

**Procedures:** Read and analyze excerpts taken from several primary resources that correspond to the issue of fugitive slaves. Use this information to develop an extended constructed response to the following focus question.

*Focus Question for writing prompt: How did the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (part of the Compromise of 1850) reveal differences between the North and the South? Explain how this event contributed to division in American culture.*

**Pre-Reading Activity:** These terms will appear throughout the primary resources that you are about to read. Please follow your teacher's instructions by writing each term and its definition.

**Fugitive slave:** *a runaway slave*

**Extra-territoriality:** *exemption from local legal jurisdiction*

**Abolitionist:** *a person who wants to end slavery*

**Anthony Burns:** *a young man who escaped from slavery in Virginia and went to Boston, Massachusetts; in 1834 he was captured by government officials and tried as a runaway slave.*

**Marshal:** *a law enforcement official*

**Frederick Douglass:** *a runaway slave from Maryland who became a well-known Northern abolitionist, writer, and public speaker.*

**Harriet Beecher Stowe:** *author of Uncle Tom's Cabin, a novel published in 1852 that drew national attention to the abolitionist movement.*

**Mary Henderson Eastman:** *author of Aunt Phillis's Cabin, a pro-slavery work written in response to Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

**During- Reading Activity:** The primary resources which have been selected for this activity focus on the impact of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 on American culture.

- Read the title of each primary resource and think about what you already know about this topic.
- Read the questions that follow each primary resource. Could you formulate a response to these questions without looking at the excerpt from the primary resource?
- Next, read the excerpt from the primary resource. Underline any words and essential phrases that would help you respond to the ECR.
- Answer the questions that follow each of the excerpts.

### Primary Resource 1

This excerpt is from Article Four, Section II, of the United States Constitution. Pierce Butler, one of the delegates from South Carolina at the Constitutional Convention, proposed this clause, which eventually was written into the Constitution.

“Wheresoever any person bound to service or labour in any state shall flee into another state, he shall not be thereby discharged from such service or labor: but the legislatures of the several states shall make provision for the recovery of such person[.]”

This clause does not contain the words “fugitive slave.” Cite words within the text that imply these words.

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Why do you think the term “slavery” was omitted in the Constitution until the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1865?

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### Primary Resource 2

The enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which was a part of the Compromise of 1850, intensified the already heated arguments between anti-slavery Northerners and pro-slavery Southerners. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 made the federal government responsible for finding and apprehending fugitive slaves in the North and then sending them back to the South. Essentially this law gave the federal government permission to negate the legal processes already established in the North. In fact, all citizens, even white northerners who were against slavery, were required to help capture and return slaves escaped slaves to their owners. The federal government was empowered with the ability to force citizens, even against their wills, to take part in the seizure of fugitive slaves.

Even though southern slaveholders believed in state's rights and their own local autonomy, they supported and benefited from the power of the federal government in its enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act. Not only would this law help to stop the flow of fugitive slaves to the North, but this legislation bolstered southern slaveholders' constitutional right to own slave property.

*Section 5 of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850:*

“...and all good citizens are hereby commanded to aid and assist in the prompt and efficient execution of this law, whenever their services may be required, as aforesaid, for that purpose; and said warrants shall run, and be executed by said officers, any where in the State within which they are issued.”

What is this section of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 requiring citizens to do?

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*Section 6 of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850:*

*“And be it further enacted, That when a person held to service or labor in any State or Territory of the United States, has heretofore or shall hereafter escape into another State or Territory of the United States, the person or persons to whom such service or labor may be due, or his, her, or their agent or attorney, duly authorized, by power of attorney, in writing, acknowledged and certified under the seal of some legal officer or court of the State or Territory in which the same may be executed, may pursue and reclaim such fugitive person, either by procuring a warrant from some one of the courts, judges, or commissioners aforesaid, of the proper circuit, district, or county, for the apprehension of such fugitive from service or labor, or by seizing and arresting such fugitive, where the same can be done without process...”*

Besides the legal owner of a fugitive slave, who else had the authority to apprehend a runaway?

