**Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?**

**Document Based Questions**



Abolitionist Wendell Phillips speaking against the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 at an antislavery meeting in Boston. Source: [Mid-Manhattan Library/Picture Collection/The New York Public Library](http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/id?807861)

**Historical Background:** Slavery has existed in America since our first colony of Jamestown, when the English brought slaves to Virginia to work the plantations. Settlers were interested in making a profit from these plantations, but there was a need for a large, inexpensive workforce. At first, Native Americans were enslaved, but this was unsuccessful. Turning to Africa as a source of labor, slavery soon spread to all thirteen colonies. Not all slaves were put to work on the large plantations; some worked in homes, in businesses, and in craft shops. After the invention of the cotton gin, the demand for slaves in the South increased, while in the North, slavery was gradually abolished.

The goal of the Abolitionist Movement was to end slavery in America, however, slavery was both a social and economic institution in the South. Most abolitionists in the North, beginning with the Quakers, who believed that God existed in all men, and opposed violence and war, while others believed slavery was hurtful, violent, and dehumanizing.

**Using your background knowledge and the enclosed documents, determine whether the Abolitionist Movement was successful, and a major cause of the Civil War.**

**Lanette Bowen Dayton Intermediate School lbowen@lyon.k12.nv.us**

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War**?**

**Source 1: Library of Congress /** American State Trials, ed. by J. D. Lawson, Vol. VI, p. 800 ff.



**"Tragic Prelude" by John Stewart Curry**

***Document 1 Note****:*

***John Brown, an abolitionist, planned to incite the slaves in Virginia to rise up against their owners, and then form a free state somewhere in the mountains of western Maryland and Virginia. With the aid of funds gathered in New England and New York, he collected supplies and arms, which he brought to a farmhouse near Harper's Ferry, Virginia. On the night of October 16, 1859, Brown and twenty-one men attacked and captured the government armory at Harper's Ferry, and hoped the slaves would rise against their owners. Within thirty-six hours, locals and the United States Marines, under the command of Col. Robert. E. Lee, captured Brown and some of his followers. He was indicted for treason and for conspiring with slaves to commit murder. He was convicted, and was sentenced to be hanged.. Some in the North felt Brown was a martyr while others felt he was a terrorist.***

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War. Source 1

Answer the following questions about the previous document .

1. Why is John Brown standing on two bodies?

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2. List what you observe in the painting.

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3. Read Document Note 1. Where did Brown obtain his funding? Why would he go to these areas to raise funds? Support your answer.

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4. What was John Brown’s purpose in capturing the armory?

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5. How might Southerners have viewed Brown?

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Did the Abolitionist Movement help Cause the Civil War?

**Source 2: Library of Congress Prints and Photograph Division**

 **Document Note 2:**

The illustration on this sheet-music cover is a railroad car called "Immediate Emancipation," and it is pulled by a locomotive named "Liberator." These two names refer to William Lloyd Garrison, who demanded immediate emancipation in his newspaper, The Liberator. "Repealer," is the second locomotive. The two flags have the names of two other Abolitionist publications: The Herald of Freedom and American Standard (or National Anti-Slavery Standard). In the distance, two other trains, one marked "Van," the other "Clay," crash, and their passengers flee. These trains are named for the Democrat and Whig presidential hopefuls Martin Van Buren and Henry Clay.



***Document 2A*** "Get Off The Track: A Song for Emancipation...," cover Jesse Hutchinson, Author Boston, 1844 Sheet music [Prints and Photographs Division](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/)

***Document 2B***

***Get Off The Track! by Jesse Hutchinson, Jr.*** Ho! the car, Emancipation, Rides majestic thro' our nation Bearing on its train, the story Liberty! a nation's glory. Roll it along! Roll it along! Roll it along! thro' the nation Freedom's car, Emancipation  Men of various predilections, Frightened, run in all directions; Merchants, editors, physicians, Lawyers, priests and politicians. Get out of the way! Get out of the way! Get out of the way! every station,Clear the track of 'mancipation. All true friends of emancipation, Haste to freedom's rail road station; Quick into the cars get seated, All is ready, and completed.

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?. Source 2A and 2B

Answer the following questions about the previous document.

1. List the items you observed in the illustration in Document 2A.

2. After reading the lyrics and looking at the cover, rename the song’s title.

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3. What in the illustration of Document 2A explains the title.

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 4. Using Document 2B, what occupations are mentioned?

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5. Reinstate or interpret, in your own words, the song’s lyrics in Document 2B.

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

 **Source 3: Library of Congress Rare Books and Special Collections**

**Document Note**:

Abolitionist material, meant for women, often played on their compassionate feelings for the difficulty of slave women who might be separated from the families.



