Lesson Plan: Maine Statehood and the Missouri Compromise

This lesson was developed by Maine Historical Society in partnership with a Teaching with Primary Sources grant from the Library of Congress.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to use primary sources to describe the implications Maine statehood and the Missouri Compromise had for the United States.
- Students will practice the skills involved in analyzing primary sources.
- Students will learn how to and practice using evidence from primary sources to support a point view.

Essential Questions: What implications did Maine statehood and the Missouri Compromise have for the United States?

Materials:

- primary source documents and questions – 1 set per student (see below)
- primary source analysis tools (see links below)
- computers with internet access for student use – will need to access Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/) and Maine Memory Network (www.mainememory.net).
- writing paper
- pen/pencil
- timer (for debate)

Timeframe:

Will vary depending on length of class period, class size, etc.; 5-7 days/class periods recommended.
Procedure:

Part 1 – Initial Analysis

1. Ask students to consider the following questions and to brainstorm some answers; this can be done by students working as individuals, working with partners/small groups, or as a class.
   a. *In what ways was the United States divided in 1820?*
   b. *Slavery was probably the most divisive issue in 19th century America. Do you think constantly trying to compromise on this issue made things worse or better? Explain.*

2. Ask students to share their answers; record and discuss their ideas as a class.

3. Explain that today students are going to take a closer look at some primary sources to try and answer the question, *What implications did Maine statehood and the Missouri Compromise have for the United States?*

4. Distribute Documents 1-4 and primary analysis tools to students. You can use the primary source analysis tools or graphic organizers from the Maine Memory Network lesson plan [Using Primary Source Documents in the Classroom](http://example.com) or the Library of Congress’ [Primary Source Analysis Tools](http://example.com).

5. Students can work to analyze the documents in a number of ways;
   a. Analyze all documents individually.
   b. Analyze all documents working with a partner or small group.
   c. Randomly assign students to each analyze one of the documents and then instruct students to form jigsaw groups and share information on their assigned documents.
      *Regardless of how you assign the documents, make sure that each student has a copy of all the documents.*

6. If students do not complete their analysis before the completion of the class period, assign completion of the assignment for homework.
Part 2 – Digging Deeper

1. Begin by reviewing with students the questions and their answers from the start of the previous lesson.

2. Ask students to share their findings/ideas from their analysis of Documents 1-4. This can be done in jigsaw groups and/or as a class.

3. Once students have reviewed their primary findings and analysis, students should work to answer the questions for each individual document.

4. Review students’ answers to the document questions. This can be done in small groups and/or as a class.

5. Ask students to consider how these primary sources help answer the questions.

Part 3 – Debate Preparation

1. Instruct students that their next step in this unit will be to prepare and engage in a formal debate using primary sources. Students will work in teams; one team arguing the “pro” side of an issue/statement, the other team arguing the “con” side. Each student on each team will be responsible for a different part of the debate. See debate instructions below.

2. Students will be expected to cite/use at least two of Documents 1-4 as evidence in their debate. They will also need to locate at least one third primary source on the Library of Congress or Maine Memory Network to use as evidence.

3. Assign students to debate teams and distribute debate instructions/assignment. Within each team, pairs or small groups of students should be assigned to the different aspects of the debate: opening statement, evidence, rebuttal, closing statement (see debate instructions below). Whether you assign these pairs/groups or students do it themselves, make sure you have a record of who is responsible for each aspect of the debate for assessment purposes.

4. Allow students as much class time and time outside of class to research, prepare, and practice their debate as appropriate (at least two class periods and three days outside of class is recommended as a minimum). Factoring in this time, set a date for the debate and ensure that students understand they must be prepared to participate in the debate and turn in their written portion of the assignment.
Debate tips:

- You may want to assign certain topics, ideas, or documents for students to stick to in order to better ensure they debate the same points.
- Encourage the teams to talk to each other, especially those working on “evidence” and “rebuttal”. While they students won’t necessarily want to give away strategy, remind them that the debate will be smoother for everybody if each team knows the talking points or evidence that the other team is using, not unlike how lawyers must disclose evidence and supply lists of witnesses to each other before going to trial. Everyone should be working with the same information.
- Remind students that their assessment will not be based on who “wins”, but rather on connecting arguments to evidence.
- Rebuttal is typically the aspect of debate that students struggle with the most; preparing rebuttal means trying to predict the arguments the other side with use and how to poke holes in those arguments. Make sure the students assigned to rebuttal have the tools and support they need.
- For students working in pairs/small groups, make sure they determine before the actual debate who will do the speaking for their portion during the debate.
- Encourage (or even require) students to practice the debate; like any presentation, it will go smoother if you practice for an audience (even just one person) first.
- Students will understandably want to know who “won” the debate after it’s over; consider bringing in a guest audience or judges panel of other students or teachers to listen to the debate and determine a winner. Be sure that students understand that determining a “winner” is not the same as an assessment of the assignment.

