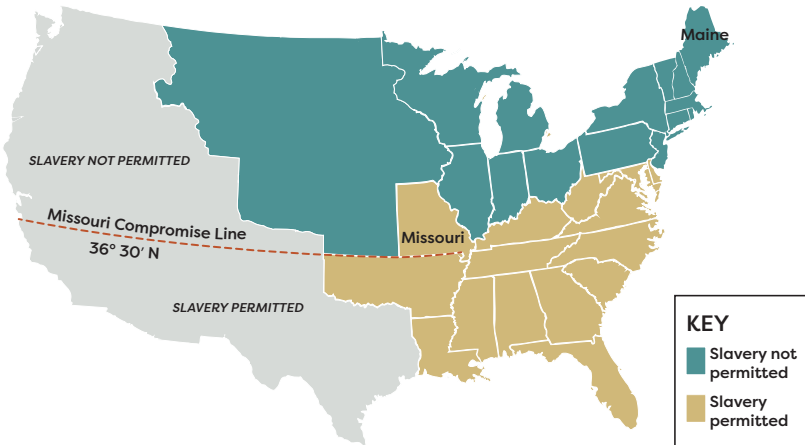


Causes of the Civil War: Analyzing Events

The Civil War began in 1861, but tensions between the North and South started much earlier. Several key events contributed to growing tensions and hostilities leading up to the Civil War. Answer the following questions about some of those events. **Sample answers**

1. How did the 1820 Missouri Compromise increase tensions between the North and the South?



A map showing the terms of the Missouri Compromise

The Missouri Compromise provided a plan for balancing the number of free and slave states. Questions, however, remained for both sides. Abolitionists in the North did not want any new slave states admitted. Some Southerners worried that Congress would not keep the number of free and slave states equal.

2. How did the Compromise of 1850 increase tensions between the North and the South?



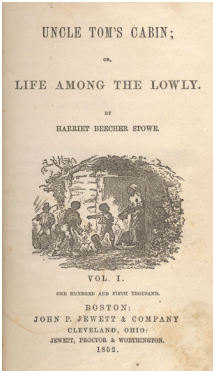
A Fugitive Slave Law sign offering a reward for returning an enslaved woman in 1851

The Missouri Compromise divided the California territory in half. So, when California asked to be admitted as a free state, Congress needed a new political compromise. The Compromise of 1850 allowed California to enter the union as a free state. To gain southern support, Congress decided to include a strict Fugitive Slave Law. The law punished anyone who helped enslaved people escape and forced citizens anywhere in the country to return escaped slaves. Many Northerners resented the Fugitive Slave Law and tensions over slavery increased.

Causes of the Civil War: Analyzing Events

Keep going! Answer the questions below. **Sample answers**

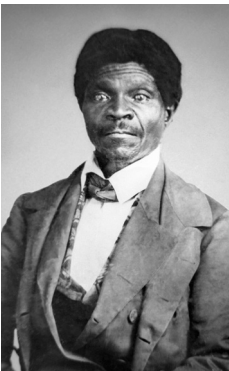
4. How did the popularity of Uncle Tom's Cabin, published in 1852, impact public opinion on the issue of slavery?



The novel sold 300,000 copies the first year of its publication.

The popularity of Uncle Tom's Cabin pushed many people to finally take a stand on the controversial issue of slavery. Many Northerners were inspired to care about the moral issues raised in the book. Many Southerners were outraged that the book depicted plantation life so negatively.

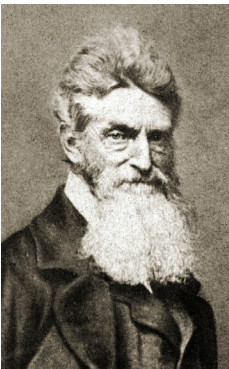
4. How did the 1857 Dred Scott Decision increase tensions between the North and the South?



Dred Scott sued for his freedom in 1857 and lost.

The Dred Scott decision threatened to undo the political compromises Congress had made in 1820 and 1850. The Supreme Court ruled that an enslaved person was considered "property," so they could be forced to remain enslaved even if taken to free states or new territories. Many Southerners were encouraged by this unexpected legal victory. Many Northerners were infuriated by the decision.

5. How did John Brown's 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry increase tensions between the North and South?



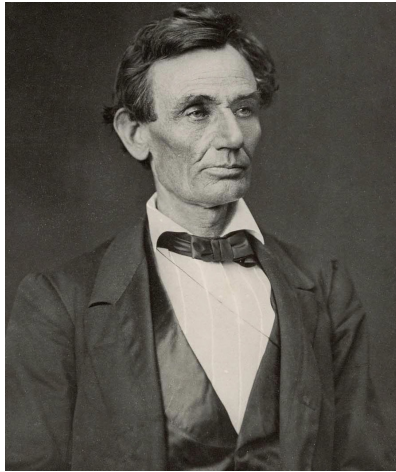
John Brown led violent uprisings against slavery.

Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry attempted to ignite a violent revolt against slavery. It was not successful. During the raid, Brown and his supporters held 60 people hostage. Brown was arrested and eventually hanged for his actions. Brown's violent tactics were questioned, but he became a hero to many in the North. The raid terrified many Southern slaveholders, who feared Northerners might plan additional slave uprisings across the South.

Causes of the Civil War: Analyzing Events

Keep going! Answer the questions below. **Sample answers**

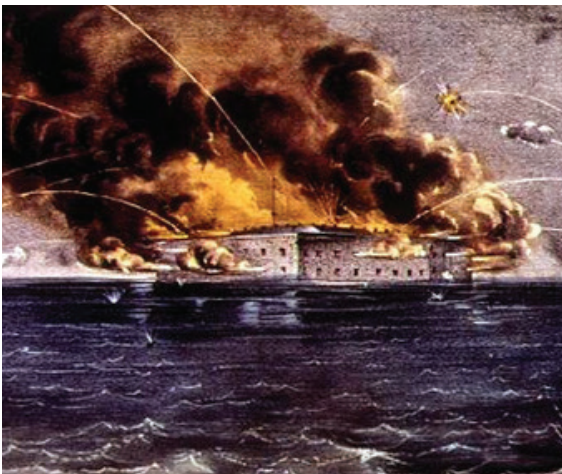
6. What immediate effect did Abraham Lincoln's 1860 presidential election have on the South?



Lincoln won the 1860 election without support in the South.

For many Southern states, the election of Abraham Lincoln was a turning point. After the election, seven Southern states left the Union. These states declared themselves a separate country, the Confederate States of America. The new Confederate government demanded that all Northern military forces withdraw from Southern soil. President Lincoln refused.

7. Why did the 1861 attack on Fort Sumter make it impossible for the North to avoid war against the South?



A print illustrating the attack on Fort Sumter in 1861 that started the war

When Confederate soldiers attacked Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, there was no turning back. The Union was forced to defend its own military fort in now-hostile territory. The attack was an act of war. The South was able to capture Fort Sumter. It was the first official battle of the Civil War. The North had lost a battle and an important military fortress.

Bonus question: Write a newspaper article dated April 13, 1861, with the title "Tensions Kept Building: Now We Are at War." The article should mention at least five of the events highlighted in the questions above.