“Ye wives and ye mothers, your influence

extend--

Ye sisters, ye daughters, the helpless defend--

The strong ties are severed for one crime alone,

Possessing a colour less fair than your own.”

 *Document 3*

"The Negro Woman's Appeal to Her White Sisters" Richard Barrett, ca. 1850s Broadside [Rare Book and Special Collections Division](http://www.loc.gov/rr/rarebook/) (46)

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 3**

**Answer the following questions about previous document** .

1. “Possessing a colore less fair” describes what?

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2. Who is the intended audience for this Abolitionist poem? Explain your answer.

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3. Explain the reference, “…one crime alone.”

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4. Is the illustration a good match to the poem? Defend your answer.

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5. Use a magnifying glass to find and list two things from this document that tell what life was like for a slave.

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

 **Source 4:**

**Document Notes:**

Dred Scott first went to trial to sue for his freedom in 1847. After a decade of appeals his case was brought before the United States Supreme Court. In what is a famous case, the court decided that all people of African ancestry -- slaves as well as those who were free -- could never become citizens of the United States. A person, then, of African ancestry, could not sue in federal court. The court also ruled that the federal government did not have the power to prohibit slavery in its territories. Dred Scott remained a slave. His owners eventually set him free, and he died a year later.

**Excerpt from *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, Supreme Court decision, 1857**

“...upon full and careful consideration of the subject, the court is of the opinion, that, upon the facts stated...Dred Scott was not a citizen of Missouri within the meaning of the constitution of the United States and not entitled as such to sue in its courts”

***Document 4A***

***Document 4B***

 

Reproduction courtesy of Lincoln University of Pennsylvania

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 4A and 4B**

**Answer the following questions about previous document** .

1. Read Document 4A and state the results of the decision reached by the Supreme Court in your own words.

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2. From the poster, 4B, what was the reaction of the Abolitionists to the Supreme Court decision?

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3. Why might this meeting be held in a church? Support your statement.

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4. What was ment by the statement, “…other outrages to which colored people are subject/”

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5. According to the Document Notes, what rights did people of African decent have? Explain.

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

 **Source 5:**

**Document Notes:**

In an effort to preserve the balance of power in Congress between Slave and Free states, the [*Missouri Compromise*](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=003/llsl003.db&recNum=586) was passed in 1820, which admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. With the exception of Missouri, this law prohibited slavery in the Louisiana Territory. The Missouri Compromise was repealed with the Compromise of 1850, which allowed California to become a Free state, slavery allowed in acquired from Mexico, which contradicted parts of the Missouri Compromise, resulting in discontent among many northerners.

***Document 5A:* Wesleyan Cemetery, St. Louis (St. Louis University campus)**



***Document 5B*** : Compromise of 1850 

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

**Source 5A and 5B**

**Answer the following questions about previous document.**

1. What information did you gather from Dred Scott’s gravestone, Document 5A?

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2. Why would the Missouri Compromise be mentioned on Dred Scott’s gravestone?

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3. Using the Document Notes, what did the Missouri Compromise establish?

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4. Use the key in Document 5B to list all the areas shown on the map.

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5. Describe the map in two sentences.

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6.What do you think are the important pieces of information that the map provides?

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

 **Source 6:** National Archives / State Historical Society, Missouri

**Document Notes:** “Until the lion writes its own history, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.” Until slaves themselves were able to document their treatment or others on their behalf, the true of slavery would never be know

"Overseer Artayou Carrier whipped me. I was two months in bed sore from the whipping. My master come after I was whipped; he discharged the overseer. The very words of poor Peter, taken as he sat for his picture."

" My master use to …whip me. He would put my hands together and tie them. He would strip me---- He would whip me one side till that was sore and full of blood and then he would whip me on the other side till that was all torn up.” ***Document 6A***

 

***Document 6B:*** National Archives and Records ***Document 6C:*** State Historical Society of Missouri

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 6A, 6B, and 6C.**

**Answer the following questions about previous document.**

1. What does **Document 6A** say about the relationship of the slave and the master?

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2. Think about what rights were denied slaves, what rights freemen were given, and any rights they had alike. Fill out the chart below. Use your class notes, too.

 Slaves Freemen

 Same

3. Compare the two pictures. What examples do you observe of inhuman treatment?

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4. How might the Abolitionists use these sources to influence others against slavery?

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5. List everything you see in **Document 6C.**

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

**Source 7:** Corbis IH155219

**Document Note:** A British political cartoon published in about 1789 making fun of the United States' slavery practice. by placing African Americans in the position of retaliating against the whites.



Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 7**

**Answer the following questions about previous document.**

1. List three events that are occurring in the cartoon.

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2. If you did not live in the United States at the time, what would your reaction be to this cartoon?

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3. What would your reaction be if you were a southern slave owner?

