

Causes of the Civil War

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Causes of the Civil War

Through viewing relationships and systems
Written By Greg Reid

Grade Level: 5th

Objectives: The learners will evaluate the success or failure of strategies that people use to resolve conflict.

The learners will be able to graphically describe the tension in the U.S. and the various causes of the Civil War.

Lessons at a Glance: The purpose of the following lessons is to supply the students with an understanding of why the Civil War took place, and that the Civil War was not a whimsical war, but a conflict that began brewing during the foundation of this country. Hence, due to poor conflict resolution, tension between the economically and politically diverse North and South grew. Events, such as the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott Decision, and the actions of John Brown serve as a microcosm through which to view North-South conflict and attempts at remediation.

It is recommended that the students have a background in the economic differences between the South and the North prior to beginning these lessons.

Time Allotment: 5 one hour lessons

Materials Needed for lessons:

- Student reading materials on the following topics:
 - Missouri Compromise including Louisiana Purchase
 - Compromise of 1850
 - Kansas-Nebraska Act
 - Dred Scott Supreme Court Decision
 - John Brown
- Other materials needed are listed with each lesson

- Permission is granted to copy this material for non-profit purposes only.*
- Preparation: Recommend brief research of political tension in the U.S. from 1787 to 1860's. America, a Narrative History by George Brown Tindall and David Shi is an excellent teacher resource to help review this time period.
- Student Background Information: Hakim, Joy, War, Terrible War. Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Closure: The students will be able to help the teacher complete a stock flow diagram that illustrates the gradual increase in tension in the U.S. and the compromises offered prior to the Civil War.
- In sub-lessons, individual closures will be offered for teacher use. These are only suggested.
- Assessment: The student will be able to individually complete a BOTG that accurately depicts Tension vs. Time (1820's-1861).
- Student Resources: The World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia (TM)
World Book, Inc., 525 W. Monroe, Chicago, IL.
1995
- Atlas Of United States History: New Revised and Expansion Edition. Hammon Inc., Maplewood, NJ, 1989.
- Extensions: These lessons could precede the STELLA simulation entitled Pre-Civil War Tension Sim .

Lesson #1

Missouri Compromise

Time: One hour

Objective: The learner will be able to understand the relationships between slaves, land, and political power in the U.S. Senate.

The learner will recognize that through the Missouri Compromise slavery (in 1820) was forbidden above 36 degrees 30 minutes north latitude except in the state of Missouri.

Materials: Article about the Missouri Compromise
Map of the Louisiana Purchase (overhead)
Map of Missouri (overhead)
Map of U.S. including Missouri (1820's), one for each student
Overhead projector
Time Line, one for each student

Procedure: **Unit Set-** Ask students to think about the last time they were in a conflict (might want to define conflict to give common ground). Was it a physical or verbal conflict? What was the result of the conflict? What led up to this conflict? Were you successful in ending this conflict?

Call on a few students to share their experiences. Have them go into detail about conflict and resolution (successful or not successful, violent or peaceful). Then tell them that for the next few days they will be looking at a few conflicts in the U.S. prior to the Civil War. Tell them that it is their job (all the time) to judge the effectiveness of the resolutions.

Lesson Set- Ask the students about the process in which free time activities are picked (or any other event in which students vote).

How do we decide what we will do during free time? (Class offers 5 suggestions and then class votes).

What activity do we end up doing? (the one with the

highest amount of votes)

How does peer pressure of your friends persuade your vote? Why? (I vote on what my friends vote for, more of a chance of getting that activity).

Would {Could} you say that the biggest group of friends probably will have the most power in deciding what we will do during free time? {Why?} (Yes, because the more of them the more votes they have).

Body- Tell the students that this is very similar to how the government runs. There is a group of people called senators and they are elected by their states as representatives. There are only two senators per state (every state has an equal number of senators). Their job is to vote on laws the way the people in their state feel about those laws. The more senators that vote the same way on a law have a better chance of putting the law into effect.

