

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Unearthing the Crisis of the 1850s: A 10th Grade Civil War Quest

Sophomores will synthesize primary source perspectives from the Lecompton Constitution through the Crittenden Compromise to evaluate the breakdown of national discourse.

1. Which specific provision of the Compromise of 1850 proved most polarizing, as it required citizens in free states to assist in the recovery of freedom-seekers, effectively federalizing the protection of property in humans?

Answer: B) The Fugitive Slave Act

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 stripped African Americans of the right to a jury trial and compelled Northern citizens to aid in their capture, turning the conflict into a daily reality for Northerners.

2. The 1860 Constitutional Union Party, led by John Bell, campaigned primarily on a platform that explicitly endorsed the expansion of slavery into all Western territories.

Answer: B) False

The Constitutional Union Party sought to avoid the issue of slavery altogether, focusing instead on preserving the Union and adhering to the Constitution without taking a sectional stance.

3. During the 1850s, the concept of _____, championed by Stephen Douglas, suggested that local residents should decide the legal status of slavery within their territory.

Answer: C) Popular Sovereignty

Popular sovereignty was the democratic principle that allowed settlers of a territory to vote on whether to permit slavery, a policy that directly led to the violence in 'Bleeding Kansas'.

4. The 1862 Homestead Act is often analyzed as a wartime measure. How did this legislation serve Union interests during the Civil War?

Answer: B) It incentivized Western settlement with free land, promoting a vision of 'free labor' territories

Passed by a Republican-controlled Congress after Southern states seceded, the Homestead Act promoted the 'free soil' ideology by providing public land to small farmers.

5. Which post-war labor system emerged as a compromise between former planters' desire for controlled labor and freedpeople's desire for independence, yet often led to cycles of debt?

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Answer: D) Sharecropping

Sharecropping allowed freedpeople to farm land in exchange for a portion of the crop, but high interest rates and falling cotton prices often created a system of 'debt peonage'.

6. The _____ Amendment, ratified in 1870, prohibited the denial of suffrage based on 'race, color, or previous condition of servitude' but notably omitted gender as a protected category.

Answer: C) Fifteenth

The 15th Amendment expanded the electorate but sparked significant debate within the women's suffrage movement, as leaders like Elizabeth Cady Stanton opposed it for excluding women.

7. The 'Redeemers' were a political coalition in the South during the 1870s that sought to protect the civil rights advancements of the Radical Republicans.

Answer: B) False

The Redeemers were white Southern Democrats who aimed to oust Republican governments and restore the pre-war social and political hierarchy through 'Home Rule'.

8. Assess the impact of the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862. What was its primary contribution to American society during and after the war?

Answer: B) It provided federal land to states to finance agricultural and mechanical colleges

The Morrill Act revolutionized higher education by making technical and agricultural training accessible, fueling the nation's industrial and agricultural growth.

9. General William T. Sherman's Special Field Orders, No. 15, is famous for suggesting the policy of _____, which briefly distributed land to freed families along the coast.

Answer: B) Forty Acres and a Mule

Special Field Orders, No. 15, set aside land for freedpeople, creating the enduring hope for land redistribution that was later revoked by President Andrew Johnson.

10. What was the primary constitutional justification used by Radical Republicans in Congress to oversee Military Reconstruction in the South?

Answer: A) The 'state suicide' theory, suggesting Southern states had forfeited their rights

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Radical Republicans argued that by seceding, Southern states had committed 'political suicide' and reverted to the status of territories, thus placing them under the jurisdiction of Congress.