Part 4 - Debate

1. On the day of the debate, remind students of debate rules:
   a. The debate will be presented in the following format:
      i. Pro Opening Statement, Con Opening Statement
      ii. Pro Evidence, Con Evidence
      (quick break)
      iii. Pro Rebuttal, Con Rebuttal
      iv. Pro Closing Statement, Con Closing Statement
b. Each side is given a limited amount of time to speak (see assignment below).
c. The audience is to be respectful and quiet during the presentation. If you have a guest audience judging the debate, they should be taking notes.
d. After delivering his/her portion of the debate, each student must turn in a written/typed copy of his/her contribution.

2. After the debate, engage students in a whole class discussion on their personal feelings on the statement/idea that was being debated. What do they think the primary source evidence supports?

Alternatives/Extensions:

1. Instead of having students working in teams on the debate, assign them to work with a partner. In this format, a student is responsible for all aspects of one side in the debate (opening statement, evidence, etc.) as opposed to just one piece of one side. This may be easier to students to take on after having done one or two debates in teams.
2. The debate exercise can be easily modified into a persuasive essay format. Instead of having students debate in teams, have them take a stand on the statement/idea and compose a persuasive essay using the debate format.
3. Use the documents and instruct students to answer the essential questions as Document Based Questions (DBQs).
4. Instruct students to write their own pamphlet, speech or broadside/poster encouraging or discouraging the separation of Maine from Massachusetts.
Document 1: The substance of two speeches, delivered in the Senate of the United States, on the subject of the Missouri bill. (modified)

Rufus King was an anti-slavery U.S. Senator; he was born in Maine, but eventually moved to and served as a Senator from New York. He wrote this pamphlet summarizing two speeches he gave during the Missouri Compromise debates of 1819.

(Library of Congress link: https://lccn.loc.gov/09020866)

The existence of slavery impairs the industry and the power of a nation; and it does so in proportion to the multiplication of its slaves: where the manual labor of a country is performed by slaves, labor dishonors the hands of freemen.

If her laborers be slaves, Missouri may be able to pay money taxes, but will be unable to raise soldiers, or to recruit seamen; and experience seems to have proved that manufactures do not prosper where the artificers are slaves…

The motives for the admission of new states into the union, are the extension of the principles of our free government, the equalizing of the public burdens and the consolidation of the power of the confederated nation. Unless these objects be promoted by the admission of new states, no such admission can be expedient or justified.

The states in which slavery already exists, are contiguous to each other; they are also the portion of the United States nearest to the European colonies in the West Indies; colonies whose future condition can hardly be regarded as problematic. If Missouri, and the other states that may be formed to the west of the river Mississippi, are permitted to introduce and establish slavery, the repose, if not the security of the union may be endangered…the establishment of new states west of the river Mississippi, will serve to extend slavery instead of freedom over that boundless region.

Vocabulary:

artificers: skillful at making something
confederated: united
expedient: tending to promote the desired result
contiguous: in close proximity; touching
Document 1: The substance of two speeches Questions

1. What are some of the reasons that King says slavery is a problem?

2. Why is King against the admission of Missouri as a slave state?
the Missouri question aroused and filled me with alarm. The old schism of federal & republican, threatened nothing because it existed in every state, and united them together by the fraternization of party. But the coincidence of a marked principle, moral & political with a geographical line, once conceived, I feared would never more be obliterated from the mind; that it would be recurring on every occasion & renewing irritations until it would kindle such mutual & mortal hatred, as to render separation preferable to eternal discord. I have been among the most sanguine in believing that our Union would be of long duration. I now doubt it much, and see the event at no great distance, and the direct consequence of this question: not by the time which has been so confidently counted on. The laws of nature control this, but by the Potomac, Ohio, and Missouri, or more probably the Mississippi upwards to our Northern boundary, my only comfort & confidence is that I shall not live to see this: and I envy not the present generation the glory of throwing away the fruits of their fathers sacrifices of life & fortune, and of rendering desperate the experiment which was to decide ultimately whether man is capable of self-government? This treason against human hope will signalize their epoch in future history, as the counterpart of the medal of their predecessors.