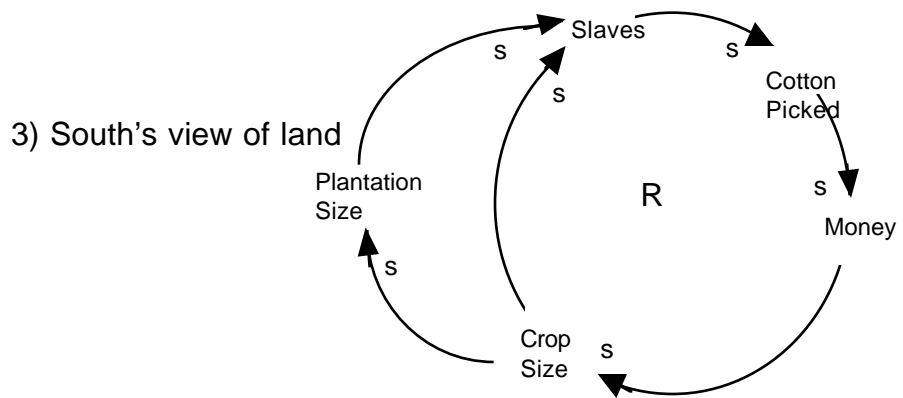
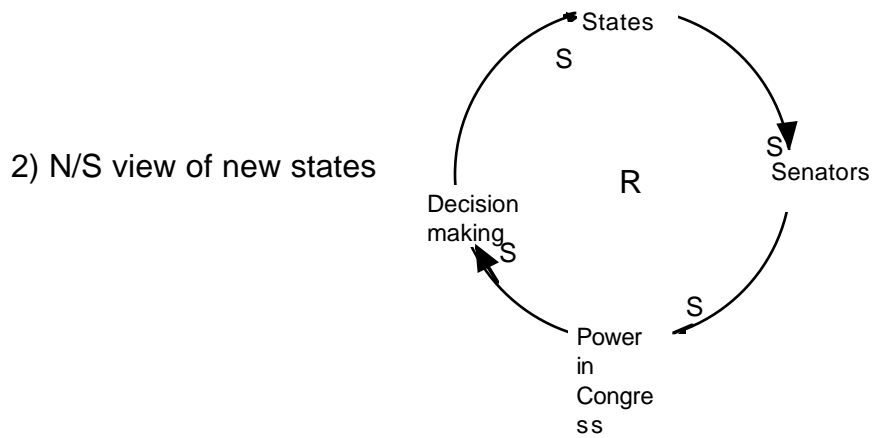
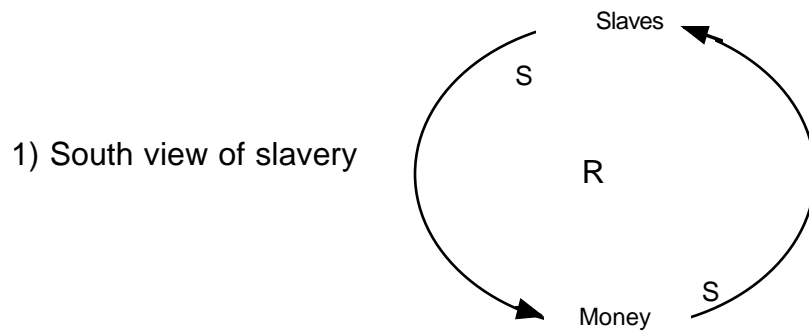
Back in the 1800's it was a little more like our classroom. In the Senate, the place where senators meet, it seemed to be the northern senators versus the southern senators. Why do you think it was North versus South? What do you know about these regions of the U.S. that might make them different from each other? Remember, a senator votes according to how the people from their state want them to vote. It is important to bring up the issue of slavery versus non-slavery stance based on economics.

Up until about the 1820's it was even in the Senate. Both the North and the South had 22 senators. However, that changes with the Louisiana Purchase. Does anybody remember what the Louisiana Purchase was? Show overhead of territory.

