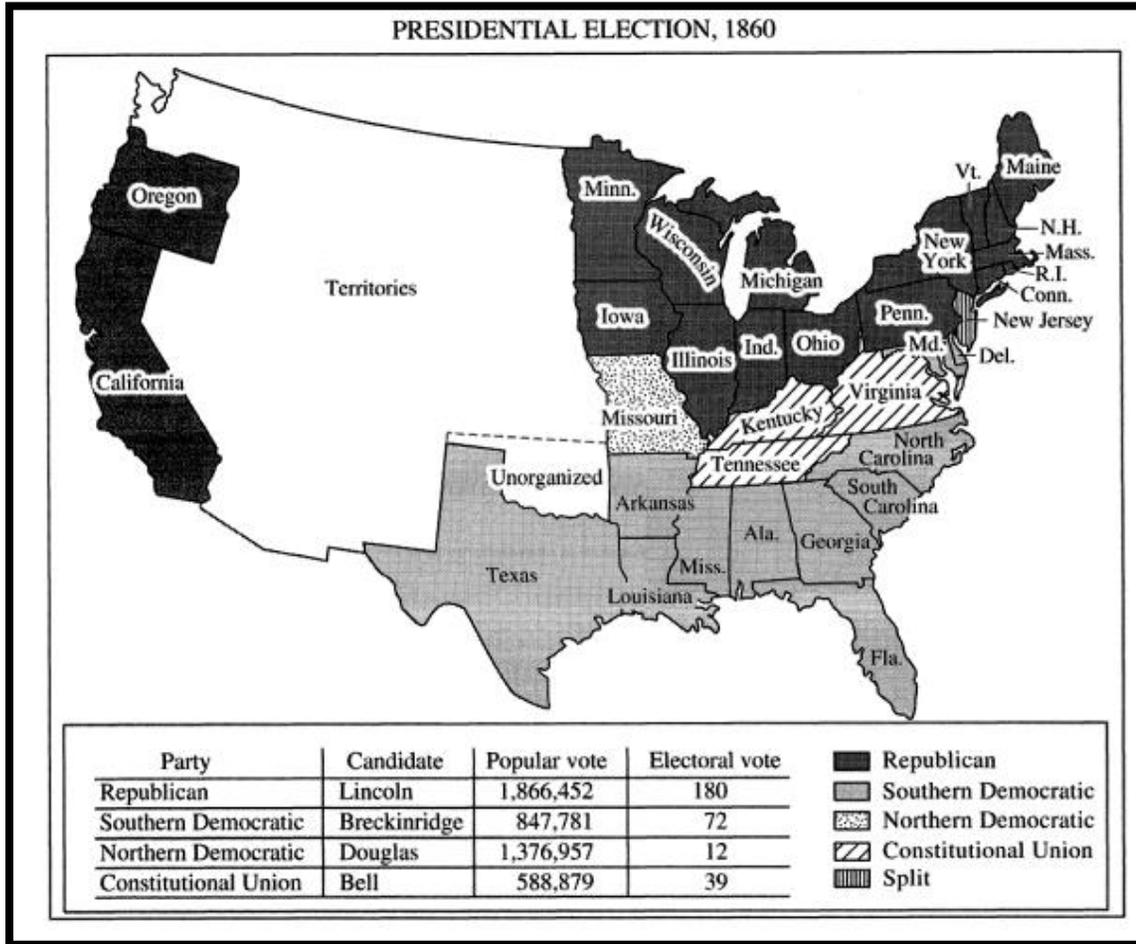
Source: Senator Daniel Webster, speech to the Senate, March 7, 1850

Mr. President, I wish to speak today, not as a Northern man, but as an American. . . .

I will state . . . one complaint of the South . . . that there has been found at the North, among individuals and among the legislatures of the North, a disinclination to perform fully their constitutional duties in regard to the return of persons bound to service who have escaped into the free states. In that respect, it is my judgement that the South is right and the North is wrong. . . .

I hear with pain and anguish the word “secession,” especially when it falls from the lips of those who are eminently [*sic*] patriotic, and known to the country, and known all over the world for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. . . . I hold the idea of a separation of these states—those that are free to form one government and those that are slaveholding to form another—as a moral impossibility. We could not separate the states by any such line if we were to draw it. We could not sit down here today and draw a line of separation that would satisfy any five men in the country.

# Document Analysis & *Defending Your Thesis*



**Extension:** On a separate sheet of paper, write your conclusion for this essay. (see writing guides for conclusion formula if you do not remember it).