Lines of Division

Trace how government actions deepened sectional conflict.

SS24.US1.11 "Analyze how government policies and events related to slavery led to increased sectionalism throughout the United States prior to the Civil War..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three government actions in the passage. Circle a sectional response to each one, then number each action and its response with matching numbers to show the connection.

When Expansion Became a Divide

1 In 1820, Congress admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, while barring slavery in much of the Louisiana Purchase north of 36°30′. This Missouri Compromise kept the Senate balanced, but it drew a line between sections with opposing demands. The Compromise of 1850 admitted California as a free state and imposed a stronger Fugitive Slave Act. Many Northerners resisted being required to help return people who had escaped slavery, while many white Southerners demanded enforcement. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act let settlers vote on slavery in lands previously closed to it, sparking violent conflict in Kansas.

2 Texas won independence from Mexico in 1836 amid conflicts over central control and Mexican limits on slavery. Many settlers had come from the United States. Many Texans wanted annexation, but some Northerners feared adding another slave state. Congress annexed Texas in 1845, and border disputes helped lead to the Mexican-American War in 1846. The 1848 treaty gave the United States vast western lands. During the war, the Wilmot Proviso proposed banning slavery in land gained from Mexico, but it failed. Its debate sharpened the divide: many Northerners opposed expanding slavery, while white Southern leaders defended access to the new territories.

3 After an 1832 treaty broke up Creek landholding in Alabama, fraud and land seizures helped fuel the Second Creek War in 1836. Federal removal opened land for cotton plantations worked by enslaved people. In 1857, the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision said Congress could not ban slavery in territories. Many Northerners protested; many white Southerners welcomed it. Disputes over slavery split the Whigs and helped build the Republican Party, which opposed slavery's expansion. Democrats split over slavery in 1860, and Lincoln won without carrying a Southern state. Alabama seceded in January 1861, seeking to protect slavery and its cotton economy.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act change the Missouri Compromise's approach to slavery, and what happened afterward?

2. How did the annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War turn expansion into a sectional dispute?

3. How did Creek land loss connect to Alabama's cotton economy and its later secession?

4. How did the Dred Scott decision and the debate over slavery's expansion help reshape parties before Lincoln's victory?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short newspaper editorial set before the 1860 election from the viewpoint of a Northern critic of slavery's expansion or a white Southern defender of it. Name two government actions from the passage, explain how each increased sectional distrust, and predict an effect on the election or the country's unity.

ANSWER KEY

Lines of Division

GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.11

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three government actions in the passage. Circle a sectional response to each one, then number each action and its response with matching numbers to show the connection. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act change the Missouri Compromise's approach to slavery, and what happened afterward?	**The Missouri Compromise barred slavery in much of the Louisiana Purchase north of 36°30′. The Kansas-Nebraska Act let settlers vote on slavery in lands previously closed to it, and violent conflict followed in Kansas.**
2	How did the annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War turn expansion into a sectional dispute?	**Some Northerners feared that annexing Texas would add a slave state. The war brought vast new lands, and debate over the failed Wilmot Proviso divided those who opposed slavery's expansion from white Southern leaders who defended access to the territories.**
3	How did Creek land loss connect to Alabama's cotton economy and its later secession?	**The breakup of Creek landholding, land seizures, and federal removal opened land for cotton plantations worked by enslaved people. Alabama later seceded seeking to protect slavery and its cotton economy.**
4	How did the Dred Scott decision and the debate over slavery's expansion help reshape parties before Lincoln's victory?	**The ruling drew Northern protests and white Southern support. Disputes over slavery split the Whigs, helped build the Republican Party, and split Democrats in 1860; Lincoln won without carrying a Southern state.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

From a Northern editor, 1860: The Kansas-Nebraska Act let settlers decide whether slavery could spread into lands once closed to it. Violence in Kansas showed that voting alone could not end this dispute. Then the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision said Congress could not ban slavery in the territories. White Southern leaders welcomed that ruling, but many Northerners saw their hopes for limiting slavery collapse. These opposing reactions have divided the parties. If voters cannot agree on expansion, the election may pull the Union further apart.

Accept other accurate connections between an action and the sectional responses described in the passage. For the editorial, look for a consistent viewpoint, two named actions with explained effects on distrust, and a prediction that makes sense before the 1860 election.