Pass out the article about the Missouri Compromise. Have students read article. Ask them to pay close attention to the references to the Louisiana Purchase.

When a majority is done ask: Why is the Louisiana Purchase mentioned? What area might become a state and why are senators so bothered by this state entering the Union. Show the state of Missouri in comparison to the Louisiana Purchase (use overhead). Discuss the meaning of 36 degrees 30 minutes north.

It is important at this time to establish the relationships of money and power and that of slaves and money. Use questioning strategies to prompt students to help you construct the following casual loops: how would more slaves lead to more money? How would more money lead to more slaves? (If you need help with causal loop diagrams, please contact your mentor)



Ask students to identify the conflict between the North and the South. (The North and South are in a power struggle in order to control the Senate and to control the laws so that their individual lifestyles, based on economic systems, will be supported.)

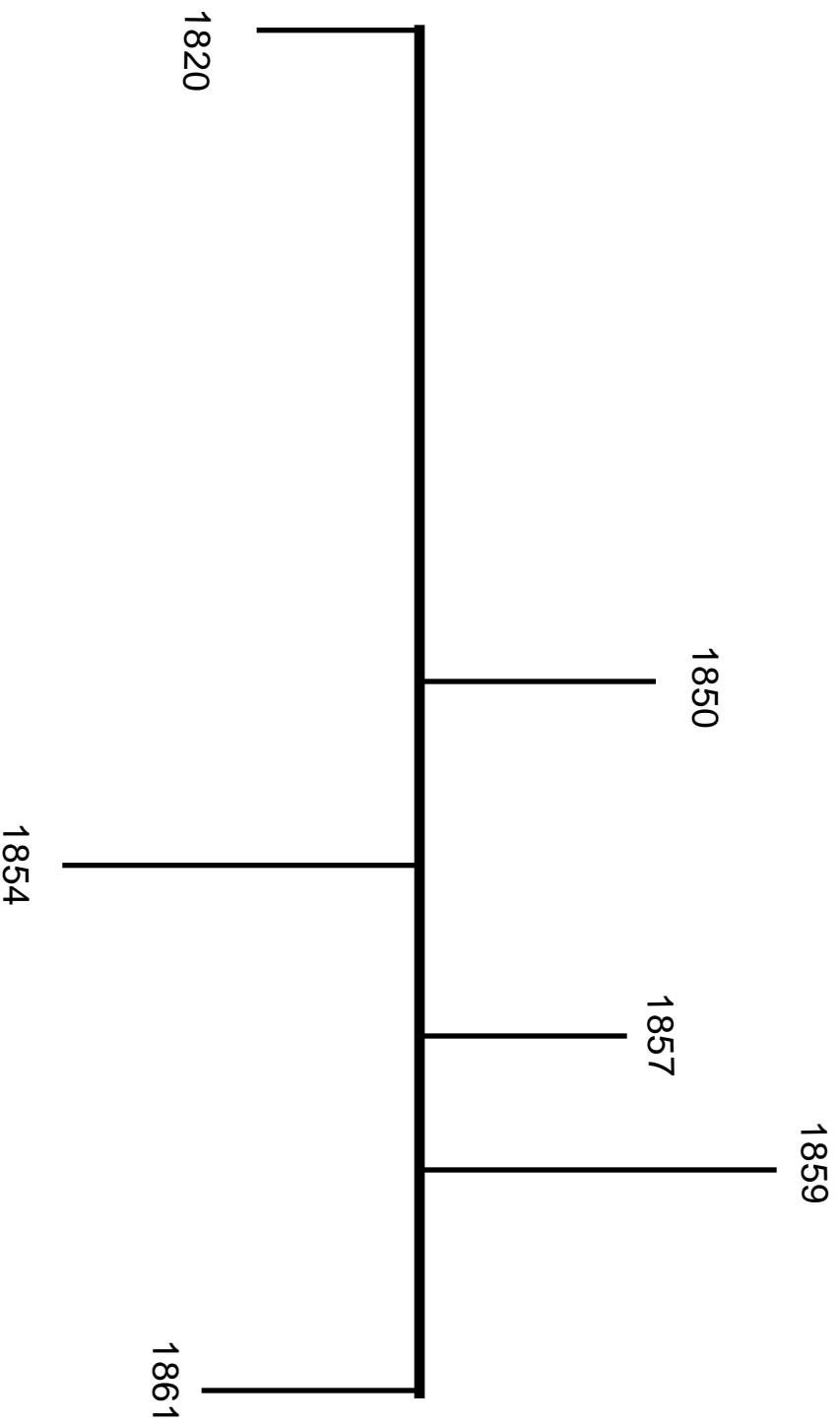
Ask students if the conflict was being resolved. Why or Why not? (Temporarily, through compromising)

