

Voices and Compromise

Read how debate, a free press, and compromise shaped sectional conflict.

8.21 "Citizenship. The student understands the importance of the expression of different points of view in a constitutional republic. The student is expected to: identify different points of view of political parties and interest groups on..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline phrases that state a group's or party members' viewpoint, circle words about speech or the press, and number the three major compromise laws in the order the passage introduces them.

Debating Expansion

- ① In a constitutional republic, citizens use speech and a free press to debate public problems and judge leaders. In the 1800s, newspapers printed speeches, editorials, and reports that often disagreed sharply. Abolitionists used meetings, petitions, and antislavery papers to argue that slavery should end. Slaveholders and their supporters defended slavery and sometimes tried to block antislavery mail or silence speakers. Free expression did not guarantee agreement, but it let competing views reach voters and helped citizens examine government decisions.
- ② As the nation expanded west, the question was whether slavery could spread into new states and territories. In 1820, Congress passed the Missouri Compromise. Missouri entered as a slave state, Maine entered as a free state, and slavery was barred in most of the Louisiana Purchase north of latitude 36°30'. Many northern antislavery groups supported limits on slavery's expansion. Many southern slaveholding interests wanted equal protection for slavery in new territory. The compromise temporarily balanced power, but it did not settle the moral and political conflict.
- ③ Debate grew after the Mexican-American War. The Compromise of 1850 admitted California as a free state, ended the slave trade in Washington, D.C., and created Utah and New Mexico territories, where settlers would decide about slavery. It also included a stricter Fugitive Slave Act. Northern Democrats and Whigs often opposed expansion of slavery, while southern Democrats and Whigs often defended slaveholders' rights in the territories. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act used popular sovereignty in two territories and repealed the Missouri Compromise limit. Rather than ending conflict, it led to violent struggle in Kansas.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did free speech and a free press matter to citizens in a constitutional republic, according to the passage?

2 Compare two viewpoints on slavery's expansion. What did northern antislavery groups support, and what did southern Democrats and Whigs often defend?

3 Summarize the Compromise of 1850 by naming two of its provisions.

4 How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act change the earlier Missouri Compromise policy, and what happened afterward?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence newspaper editorial set in 1854. State one viewpoint held by an abolitionist or slaveholder and a different viewpoint held by a Democrat or Whig, explain why a free press matters, and describe how the Kansas-Nebraska Act changed earlier policy.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline phrases that state a group's or party members' viewpoint, circle words about speech or the press, and number the three major compromise laws in the order the passage introduces them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did free speech and a free press matter to citizens in a constitutional republic, according to the passage?	They allowed competing views to reach voters and helped citizens examine government decisions.
2	Compare two viewpoints on slavery's expansion. What did northern antislavery groups support, and what did southern Democrats and Whigs often defend?	Northern antislavery groups supported limits on slavery's expansion. Southern Democrats and Whigs often defended slaveholders' rights in the territories.
3	Summarize the Compromise of 1850 by naming two of its provisions.	Accept any two: California entered as a free state; the slave trade ended in Washington, D.C.; Utah and New Mexico used popular sovereignty; the Fugitive Slave Act became stricter.
4	How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act change the earlier Missouri Compromise policy, and what happened afterward?	It repealed the Missouri Compromise limit on slavery and used popular sovereignty in Kansas and Nebraska. It led to violent struggle in Kansas.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

As an abolitionist, I oppose allowing slavery to spread into Kansas and Nebraska. A southern Democrat may support popular sovereignty because settlers, rather than Congress, would decide the slavery question. A free press matters because newspapers can print both arguments for citizens to examine. The Kansas-Nebraska Act organized the two territories and repealed the Missouri Compromise limit on slavery north of 36°30'. This change can increase conflict because people disagree deeply about slavery's expansion.

Accept accurate paraphrases of the passage's viewpoints, free-expression purpose, and compromise provisions. For the editorial, check for exactly five sentences that include all four requested elements and remain historically accurate.