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*Section 6 of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850:*

*“...to use such reasonable force and restraint as may be necessary, under the circumstances of the case, to take and remove such fugitive person back to the State or Territory whence he or she may have escaped as aforesaid. In no trial or hearing under this act shall the testimony of such alleged fugitive be admitted in evidence ...”*

Was the testimony of a fugitive slave permissible in court? Use information from the text to support your answer.

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*Section 7 of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850:*

*“And be it further enacted, That any person who shall knowingly and willingly obstruct, hinder, or prevent such claimant, his agent or attorney, or any person or persons lawfully assisting him, her, or them, from arresting such a fugitive from service or labor, either with or without process as aforesaid, or shall rescue, or attempt to rescue, such fugitive from service or labor, from the custody of such claimant, his or her agent or attorney, or other person or persons lawfully assisting as aforesaid, when so arrested, pursuant to the authority herein given and declared; or shall aid, abet, or assist such person so owing service or labor as aforesaid, directly or indirectly, to escape from such claimant, his agent or attorney, or other person or persons legally authorized as aforesaid; or shall harbor or conceal such fugitive, so as to prevent the discovery and arrest of such person, after notice or knowledge of the fact that such person was a fugitive from service or labor as aforesaid, shall, for either of said offences, be subject to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, and imprisonment not exceeding six months...”*

Identify 3 - 5 infractions of this Act that could result in a fine not greater than one thousand dollars and imprisonment not exceeding six months:

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Extension Question:**

How did the Fugitive Slave Act, as a part of the Compromise of 1850, benefit southern slaveholders?

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**Primary Resource 3**

In March 1854, Anthony Burns, a slave owned by Charles Suttle of Alexandria, Virginia, escapes from slavery and heads toward Boston, Massachusetts as a fugitive slave. With his new found freedom, Burns accepts a job at a clothing store which is owned by Lewis Hayden, an abolitionist. Unfortunately, under the authority of the Fugitive Slave Act

of 1850, Burns is seized by his owner, Charles Suttle on May 24, 1854. Two days later, white and African-American abolitionists, including Lewis Hayden, storm the courthouse to free Burns. Violence erupts and results in the death of one marshal and the arrest of thirteen people. President Franklin Pierce sends in federal troops to help the guards watch over Burns.

On June 2, 1854 Burns is convicted of being a fugitive slave and is ordered to return to Virginia. A large crowd of about 50,000 people line the streets of Boston to watch a shackled Burns walk to the waterfront to the ship that will transport him back to slavery. By February 1855, Reverend Leonard Grimes of Boston sponsors an effort to raise money to purchase Anthony Burn's freedom for \$1300.00. Remarkably, less than a year later, Burns arrives back in Boston as a free man. Eventually, Burns studies at Oberlin College in Ohio and becomes a minister in Canada.

### *Anthony Burns' Notice 1854*

Several days after Burn's arrest, notices like this appeared in Boston.

A MAN  
KIDNAPPED!

A PUBLIC MEETING AT  
FANEUIL HALL!  
WILL BE HELD  
THIS FRIDAY EVEN'G,  
May 26th, at 7 o'clock,  
To secure justice for A MAN CLAIMED AS A SLAVE by a  
VIRGINIA  
KIDNAPPER!

And NOW IMPRISONED IN BOSTON COURT HOUSE, in defiance of the Laws of Massachusetts, Shall be plunged into the Hell of Virginia Slavery by a Massachusetts Judge of Probate!<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h1566b.html>  
BOSTON, May 26, 1854



Primary Source: The Granger Collection, New York

This notice contains anti-slavery sentiment. For example, the author of this notice uses the phrase, “**a man kidnapped**,” to describe the imprisonment of Anthony Burns in Boston. Why do you think some of the words in this notice appear larger and bolder than other words?

