

Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 5, WEBISODE 5

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



Segment Overview

All three were born poor, but all three became senators of the United States: John Calhoun, Henry Clay, and Daniel Webster. All three impacted the future of a very young country again threatened with war—a war between its own states and among its own citizens. The issues were slavery and states' rights, and these three senators from three different states held different opinions on how to resolve each of these problems.

John C. Calhoun, a senator and a vice-president from South Carolina, believed in the preservation of the Union, but he also felt that individual states had the right to make their own laws, even if those laws conflicted with the United States Constitution. As a Southerner by birth and belief, he supported slavery. He argued that slaves were not citizens; therefore, they were not protected by the Constitution. Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, a very prolific writer and orator, believed solidly in one united nation in which all states would be free and slavery would be abolished. Henry Clay of Kentucky, on the other hand, sought to find ways to reconcile the issues of free soil versus slave states in order to preserve the Union. While each of these men were statesmen and patriots, their views and actions had a major impact on issues that eventually would lead to Civil War.

Teacher Directions

1. Share some background information regarding the three senators with the students.

Throughout our history, Americans have been divided over issues of public interest. Our system of government permits open debate between and among senators and members of the House of Representatives. People often remain loyal to their home states and to their early upbringing. John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, and Henry Clay held opinions about slavery that were common in their home states. Calhoun was a Southerner who grew up in a slave state; Webster came from New England, an area ardently opposed to slavery, and Clay was from Kentucky, a state that was part slave and part free. Clay wanted to see a gradual elimination of slavery.

2. Help the students define and discuss the following terms.

debate — a formal discussion during which people argue for or against something about which they feel strongly



Let's Discuss

Let's Discuss, Cont.

argument — an exchange of ideas based on good reasoning and concerning issues that are controversial.

Note to the Teacher: Help students understand that a formal argument is different from an argument people may have with friends or family. However, even when arguing, they are still on two opposing sides of an issue.

issue — point at which two opinions collide; the topic that forces people to be for or against an idea

3. Ask the students.

- What are some good ways to resolve arguments? Stress the importance of a quiet exchange of reasons where each person is given the opportunity to present his or her views.

4. Explain that the United States Congress debated the issue of slavery for many years trying to find solutions that would please all the states. The three senators, Calhoun, Webster, and Clay, held different opinions that were common at the time.

5. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Words Before War*. Working in their teams, the students discuss what the quotations mean and how they apply to each senator's view of the slavery issue.

6. Use the following information and questions to help the students interpret and discuss the quotations.

- Both the North and South argued for liberty. How did Northerners interpret the word? (Freedom for all people according to the Constitution) How did Southerners interpret the word? (Freedom to make their own state laws, including those concerning slavery)
- What does Calhoun mean when he says that we are “not a Nation, but a Union?” If the definition of a confederacy is an alliance of people who think similarly, then what is a union? (Calhoun sees a union as a loose collection of states that choose to belong together. Webster sees a union as a closely bonded group committed to common causes, thus a nation.)
- What is the only way that Calhoun believes that the Union can be preserved? (Only by accepting slavery and states' rights)
- Read Clay's “North, East etc.” quote. To whom does Clay give his allegiance? (Clay was called “The Great Compromiser.” He believed that slavery would eventually disappear. Ask students if they agree.)
- Remind students about the meaning of the word contradiction (as in “Fatal Contradiction.” What do they see as a contradiction in the words “peaceable secession.” (Define secession as the withdrawal of states from the United States.) Was it possible for states to secede without going to war?

7. Conclude the discussion by reminding students that these men considered themselves patriots, and they were, indeed, all good men and good statesmen.



History Sleuth

Teacher Directions

1. If necessary introduce the three senators: John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, and Henry Clay. Students identify where each stood on the issue of slavery. Help students discover what each man accomplished or argued for in his many speeches and writings.

Note to the Teacher: The three senators and their stand on slavery are introduced in Let's Discuss.