Closure- Pass out maps of the Louisiana Purchase with Missouri as a state. Ask the students to color the 36 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. To the side, write down why this line is important.

Also, pass out a time line and have students fill in Missouri Compromise 1820 for the first event. End by summarizing that the conflict over new land was due to a difference in livelihood for North and South and how, under the Missouri Compromise, Missouri and Maine became states and that no slavery was allowed above 36 30". Under the label they just wrote, have students evaluate the effectiveness of this compromise. Ask them if they can foresee any "unintended consequences" or long term effects. Share answers and discuss.

Time Line

Name



Lesson #2

The Compromise of 1850

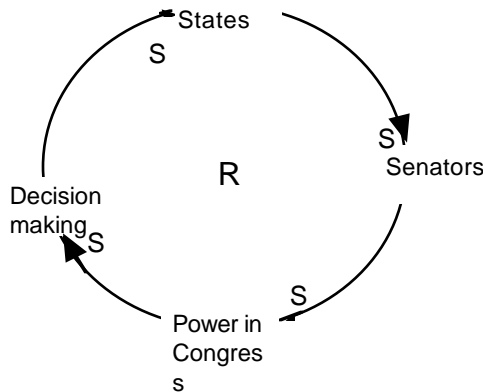
Objectives: The learners will identify that the Compromise of 1850 was a solution to conflict between North and South that granted peace for a short time.

The learner will identify that the conflict remained over land and power in the U.S. during the 1850's.

Materials: Article about the Compromise of 1850
Map of territories involved in Compromise of 1850 (overhead).
Overhead projector

Procedure: **Set-** Ask students to recall the activities of the last lesson. Through questions, illustrate that the North and South are economically different, both areas are pursuing territories for statehood, and that new states lead to more power in Congress and more decision making power.

Reintroduce the following casual loop having students help fill in the areas:



Body- Discuss the term “compromise” with students. Pass out article about the Compromise of 1850. Inform the students that this article is about new lands (California, Utah Territory, and New Mexico Territory) that were acquired after a war between the U.S. and Mexico in the late 1840's. Then ask them who might be interested in acquiring these lands as states and why (North and South, power in Congress).

Have students read the article, but before hand it maybe necessary to introduce the following vocabulary:

acts-	laws or ordinances
strife-	struggle
territory-	land that is not a state
fugitive-	runaway

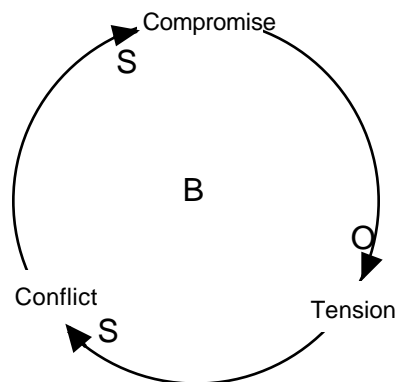
Have students read the article, when they finish tell them to underline the parts that look like a resolution to the struggle between North and South to get land.