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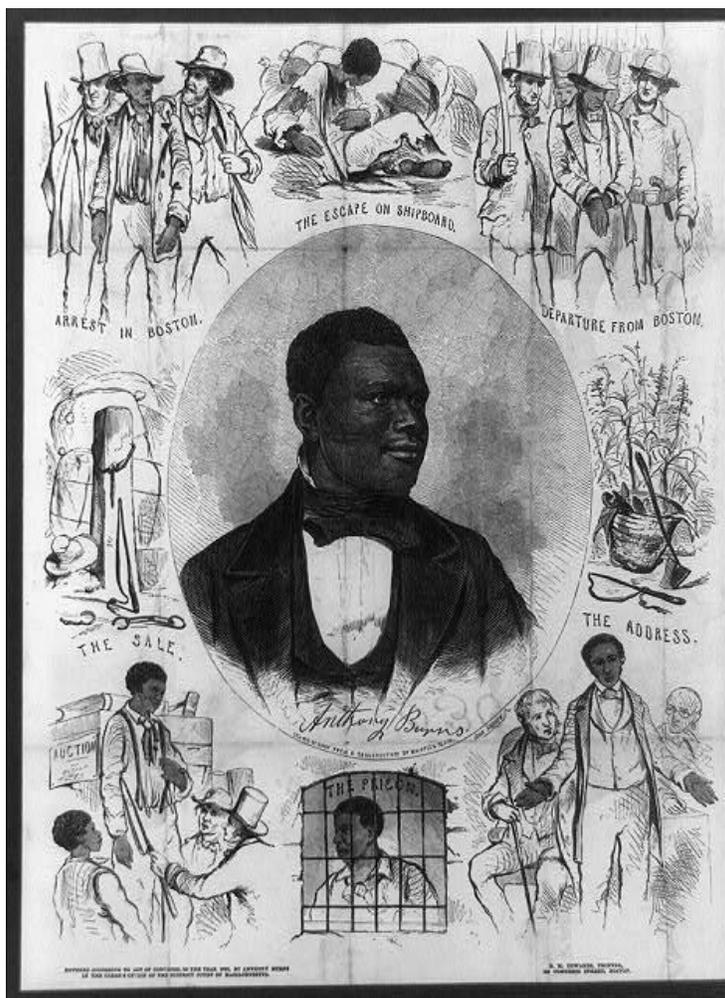
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**Primary Source 4**

*Portrait of Anthony Burns, 1855, by engraver, John Andrews*



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Notice the **images and words** surrounding Anthony Burns' portrait. What was the engraver's main purpose in creating this depiction of Anthony

Burns? Do you think this engraving is effective in portraying Burns as an important figure in the abolitionist movement?

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## Primary Resource 5

### *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born into slavery near Easton in Talbot County, Maryland in either 1817 or 1818. As a young boy, he was sent to Baltimore to be a house servant. He was taught to read and write by his master's wife, Mrs. Auld. During his youth and early adulthood, he worked for several owners. In 1838 he escaped from slavery by travelling on a train headed for New York City disguised as a sailor with a freed friend's identification papers. There he married Anna Murray, a free African American woman whom he had met in Baltimore. He eventually changed his name to Frederick Douglass. During his lifetime, he became well known for his passionate and eloquent speeches about the right of liberty for African-Americans and even women. He wrote about his life as a slave in the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. During the Civil War, he served as an advisor to President Lincoln and helped recruit African-American soldiers for the 54<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiments. Later in life he served as a US marshal for the District of Columbia and became an American representative to the Republic of Haiti.

### Chapter XI of the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

In writing to a dear friend, immediately after my arrival at New York, I said I felt like one who had escaped a den of hungry lions. This state of mind, however, very soon subsided; and I was again seized with a feeling of great insecurity and loneliness. I was afraid to speak to any one for fear of speaking to the wrong one, and thereby falling into the hands of money-loving kidnappers, whose business it was to lie in wait for the panting fugitive, as the ferocious beasts of the forest lie in wait for their prey.

**Analyze** the words selected by Douglass to describe his arrival in New York after his escape. What images are evoked through his analogies? Do

you think his analogies are effective in communicating how he feels about being a fugitive slave?

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Why is Douglass' narrative considered a primary resource?

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What impact did Douglass' experiences as a slave have on the development of the anti-slavery movement?

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**Reexamine** Primary Resource 4, Anthony Burns' Notice 1854.

Why do you think the word "**kidnapper**" is used in **both of these primary resources** (Anthony Burns' notice and Frederick Douglass' narrative)?

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**Primary Resource 6**

## *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

In 1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe's controversial novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, became one of the bestselling books of the nineteenth century. Stowe, the daughter of a famous Protestant preacher, moved to Cincinnati, Ohio in 1832, where she met many runaway slaves who were crossing the Ohio River from the slave state of Kentucky to gain freedom in Ohio.