Vocabulary:

schism: division
fraternization: to be friendly with
discord: strife, disagreement
sanguine: optimistic
1. What about the Missouri Compromise alarmed Jefferson? What do you think in his point of view is a “schism” greater than that of Federalists and Republicans?

2. What does Jefferson think will be the ultimate result of such legislation? Is he in any way correct? Explain.
Document 3: Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, April 22, 1820 (modified)

Thomas Jefferson, former president of the United States, wrote this letter to John Holmes on April 22, 1820. He mentioned the question of the Missouri Compromise as well as the issues of slavery and emancipation.

(Library of Congress link: http://www.loc.gov/item/mtjbib023795/)

I had for a long time ceased to read newspapers or pay any attention to public affairs, confident they were in good hands, and content to be a passenger in our bark to the shore from which I am not distant. But this momentous question, like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed indeed for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated; and every irritation will mark it deeper and deeper. I can say with conscious truth that there is not a man on earth who would sacrifice more than I would, to relieve us from this heavy reproach, in any practicable way. The cession of that kind of property, for it is so misnamed, is a bagatelle which would not cost me a second thought, if, in that way, a general emancipation and expatriation could be effected: and, gradually, and with due sacrifices, I think it might be. But, as it is, we have the wolf by the ear, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other. Of one thing I am certain, that as the passage of slaves from one state to another would not make a slave of a single human being who would not be so without it, so their diffusion over a greater surface would make them individually happier and proportionally facilitate the accomplishment of their emancipation; by dividing the burthen on a greater number of coadjutors. An abstinence too from this act of power would remove the jealousy excited by the undertaking of Congress; to regulate the condition of the different descriptions of men composing a state. This certainly is the exclusive right of every state, which nothing in the constitution has taken from them and given to the general government. Could congress, for example say that the Non-freemen of Connecticut, shall be freemen, or that they shall not immigrate into any other state?

Vocabulary:

bark: ship
knell: warning sound, funeral bell
reprieve: pardon
obliterated: destroyed
emancipation: set free
expatriation: banishment from one’s native country
coadjutors: assistants
abstinence: to refrain from
Document 3: Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, April 22, 1820

Questions

1.) What does Jefferson mean when he says he considers the Missouri Compromise the “knell of the Union”?

2.) Does Jefferson think the peace created by the compromise will last?

3.) Jefferson compares the existence of slavery in the United States to holding a “wolf by the ears”; what does the analogy mean?
Joshua Cushman (1761-1834) of Winslow, a Democratic-Republican U.S. Representative, wrote a letter supporting the vote of Congress against the Missouri Compromise, which let Missouri join the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state and forbid the spread of slavery to the West. Cushman noted that only one New England member of Congress voted for the compromise, Sen. John Holmes of Maine. His letter was intended to prevent Holmes re-election to the Senate after Maine Statehood went into effect.

(Maine Memory Network link: https://www.mainememory.net/artifact/23979)

…I question the correctness of that policy which would urge sacrifices on the altar of conciliation. Not on the indiscriminate offerings of peace, but on the balance of power, depends the safety of our republic. The representatives from the east and north, have been sufficiently partial in their attachments. They are sincerely desirous to preserve the integrity of the Union, and to live in harmony with their sister states and brethren of the south. But if the sine qua non of amity and concord be self-immolation, and the sapping of the foundation of our national edifice, the most beautiful structure of liberty the world ever beheld, they cannot subscribe to the conditions. To secure a momentary calm to themselves, they cannot consent to entail on their posterity a series of the most deleterious evils. There are some sacrifices too great to be made even for the all glorious blessing of peace! Such, Sir, are my reflections on the subjects, which are not without interest to the people of Maine, and their rulers. With some of the latter, I fear, my opinions and views are not in unison. I have no personal designs; I feel for the honor of Maine. I am anxious for her consistency of character—and I humbly trust in Heaven, that she will never be so unguarded as to sanction a policy which must degrade her in public estimation, and fix on her escutcheon a stain—a deep and black stain—which no time could obliterate.