When they are finished reading, use an overhead map to illustrate the territories involved. Ask for student volunteers to summarize this article. Make sure to hit the key points of California as a state, Utah and New Mexico as territories that decide whether they are a slave state or a free state, and the fugitive slave law.

Ask students about the conflict occurring in this article and in the article from the last lesson (the conflict is over land, which leads to power in Congress and money-plantation/industry). On the board, write "Conflict over land". Prompt students to discuss this phrase in regards to feelings between the North and South (it increases tensions because they are both going for the same land, but only one can have it.) Write "Tension" on the board and connect it with "Conflict over land" via an arrow.

Ask students what was used to try to ease this tension (compromise). Write "Compromise to reduce Tension" on the board and connect it to "Tension" via an arrow. Ask the students what types of compromises have the North and South made (responses should include California as a state, Utah and New Mexico Territories decide if they are free states or slave states, no slaves above 36 degrees 30 minutes north latitude, etc.).

Did this solve the real issue? What was the real issue? Connect "Compromise" to "Conflict" and ask the students "was the real problem being solved or did resolutions just solve the problem temporarily?" See casual loop below: (label- short term)



Closure- Have students take out their time lines. Ask them to label this important compromise in the appropriate area on the time line. Then ask them to write down, underneath it, one compromise that was made in this deal, and to write yes or no to the following question: Was the Compromise of 1850 solving the problem between the North and the South?" Ask them if they see any "unintended consequences" of the compromise.

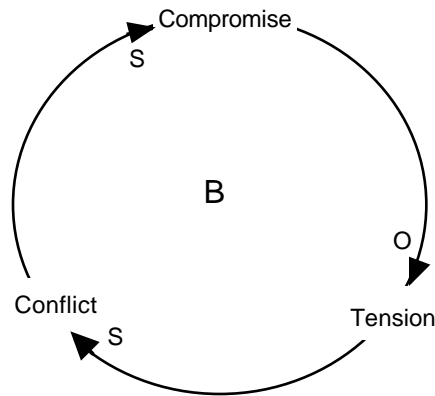
Lesson #3

The Kansas-Nebraska Act

Objectives: The learner will identify that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 was a resolution that failed in the conflict between the North and the South over land.

Materials: Article about the Kansas-Nebraska Act
Overhead of Kansas-Nebraska Territories (1854)
Maps of Missouri from Lesson #1
Overhead projector

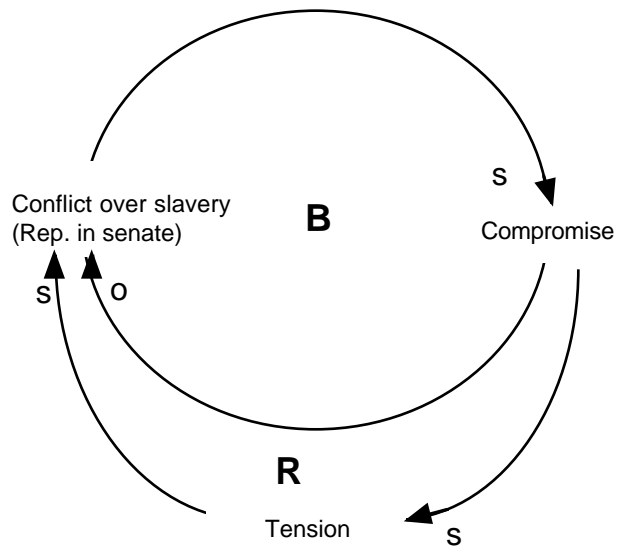
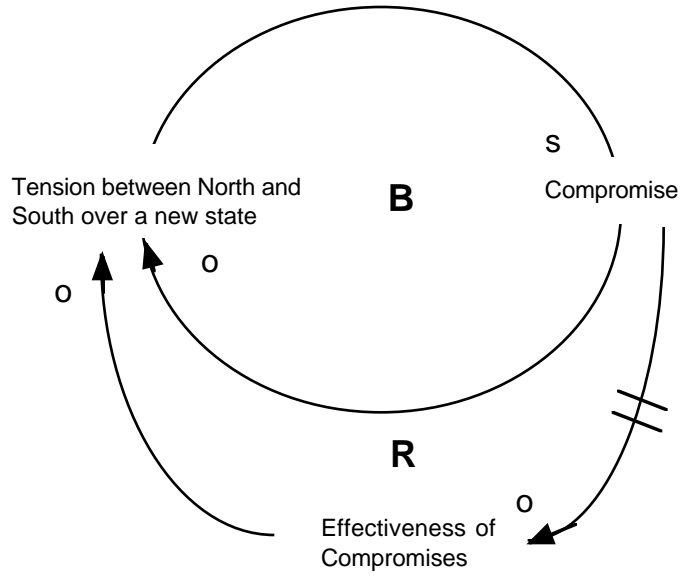
Procedure: **Set-** Write the casual loop on the board from last lesson:



Review with the students how the casual loop works. Then, tell the students that today they will be reviewing a new conflict between the North and the South (might be important to review the casual loops that show why they both want land and why slavery is important to the South).

Tell students that today they will read about new lands that both the South and the North desire. Draw the following Fixes that Fail Archetype to show how the compromising strategies between the North and the South were not working. Have students give input. In addition, discuss each piece of the casual loop.

1) Fixes that Fail- Long term



Body- Before passing out the article, pass out the map that illustrates the Kansas and Nebraska Territories. Inform them that in 1854 a Northern Senator wanted to connect a railroad from Chicago (his home town) to San Francisco. Ask the students to mentally draw a straight line (as best as possible) between Chicago and San Francisco. Ask them, through which territory does your imaginary line pass (Kansas)?

Pass out the article and have students read the information.

When done reading, call on students to summarize the new conflict due to the breaking of an old compromise (Missouri Compromise was no longer valid and neither was the 36 degrees 30 minutes north). Have students take out their maps from lesson #1 and tell them to x-out that line of latitude that separated Slave States from Free States.

Ask students to look at the casual loops on the board. Discuss whether or not these loops accurately describes the situation in America during the 1850's with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

What do you think will happen next? Ask student to review the problem and the solutions offered. Were the solutions working? Was the real problem being solved? Was tension still mounting and was there anything to relieve just a little bit of that tension?

Closure- Have students take out their time lines and label the Kansas-Nebraska Act on the appropriate date. Then ask them to write down under this heading the significance of this act. Also, have them answer the following question: Was compromising working well in the U.S. and was tension high or low? What was the trend of tension thus far?

Lesson #4

The Dred Scott Decision And John Brown

Objectives: The learner will evaluate the escalation of tension in the U.S. after the actions involving Dred Scott and John Brown.

Materials: Article about Dred Scott Decision
Article about John Brown

Procedure: **Set-** Read this, or a similar scenario, to the students: Sitting down, watching the TV, a friend joins you. You both want to watch different channels and you both have a remote control. Obviously there is a lot of channel changing conflict between the two of you. You put on what you want, your friend puts on what he/she desires, you change back the channel, your friend changes the channel back, etc. You both are in a conflict and tension is mounting. So you compromise with your friend that you will watch 15 minutes of their TV program if they will watch 15 minutes of your TV program. Your friend agrees and TV watching goes great between the two of you for an hour. However, on the last minute of your show, the plot thickens and the action is getting intense. You plead with your friend for another 5 minutes and you compromise that you will take 5 minutes of your next 15 minute turn. Your friend agrees, however his/her TV program gets really interesting and she/he compromises that she/he will give up an entire turn for 15 more minutes. You agree but on your next turn your TV program is done and you do not know how it ended. With rage in your eyes and tension thick between the two of you, what do you do..... (call on students for suggestions: most likely they will offer a violent solution like take the other remote away- work with these suggestions and see if they spiral into violent conflict.) Tell students that is what was happening in the U.S. during the 1850's.

