

Study Guide

Chapter 15, Section 1



For use with textbook pages 436–439

SLAVERY AND THE WEST

KEY TERMS

sectionalism	Exaggerated loyalty to a particular region of the country (page 437)
fugitive	Someone who runs away from the law (page 438)
secede	To separate or leave the Union (page 438)
abstain	To not cast a vote (page 439)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Have you ever had to give up something to get something you wanted more? How did you decide which item was more important? What were some times when you would not compromise?

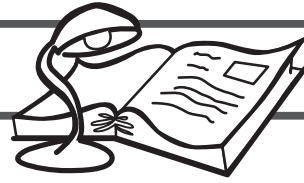
This section focuses on how the Northern states and the Southern states debated and compromised over the issue of slavery in new states.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the proposals presented to Congress in the mid-1800s concerning slavery.

Successful Proposals to Congress	Unsuccessful Proposals to Congress

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READ TO LEARN

- **The Missouri Compromise** (pages 436–437)

When Missouri asked to join the United States in 1817, it caused a debate around the country. Many settlers to Missouri had brought their enslaved workers with them. They applied to the United States as a slave state. Up to this point, the country had an even number of slave states and free states. To allow Missouri into the United States would upset that balance in the Senate.

The North and the South were also divided over the land in the West. Many Northerners wanted to limit or eliminate slavery completely. Even the Southerners that were against slavery were opposed to the interference from the North. This division between the states created **sectionalism**. Sectionalism occurs when people are overly loyal to their section of the country.

The Senate suggested a compromise. The idea was to admit Missouri into the country as a slave state. Maine would also be added to the country, but as a free state. This compromise also restricted slavery in any land, except Missouri, north of the 36°30'N latitude that was gained in the Louisiana Purchase. Speaker of the House Henry Clay led efforts in the House to pass this agreement in 1820, called the Missouri Compromise.

1. Why was there controversy in admitting Missouri into the United States?

- **New Western Lands** (pages 437–438)

The controversy between the Southern states and the Northern states arose again in the 1840s. Slavery was already established in Texas, and the Southern states strongly supported its admission to the country. They also wanted to take over New Mexico and California, which were still part of Mexico. David Wilmot of Pennsylvania introduced the Wilmot Proviso to Congress. The Wilmot Proviso declared that slavery should not be allowed in any land obtained from Mexico. An opposing proposal was created by John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. It said that Congress had no right to eliminate or limit slavery in a territory. Neither proposal passed in Congress.

In the election of 1848, a new political party was formed. The Whigs chose Zachary Taylor, a Southerner, for their candidate. The Democrats chose Senator Lewis Cass from Michigan. Neither candidate took a strong stance on slavery. Members from both parties that were against slavery joined together to create a new political party, the Free-Soil Party. The Free-Soil Party agreed with the Wilmot Proviso and selected Martin Van Buren as their candidate. Zachary Taylor won the election, but the Free-Soil Party gained several seats in Congress.

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President Zachary Taylor believed that as New Mexico and California became states, the citizens could decide whether to allow slavery or not. Other issues came up in Congress. Many people wanted to do away with slavery in Washington D.C. Southerners wanted a law that required states to send **fugitive**, or runaway, enslaved African Americans back to their slaveholders. Southerners were most concerned that California, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah would be admitted to the country as free states. This would give the South no power in Congress. The people of the South started discussing **seceding**, or leaving, the United States.

2. What stance did each candidate of the election of 1848 take on slavery?

- **A New Compromise** (pages 438–439)

In 1850 Henry Clay wrote a plan to settle the issues in Congress. His plan contained several parts.

1. California would be admitted as a free state.
2. The New Mexico territory would have no slavery restrictions.
3. The New Mexico-Texas border would favor New Mexico.
4. Slave trade, not slavery, would be eliminated in Washington D.C.
5. Stronger fugitive slave laws would be created.

Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina was against Clay's plan. He thought that the limitations on slavery would destroy the Union. Southern states would need to leave. Senator Daniel Webster of Massachusetts agreed with Clay. He felt the compromise was the only way to save the Union.

There was much disagreement about Clay's compromise. People agreed with some parts, but opposed other parts. Stephen A. Douglas, from Illinois, solved the problem by dividing Clay's plan. Each section would be voted on separately. President Fillmore, who became president after Zachary Taylor's death, convinced members of the Whig party not to cast a vote, to **abstain**, on the issues they opposed. The multi-part plan finally passed and became known as the Compromise of 1850.

3. Why was Henry Clay's plan divided into five separate bills?