Emotionally touched by the stories of these fugitive slaves, Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to capture the human side of slavery and reveal the mistreatment of slaves. Her vivid descriptions and storytelling stirred great emotions in people. Many Northerners were convinced that slavery was unjust, while many Southerners blamed this novel for the North's increasing opposition to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and they felt as though Stowe's bias gave an unjust impression of the institution of slavery. It was clear, however, that Stowe believed that slavery was morally wrong. As President Lincoln once said many years later when he met Stowe for the first time, "So this is the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."

### *Chapter VII: The Mother's Struggle*

Eliza, one of the slaves portrayed in this novel, decides to run away from the Shelby plantation, after learning that her five year old son, Harry, is going to be sold to a slave trader the next morning. Her escape takes her across the icy Ohio River.

"The frosty ground creaked beneath her feet, and she trembled at the sound; every quaking leaf and fluttering shadow sent the blood backward to her heart, and quickened her footsteps. She wondered within herself at the strength that seemed to be come upon her; for she felt the weight of her boy as if it had been a feather, and every flutter of fear seemed to increase the supernatural power that bore her on, while from her pale lips burst forth... the prayer to a Friend above—"Lord, help! Lord, save me!"

How might Stowe's dramatic description impact a Northerner's point of view about slavery?

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How might Stowe's dramatic description impact a Southerner's point of view about slavery?

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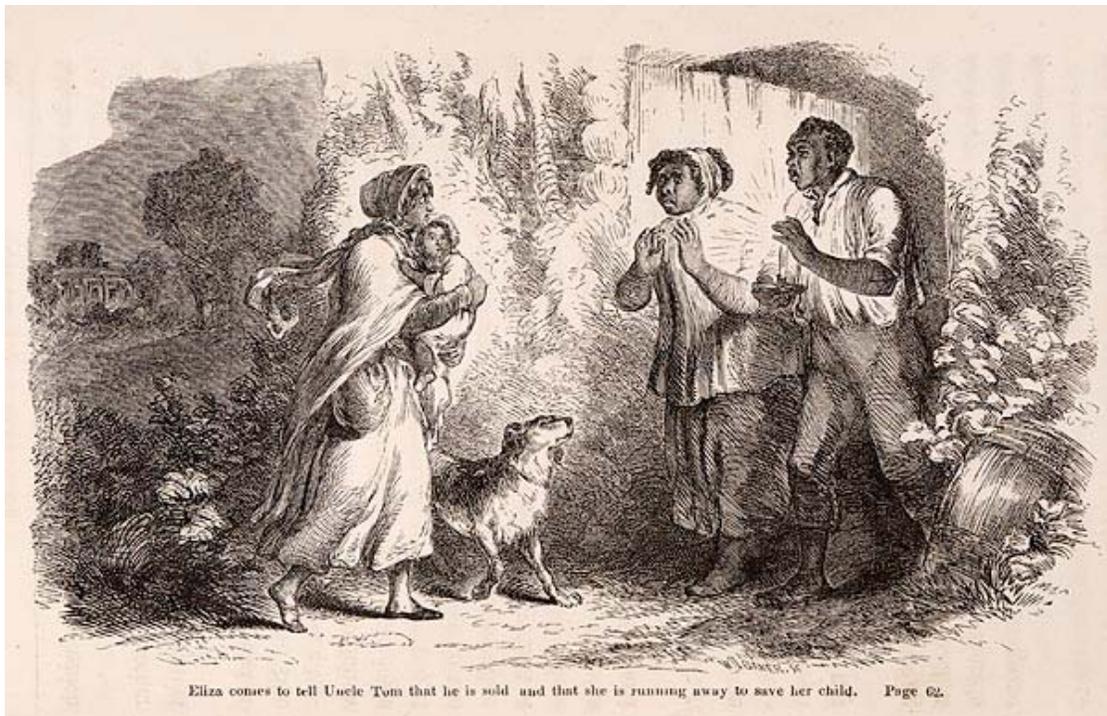
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Illustration on page 62 of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*



**Eliza comes to tell Uncle Tom that he is sold, and that she is running away to save her child.**

Full-page illustration by Hammatt Billings for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* [First Edition: Boston: John P. Jewett and Company, 1852]

Look at the three people portrayed Billings' illustration. What emotions are being expressed by them? How can you tell?

