Standard 8.67 Lesson

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8.67 Explain the reasons for and the impact of the Compromise of 1850, including the roles played by Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun and the Fugitive Slave Law. (C,E,G,H,P)

Activity and assessment for this standard - http://mrkash.com/activities/compromise.html

Lesson explanation from Mr. Michael Zoller with the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1820. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tLSDJi9EyY
The Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Act


Biography of Daniel Webster

http://www.biography.com/people/daniel-webster-9526186

Biography of John C. Calhoun

http://www.biography.com/people/john-c-calhoun-37250
Three Senatorial Giants: Clay, Calhoun and Webster

Dartmouth College

Daniel Webster’s "Seventh of March" speech urged Senators from all regions of the nation to compromise their positions in order to save the Union.

HENRY CLAY of Kentucky, JOHN C. CALHOUN of South Carolina, and DANIEL WEBSTER of Massachusetts dominated national politics from the end of the War of 1812 until their deaths in the early 1850s. Although none would ever be President, the collective impact they created in Congress was far greater than any President of the era, with the exception of Andrew Jackson. There was one issue that loomed over the nation throughout their time in power — slavery. They were continuously successful in keeping peace in America by forging a series of compromises. The next generation’s leaders were not.

The Gold Rush led to the rapid settlement of California which resulted in its imminent admission as the 31st state. Southerners recognized that there were few slaves in California because Mexico had prohibited slavery. Immediate admission would surely mean California would be the 16th free state, giving the non-slaveholding states an edge in the Senate. Already holding the House of Representatives, the free states could then dominate legislation.

Texas was claiming land that was part of New Mexico. As a slave state, any expansion of the boundaries of Texas would be opening new land to slavery. Northerners were opposed. The north was also appalled at the ongoing practice of slavery in the nation’s capital — a practice the south was not willing to let go. The lines were drawn as the three Senatorial giants took the stage for the last critical time.

Henry Clay had brokered compromises before. When the Congress was divided in 1820 over the issue of slavery in the Louisiana Territory, Clay set forth the Missouri Compromise. When South Carolina nullified the tariff in 1832, Clay saved the day with the Compromise Tariff of 1833. After 30 years in Congress and three unsuccessful attempts at the Presidency, Clay wanted badly to make good with yet another nation-saving deal. He put forth a set of eight proposals that he hoped would pass muster with his colleagues.

( Pictured Above: John Calhoun once said of Henry Clay (shown above), "I don’t like Clay. He is a bad man, an imposter, a creator of wicked schemes. I wouldn’t speak to him, but, by God, I love him!")

John C. Calhoun took to the floor next. Although sick and dying with consumption, he sat sternly in the Senate chamber, as his speech was read. The compromises would betray the south, he claimed. Northerners would have to agree to federal protection of slavery for the south to feel comfortable remaining in the Union. His words foreshadowed the very doom to the Union that would come within the decade.

Daniel Webster spoke three days after Calhoun’s speech. With the nation’s fate in the balance, he pleaded with northerners to accept southern demands, for the sake of Union. Withdrawing his former support for the Wilmot Proviso, he hoped to persuade enough of his colleagues to move closer to Clay’s proposals. Although there was no immediate deal, his words echoed in the minds of the Congressmen as they debated into that hot summer.
By 1852, Clay, Calhoun, and Webster had all passed away. They left a rich legacy behind them. Clay of the West, Calhoun of the South, and Webster of the North loved and served their country greatly. The generation that followed produced no leader that could unite the country without the force of arms.

**The Compromise of 1850**

The plan was set forth. The giants — Calhoun, Webster, and Clay — had spoken. Still the Congress debated the contentious issues well into the summer. Each time Clay’s Compromise was set forth for a vote, it did not receive a majority. Henry Clay himself had to leave in sickness, before the dispute could be resolved. In his place, Stephen Douglas worked tirelessly to end the fight. On July 9, President Zachary Taylor died of food poisoning. His successor, Millard Fillmore, was much more interested in compromise. The environment for a deal was set. By September, Clay’s Compromise became law.

California was admitted to the Union as the 16th free state. In exchange, the south was guaranteed that no federal restrictions on slavery would be placed on Utah or New Mexico. Texas lost its boundary claims in New Mexico, but the Congress compensated Texas with $10 million. Slavery was maintained in the nation’s capital, but the slave trade was prohibited. Finally, and most controversially, a Fugitive Slave Law was passed, requiring northerners to return runaway slaves to their owners under penalty of law.

**FUGITIVE SLAVE LAWS:**

Mr Zoller explains the Fugitive Slave Law and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_BclXtN1WA

- Denied slaves the right to a jury trial
- Increased the penalty for interfering with the capture of runaway slaves (up to $1000 fine and six months in jail)
- Northerners were required to return slaves to their rightful owners
(Pictured Above: The Compromise of 1850 overturned the Missouri Compromise and left the overall issue of slavery unsettled.)

Compromise of 1850

**Table 1.1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Gets</th>
<th>South Gets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California admitted as a free state</td>
<td>No slavery restrictions in Utah or New Mexico territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slave trade prohibited in Washington D.C.</td>
<td>Slaveholding permitted in Washington D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas loses boundary dispute with New Mexico</td>
<td>Texas gets $10 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fugitive Slave Law</td>
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Who won and who lost in the deal? Although each side received benefits, the north seemed to gain the most. The balance of the Senate was now with the free states, although California often voted with the south on many issues in the 1850s. The major victory for the south was the Fugitive Slave Law. In the end, the north refused to enforce it. Massachusetts even called for its nullification, stealing an argument from John C. Calhoun. Northerners claimed the law was unfair. The flagrant violation of the Fugitive Slave Law set the scene for the tempest that emerged later in the decade. But for now, Americans hoped against hope that the fragile peace would prevail.