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4. How would this be an example of retaliation?

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5. Explain the title of the political cartoon.

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

**Source 8: Library of Congress**

**Vocabulary:** disinclination: reluctance; unwillingness

**Document Note:**

The Fugitive Slave Act was part of the group of laws referred to as the "Compromise of 1850." In this compromise, the antislavery advocates gained the admission of California as a free state, and the prohibition of slave-trading in the District of Columbia. The slavery party received concessions with regard to slaveholding in Texas.. Passage of this law was so hated by abolitionists.

***Document 8A***

Mr. President, I wish to speak today, not s a northern man, but an American….I will state, one complainint of the south…that there has been found in the North, among individuals and among the legislatures of the North, a disinclination to perform fully their constitutional duties in regard to the return of persons bound into service who have escaped into free states. In that respect, it is my judgement that the South is right and the North is wrong…..” Stephen Webster, Senator

 ***Document 8B***

 Library of Congress

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 8A and 8B**

**Answer the following questions about previous document.**

1. Identify what type of fair in Document 8B.

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2. What types of events might occur at such a fair?

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3. In Document 8A, what is ment by the statement, **“a disinclination to perform fully their constitutional duties in regard to the return of persons bound into service”?**

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4. In Document 8A, Mr. Webster makes the comment,”… it is my judgement …that the South is right and the North is wrong?” What was behind this statement?

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5. According to the Document Notes, what did each side receive in the Compromise of 1850?

 Free States Slave States

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

**Source 9: Library of Congress**

 **Vocbulary: sedition:** rebellion against a government

 **peaceable:** tranquil; calm

 **fanaticism:** wildly excessive or dedicated, or enthusiastic

Document Note: The Abolitionists in the North held many gatherings where key speakers would rally the supports.  These speakers included ex-slave Fredrick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison.  Many abolitionists would help freed or escaped slaves in the North by warning them of slave catchers in the area sent by Southern plantation owners looking for their missing property.

 ***Document 9A Document 9B***



Library of Congress Library pf Congress

A poster reflecting this situation was created and widely distributed by the Abolitionists of Boston in 1851,

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 9A and 9B**

**Answer the following questions about previous document.**

**1.** Define **sedition, peaceable, and fanaticism** in your own words**.**

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**2. Are these posters Pro-slavery or Anti-slavery? Support your answer with evidence from documents..**

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**3. Discuss the title in Document 9A. Why “outrages”?**

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**4. In Document 9B, why are watchman and police “empowered to act”, as what? Explain.**

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**5. High might government officials respond to these posters?**

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? Source 10A

**Source 10: Library of Congress**

**Document Note:**

As a slave, Anthony Burns had many privileges. He was allowed to hire himself and he supervised the hiring out of other slaves. He had the freedom to take on additional jobs, as long as he paid his master a fee. He joined a church, where he became a preacher. He learned to read and write. But, 1854, he took steps to find freedom. While working in Richmond, Burns boarded a ship heading north, to Boston. With the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act, the law was on the owner’s side.

Anthony Burns was arrested and tried under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Touched off riots and protests by Boston citizens and abolitionists. Scenes from his life surround his portrait. A black church soon raised $1300 to purchase Burns' freedom. In less than a year, Anthony Burns was back in Boston.



Library of Congress

Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War? **Source 10**

**Answer the following questions about previous document**

1. List the events shown in the poster**.**

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2. Pick one event, and explain what you observe. Give three examples.

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3. Who would find the publication of this poster in favor of their cause? Support your answer.

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4. Reading the Document Notes, what were the conditions Burns had in his confinement as a slave?

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5. How might the Southerners have viewed this poster?

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Did the Abolitionist Movement Help Cause the Civil War?

General scoring Rubric

5

Thorough discussion: full responses to the questions

* Thoroughly analyzes and interprets the documents
* Incorporates information from the documents in the answers
* Incorporates relevant outside information
* Recognizes points of view
* Contains no significant factual errors

4

Good responses but unevenly developed

* Uses most of the documents
* Includes some supplemental information
* Contains mostly accurate information
* Evaluates evidence and formulates general accurate conclusions
* Shows some understanding of complex issues

3

Competent responses to the questions

* Uses some of the documents
* Contains little supplementary information
* Attempts to formulate some conclusions
* Contains little accurate information
* Little understanding of complex issues

2

Incomplete responses

* Uses little information from the documents
* No relevant supplementary information
* Vague conclusions
* Many errors
* Poorly written

1

Confused responses

* Unclear references to documents
* No supplementary information
* No accurate facts or details
* Fails to have conclusions
* Attempts to complete questions
* Shows limited understanding

0

Fails to address question

* No responses
* Indecipherable
* Misunderstood questions