Review with the students the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Missouri Compromise. Tell students that today they will be looking at two more activities involving the North and the South. Tell them that these are different because these activities are not compromises, but actions involving a few individuals.

Body- Hand out the article on Dred Scott, but before reading, a review of the following terms may be helpful:

citizenship-	rights protected by the government
property-	article that is owned
suit-	a case in court
constitutional-	law that is in line with the constitution

Split the class into two groups. Tell one group that they are slave owners. Tell the other group that they are abolitionists. Have students set up a BOTG on a separate sheet of paper. Tell them to rate their current tension (as a Southerner or Northerner). Tell the students that they need to read this article and react to it according to their new identity.

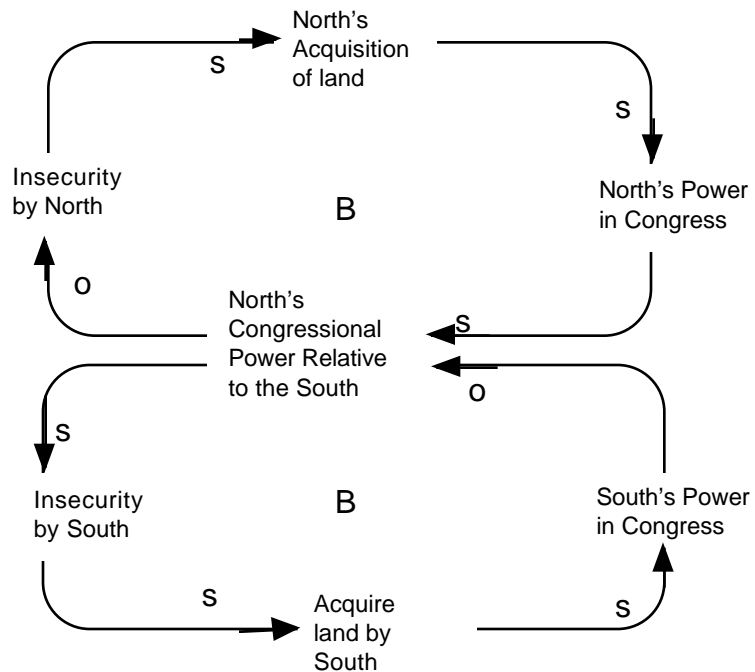
When they are done reading, allow the groups to prepare for a debate. Then, allow both sides to discuss how they feel. The students should be focused on the fact that slaves were seen as property in 1857, which would permit slavery to travel anywhere in the U.S.

After the discussion, keep the students in the same groups. Have them use their BOTG to rate their current level of tension. Then give them the article about John Brown, but discuss the following vocabulary before reading:

abolitionist-	one who hates slavery
fugitive-	runaway
proslavery-	for slavery
sympathy-	compassion
militia-	untrained, citizen soldiers
treason-	illegal actions against a government

Allow students to read. Give them time to prepare for debate/discussion. Allow them to debate. Purpose of this is to allow the students to feel the tension amongst themselves as they simulate the U.S. in the 1850's. Have them rate their current tension level on their BOTG.

When they are done, ask them how they are feeling, tense or at ease with ever one? Have them look at their BOTG and have students share results. Most should say a little tense. Tell them that was how the U.S. was feeling at the time, and remember, tension had already built up during the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Does it seem that violence was becoming more common with increase in tension?



Create this escalation archetype step by step by eliciting input from the students. When it is complete, follow the loop in a figure eight pattern with the students. Ask them if there was a power struggle and tension building.

Use the archetype to highlight the escalation of tension between North and South. Then ask the students how the Dred Scott Decision and the actions of John Brown affected this escalation. These events were isolated, but affect tension greatly.

On their time lines have them place John Brown at Harper's Fairy and Dred Scott in the appropriate places. Below these labels, ask the students to tie these events into the rising tension between North and South. Did these events relieve tension or cause more tension and why? Also, how did these events highlight the effectiveness of past conflict resolutions?