2. Distribute the Student Sheet: *The Two Compromises and The Fugitive Slave Laws*.
3. Read each of the compromises and the fugitive slave laws, one at time to the students. Help the students understand what each compromises and law meant and its impact on Northerners, Southerners, and enslaved people.
4. Make sure the students understand the major points of the two compromises and the impact of each compromise on slavery, states' rights, and the preservation of the Union.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820: The issue focused on slavery in new territories; Missouri wanted to enter the Union as a slave state, upsetting the balance of slave and free states. Missouri entered as a slave state and Maine as a free state. Slavery was prohibited in new territories acquired through the Louisiana Purchase.

The Compromise of 1850: California wanted admitted to the Union as a free state, again throwing off the balance of free versus slave states. Southerners like Calhoun were aghast. In the Senate, Daniel Webster supported Henry Clay's compromise. California was admitted. Territories could decide to be slave or free, and a fugitive slave law would be enforced.

Teacher Directions

1. Help students understand the impact of the Fugitive Slave Laws on slaves, escaped slaves, and ordinary citizens.
2. The students read the fugitive slave law section of the Student Sheet: *The Two Compromises and The Fugitive Slave Laws*.
3. Distribute the Student Sheet: *Fugitive Slave Laws: My Response*. The students answer all questions before beginning the discussion.
4. Discuss the following with students.
 - Suppose that you are a slave living on a plantation. You hear about the new fugitive slave law of 1850. How will that news affect your decision to try to run away?



What do you
Think?

What Do You Think,
Continued.

- Suppose that you are a slave already running away on the Underground Railroad. How will this new law affect your decision to keep running toward the North?
 - Suppose that you are an escaped slave living a relatively nice life of freedom in the North. After the passage of the Compromise of 1850 what might you fear?
 - Suppose that you are a white person who is opposed to slavery, and you know someone who is an escaped slave. What does the Compromise of 1850 require you to do? Can you do that? What will you fear?
5. Be sure the students understand that although Henry Clay's Compromise of 1850 helped keep the Union intact, it was a temporary measure that created even more problems and more fears for whites and blacks alike.

Teacher Directions

1. Share the following information with the students.

Over 70,000 slaves escaped through the Underground Railroad. They could not have done it alone. They received that help from "conductors" and from people who created "safehouses", places where runaway slaves could elude slave chasers. For example, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, one safehouse contains a false floor. Escaping slaves could not stand up inside this claustrophobic space, yet some spent days there until they could move northward escaping the slave chasers and patrollers.

Because most slaves could neither read nor write, as they escaped from their Southern masters, they followed the Big Dipper, a constellation of stars that points toward the North Star. The North Star became their guiding light. They called the Big Dipper the drinking gourd. Many people, including Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Frederick Douglass helped slaves "follow the drinking gourd" to freedom.

2. Distribute the Student Sheet: *A Runaway Slave*. Ask students to respond to the questions individually and then share responses with a team or a partner.
3. Discuss the dangers of being and helping a runaway as a class. What traits would a person need to be or help a runaway?
4. Ask the American Automobile Association or other agencies for maps of the United States or use geography or history books, atlases, or Internet maps for the students. Each student imagines himself or herself as an enslaved person in Tifton, Georgia. If he or she wanted to escape to the north, what present-day routes would he or she take? Students compare the routes they took with the different routes of others in the class. Which route do they think is the best? Why?
5. Emphasize the roles of black and white abolitionists and the work of such people as Frederick Douglass. Stress the bravery and heroics of those



Americans who provided safehouses on the Underground Railroad. How did the runaways and those who helped them move us toward freedom?

6. Teams present two-minute skits about a runaway and a person or persons who helped along the way to freedom.

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Language Arts — Students write a series of carefully worded quotes or slogans regarding anything they have learned so far about the turbulent 1850s: slavery, abolition, slave laws, the compromises, the three senators and the like. The class votes on the “Most Quotable Quotes.” Post where all can be seen.