Vocabulary:
conciliation: resolution
indiscriminate: thoughtless
sine qua non: absolutely essential
amity: friendship
concord: harmony
self-immolation: sacrificing oneself
edifice: structure
deleterious: harmful
sanction: authorization
escutcheon: the part of a ship where the name is displayed
obliterate: destroy
Document 4: Letter about Missouri Compromise, 1820 Questions

1. What is Cushman afraid is being sacrificed for the sake of compromise?

2. What does Cushman think will be the consequences for Maine if they vote in favor of the compromise?
Maine Statehood and the Missouri Compromise Debate

Objective: Describe the lasting effects of the Missouri Compromise.

Essential Questions: What implications did Maine statehood and the Missouri Compromise have for the United States?

Assignment: Work with a partner/team to prepare a debate that addresses the statement “The Missouri Compromise was deeply flawed and ultimately did more harm to the Union than good.” You and your partner or the opposing team will each take on a role in this debate; one will argue the pro position (Yes, the Missouri Compromise was deeply flawed and ultimately did more harm to the Union than good.), the other will argue the con position (No, the Missouri Compromise was not deeply flawed and ultimately did more good to the Union than harm.). Your debate must follow the outlined format. Your debate script must be typed and turned in after your debate is presented to the class.

Timeline: You will have ____ class periods to work both with your partner and independently to prepare your debate. You must also use your own time outside of class to prepare.

Due date: ____________________

Debate format

Question:
To answer the question, you must address two of the following main ideas:

Round 1

1. Opening Statement
   a. Explain background, why is topic important, think “big picture”, appeal to passion (1 paragraph)

2. Evidence
   a. Present data, case studies, evidence for each argument, think “specific”, appeal to intellect (2 paragraphs)

Round 2

1. Rebuttal
   a. Attack opposing side’s arguments, reiterate your side’s arguments, appeal to passion and intellect
   b. May ask questions of opponent (1 paragraph)

2. Closing statement
   a. Summarize your position and evidence, take the moral high ground (1 paragraph)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of Topic</td>
<td>The student clearly understood the topic in-depth and presented their information forcefully and convincingly.</td>
<td>The student clearly understood the topic in-depth and presented their information with ease.</td>
<td>The student seemed to understand the main points of the topic and presented those with ease.</td>
<td>The team did not show an adequate understanding of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>All information presented in the debate was clear, accurate and thorough.</td>
<td>Most information presented in the debate was clear, accurate and thorough.</td>
<td>Most information presented in the debate was clear and accurate, but was not usually thorough.</td>
<td>Information had several inaccuracies OR was usually not clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Facts/Statistics</td>
<td>Every major point was well supported with several relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.</td>
<td>Every major point was adequately supported with relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.</td>
<td>Every major point was supported with facts, statistics and/or examples, but the relevance of some was questionable.</td>
<td>Every point was not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate Format</td>
<td>Debate format was followed consistently throughout the debate.</td>
<td>Debate format was mostly followed.</td>
<td>The debate format was only partly followed.</td>
<td>The debate format was rarely or not followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script Format</td>
<td>Script format was followed; typed, double spaced, size 12 Times New Roman font.</td>
<td>Script format was mostly followed.</td>
<td>Script format was partially followed.</td>
<td>Script format was not followed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maine Learning Results:
Grade Level: PreK-2; Content Area: Social Studies: HISTORY (A1a, A1b, A1c, A1d, A1e, A3, E1a, E1b, E1e, E2a, E2b)
Grade Level: 3-5; Content Area: Social Studies: HISTORY (A1a, A1c, A1d, A1e, A3, E1a, E1b, E1c, E2a, E2b)
Grade Level: 6-8; Content Area: Social Studies: HISTORY (A1a, A1b, A1c, A1d, A1e, A1f, A1g, A1h, A1k, A1l, A3, E1a, E1b, E1d, E2a, E2b, E2c)
Grade Level: 9-Diploma; Content Area: Social Studies: HISTORY (A1a, A1b, A1c, A1d, A1e, A1f, A1g, A1h, A1i, A3, E1a, E1b, E1d, E2a, E2b)

Common Core State Standards:
Anchor Standards: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7); COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR WRITING (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8); COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.5); COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2)
Grade 2: WRITING (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.6, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.7); LANGUAGE (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.3)