Lesson #5 Closure

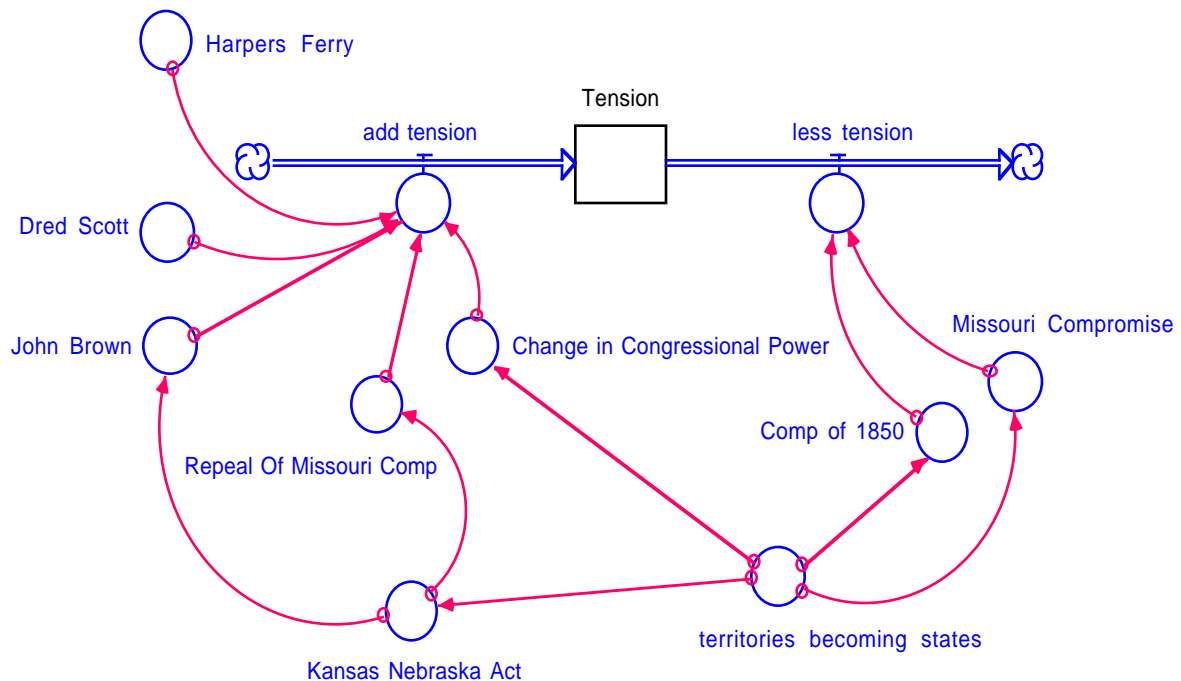
Objectives: The learner will be able to graph the gradual rise and remediation of tension from 1820 until 1859.

Materials: Graph paper (one for each student)

Procedure: **Set-** Review with the students the information they have learned in the last few lessons regarding the North and South. Emphasize conflict and resolution and how poor resolution added to the conflict. Review the motives for the North and the South in regards to the power struggle

Body- Option 1: If you are comfortable leading a discussion with your class using a stock/flow diagram, use the tool to discuss the increase and decrease in tension between the North and the South and the events that contribute to these increases/decreases. A sample map is provided below. If you have a system dynamics mentor available, he/she can help you.

Option 2: Lead a regular discussion of how all of these events contributed to the rise and fall of tension between the North and South, then skip to the closure piece.



Closure- Ask the students to take out their time lines, then pass out a piece of graph paper to each student. Remind the students that they had read about and witnessed (from 1820-1859) the rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall, etc. of tension between the North and South. Ask the students to graph the rise and fall of tension from 1820 to 1861 using their time lines as a guide. (It may be necessary to discuss BOTGs with students prior to this unit so that they understand the use of and concepts implicit in the tool.)