Language Arts — Imagine that you live in a northern city in the 1850s. The local barber is a fugitive slave. The mayor of your town wants to follow the law (The Compromise of 1850), and return the barber to his slaveholder. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, *The _____ Free Press* (insert name of your town), stating your arguments against returning this man to a life of slavery. Share letters with the class.

Art — Students use old magazines to create a collage of people talking! Pointing at things, chatting, arguing, speaking, discussing, gesturing, making faces. Students use people of all colors and nationalities, ages, and genders. Call it “A Celebration of Freedom of Speech.”

Science/Health — Students generate discussion about the realities of the lives of slaves. Today, when we become ill, we can go to a doctor or an emergency room. Students brainstorm to list health problems that slaves must have endured. (Toothaches, skin diseases, bites, foot problems, accidents, and so on.) Students research early medicine and herbal cures. Would enslaved people have received such care? Why or why not?



Connections



Words Before War

Interpret These Quotations

“Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.”

--Daniel Webster of Massachusetts

“I know no South, no North, no East, no West, to which I owe any allegiance.”

--Henry Clay of Kentucky

“We are not a Nation, but a Union, a confederacy of equal and sovereign states.”

--John Calhoun of South Carolina

“Peaceable Secession! [stated by Calhoun] Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that...Sir! There will be no secession!”

—Daniel Webster

“I have, Senators, believed from the first that...the subject of slavery would...end in disunion...the Union is in danger...How can the Union be preserved?”

—John Calhoun

THE TWO COMPROMISES AND THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAWS

\$100 REWARD.

Ran away from my farm, near Buena Vista P. O., Prince George's County, Maryland, on the first day of April, 1855, my servant **MATHEW TURNER**.

He is about five feet six or eight inches high; weighs from one hundred and sixty to one hundred and eighty pounds; he is very black, and has a remarkably thick upper lip and neck; looks as if his eyes are half closed; walks slow, and talks and laughs loud.

I will give One Hundred Dollars reward to whoever will secure him in jail, so that I get him again, no matter where taken.

MARCUS DU VAL.

BUENA VISTA P. O., MD.,
MAY 19, 1855.

When Missouri first asked to be admitted to the

Union, a delicate balance of 11 slave and 11 free states existed. Admitting Missouri as a slave state changed this balance of power. **The**

Missouri Compromise of 1820 admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, preserving the

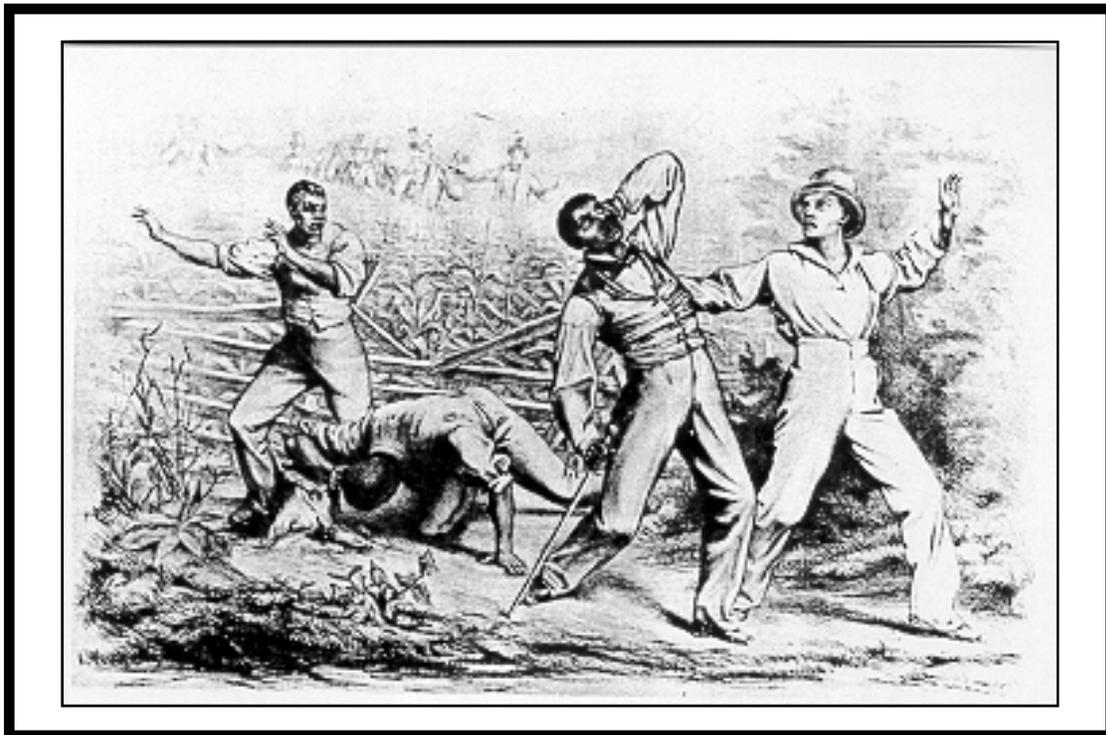
balance between North and South. The Compromise stated that slavery would not be allowed in the rest of the lands of the Louisiana Purchase.

