

## LESSON 4 SUMMARY

# The Sectional Crisis

SS.912.A.2.1, SS.912.A.4.1

## Manifest Destiny

After the Louisiana Purchase, thousands of people began to push westward to form their own settlements. More than 250,000 Americans braved obstacles on overland trails between the late 1830s and early 1860s. Most believed in Manifest Destiny, the idea that God had bestowed the entire continent to the Americans. A growing number of Americans settled the Mexican region of Texas. Eventually the settlers wished to separate and create their own government, so they fought for their independence from Mexico. The Americans finally defeated Mexico's army at the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836. Texas was annexed to the United States in 1845. At around the same time, Great Britain and the United States made an agreement in which the United States received land that later became the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

## War With Mexico

Mexico was outraged over the U.S. annexation of Texas. In November 1845, President Polk tried to buy California, but Mexico's president refused. In 1846, Polk ordered troops to cross into territory claimed by both the United States and Mexico. When Mexican troops attacked, Congress declared war. The war lasted until 1848, after which Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty gave the United States more than 500,000 square miles of land, which now includes the states of California, Nevada, and Utah, as well as parts of New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming. Mexico also accepted the Rio Grande River as the southern border of Texas.

### The War with Mexico, 1846–1848



### 1. PREDICTING CONSEQUENCES

How might Manifest Destiny later affect the relations of the United States with Native Americans?

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### ANALYZING VISUALS

**2. EVALUATING** What role did the American navy play in the War with Mexico?

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LESSON 4 SUMMARY, *continued*

## Slavery and Westward Expansion

All of the new territories that the War with Mexico had added to the United States brought up the difficult issue of the expansion of slavery yet again. Some members of Congress suggested that citizens of each new territory decide for themselves if they wanted to permit slavery. This idea came to be called popular sovereignty.

In December 1849, California applied for statehood as a free state. At the time, there were 15 free states and 15 slave states. If California were admitted as a free state, then slaveholding states would be in the minority. In early 1850, Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky proposed a compromise measure:

### 3. ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

What was Senator Henry Clay's proposed solution to the slavery question created by California's application for statehood?

*"California, with suitable boundaries, ought, upon her application, to be admitted as one of the States of this Union, without the imposition by Congress of any restriction in respect to the exclusion or introduction of slavery within those boundaries."*

—from a speech to Congress, January 29, 1850

Clay also proposed that the rest of the newly acquired land from Mexico be organized without restrictions on slavery. He called on Congress to not interfere with the slave trade and to pass a stronger law to help Southerners recover enslaved African Americans who had fled to the North. This law was the Fugitive Slave Act. By September, Congress had passed all parts of the Compromise of 1850.

African Americans had been trying to escape from the South for decades. Thousands used the Underground Railroad, an informal network of secret routes and safe houses and pathways. "Conductors" transported runaways in secret. Harriet Tubman, herself a runaway, was one of the most famous conductors. The new Fugitive Slave Act made the work of the Underground Railroad even more dangerous than it had been.

## The Crisis Over Kansas

The expansion of slavery also carried over to territories formed from within the Louisiana Purchase. In 1854, Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act that divided the Nebraska Territory into two territories. Nebraska would be to the north and Kansas to the south. Under the Missouri Compromise, Nebraska was intended to be free territory, and Kansas was designated as legal for slavery. However, the Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the ban upon slavery that had been agreed upon with the Missouri Compromise decades before. The new compromise within the Kansas-Nebraska Act established that when new territories applied for statehood, the residents would vote on whether or not to allow slavery, using the idea of popular sovereignty.

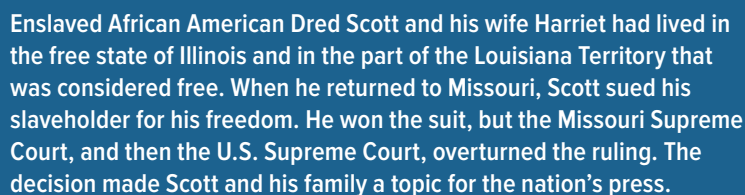
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## Political and Sectional Divisions

In 1856, the Supreme Court ruled in the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* decision that an enslaved person who had lived in a free territory was not entitled to be a free person. The decision added fuel to the controversy over slavery and divided the nation more than ever.

#### 4. IDENTIFYING POINTS OF VIEW

What on this front page indicates the point of view of the editors of the newspaper? Explain.



## LESSON 4 SUMMARY, *continued*

### 5. EVALUATING

What event do you think most directly led to secession and the forming of the Confederacy? Why do you think so?

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## The Union Dissolves

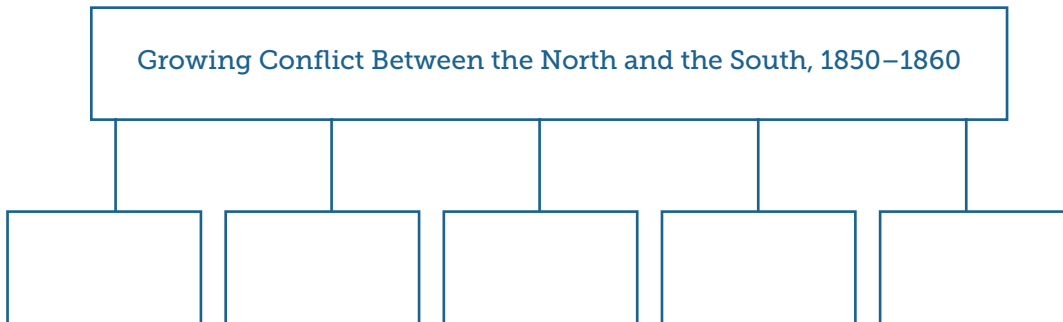
Republican Abraham Lincoln won the presidential election in 1860. Lincoln believed that slavery was morally wrong and opposed its spread into the Western territories. Many Southerners viewed Lincoln's election as a threat to their society, culture, and economy. They saw no choice but to secede.


South Carolina was the first state to secede in response to Lincoln's election. By February 1, 1861, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had also voted for secession. These southern states declared themselves to be the Confederate States of America, or the Confederacy. Former U.S. senator Jefferson Davis was selected as Confederate president. Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia seceded to join the Confederacy in April 1861.



## REVIEW LESSON 4

- Use the chart below to list the events that reflected the growing conflict between the North and the South between 1850 and 1860.



-  **HYPOTHESIZING** Use the information from your chart to write an essay that answers this question: At which point do you think civil war might have been averted? Explain your answer.