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## Primary Resource 7

Between 1852 and the outbreak of the Civil War, many pro-slavery works were written in response to Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Many of these novels centered on the benefits of plantation life for slaves and the belief that slaves were happy being slaves. Some of these novels poked fun at the North's factory system in which factory workers were treated like the "white slaves" of the North. Even though these pro-slavery novels did not attain the same success as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, they were widely read in the South and the North.

One of the best selling of these anti- "Uncle Tom's Cabin" novels was *Aunt Phillis's Cabin*, written by Mary Henderson Eastman. Eastman wrote her novel while she lived in Washington, D.C. Throughout her story, Eastman makes references to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to show how slavery really was in the South, in direct opposition to Stowe's account. In her concluding remarks at the end of the novel, Eastman states that "I only assert the necessity of the existence of slavery at present in our Southern States, and that, as a general thing, the slaves are comfortable and contented, and their owners humane and kind."

### Chapter IX of *Aunt Phillis's Cabin*

Phillis is a slave on the Weston plantation in Virginia.

"Phillis would have been truly happy to have obtained her own freedom, and that of her husband and children: she scorned the idea of running away, or of obtaining it otherwise than as a gift from her owner. She was a firm believer in the Bible, and often pondered on the words of the angel, "Return and submit thyself to thy mistress."

According to the passage, under which condition would Phillis accept her freedom?

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Notice the author's **reference** to the Bible. Why did Eastman include this in the passage?

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### Chapter X of *Aunt Phillis' Cabin*

“PHILLIS was at her ironing early in the morning, for she liked to hurry it over before the heat of the day. Her cabin doors were open, and her flowers, which had been watered by a slight rain that fell about day-break, looked fresh and beautiful. Her house could be hardly called a cabin, for it was very much superior to the others on the plantation, though they were all comfortable. Phillis was regarded by the Weston family as the most valuable servant they owned—and, apart from her services, there were strong reasons why they were attached to her. She had nursed Mrs. Weston in her last illness, and as her death occurred immediately after Arthur's birth, she nourished him as her own child, and loved him quite as well. Her comfort and wishes were always objects of the greatest consideration to the family, and this was proved whenever occasion allowed. Her neatly white-washed cottage was enclosed by a wooden fence in good condition—her little garden laid out with great taste.... All kinds of small flowers and roses adorned the front of the house, and you might as well have sought for a diamond over the whole place, as a weed.”

Analyze Eastman's portrayal of Phillis' condition as a slave. What impact do you think this description had on the pro-slavery movement?

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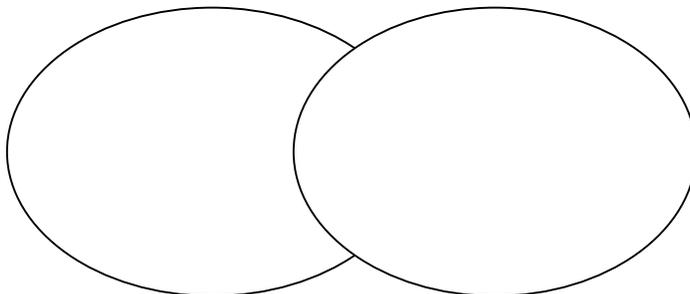
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Historical Context:

Complete the Venn diagram to compare *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to *Aunt Phillis' Cabin*. Think about the author's background and when and where the novel takes place.



**Post-Reading Activity**

- Based on the analysis these primary resources and and based upon your own background knowledge, formulate a thesis statement will directly answer the focus question of the writing prompt.
- Use the chart below to organize supportive details.
- Respond to the questions of the writing prompt by proving your thesis statement.
- Be sure to use evidence from the primary resources and your own background knowledge.
- Review and revise your draft carefully (grammar, spelling, fact check). Be sure to compare your response to the rubric.

*Focus Question for writing prompt: How did the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (part of the Compromise of 1850) reveal differences between the North and the South? Explain how this event contributed to division in American culture.*

Thesis Statement:

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Your argument	Name of supporting primary resource	Citation from primary resource	Elaboration of your citation