The Compromise of 1850: This act was very controversial. It required all citizens to assist in the recovery of fugitive slaves. It also denied a fugitive's right to a trial. This law frightened fugitives living in the North, many of whom fled to Canada, and the Underground Railroad became more active. One fugitive in the North said that "It was the beginning of a reign of terror."

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793: “And it is further agreed that [no state] will protect...criminal fugitives, servants, or slaves...but apprehend and deliver to the state or states, to which such ..slaves, respectively belong.”

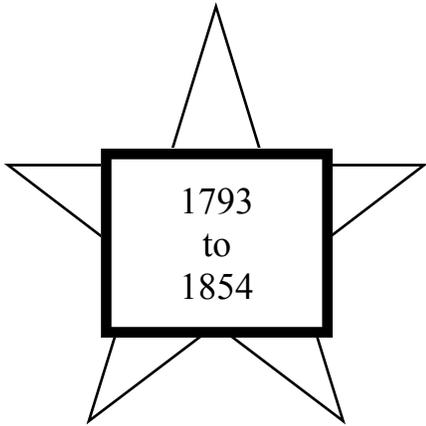
The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850: “And be it further enacted, That when a person held to service or labor....shall hereafter escape into another State or territory of the United States....that person so arrested does in fact owe service or labor to the person or persons claiming him or her...In no trial or hearing under this act shall the testimony of such alleged fugitive be admitted in evidence....and it shall be the duty of the officer making the arrest to retain such fugitive in his custody, and to remove him to the State whence he fled.”

Article 1, Section 2, United States Constitution: “Representatives...shall be apportioned among the several states.... Numbers...shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.”



New York: Hoff & Bloede, 1850

Above: Slaves pursued by white slave trackers.



Fugitive Slave Laws: My Response

1. Read Article 1, Sect. 2 of the Constitution. It refers to “free persons” and those who are indentured (those who worked without pay for a period of time). Only the people listed above counted in terms of the census that established the number of Representatives a state could send to Congress. What two groups are excluded? Slaves are not excluded but counted as 3/5 of others.
----- and -----.

2. Read the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793: Criminal fugitives, runaway servants, and ----- had to be returned to the states from which they escaped.

3. Read the Slave Act of 1850, and fill in the blanks: “...that person so arrested does in fact owe service or labor to the ----- him or her.” What does the word “claiming” refer to?

4. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 permitted the return of fugitive slaves. What else did it do?

5. Why were fugitive slaves living in the North so frightened when the Compromise of 1850 was passed? (What were all United States citizens legally required to do if they knew about a fugitive slave.)

6. Explain why slaves were not permitted the right to a trial.

7. If you lived in the North and your neighbor was a former slave who had run away from the South, what would you have done to help?



A Runaway Slave

What name will you give him?

Where is he going?

Where will he be safe?

Describe his escape to freedom.