

Outline of the Missouri Compromise

- I. Background:
 - a. Territorial Expansion: The United States was expanding westward into newly acquired territories following the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.
 - b. Slavery Issue: The question of whether slavery would be allowed in these new territories became a major point of contention.
- II. Components of the Missouri Compromise:
 - a. Main Provisions: The Missouri Compromise consisted of several key provisions.
 - i. Missouri Enters as a Slave State: Missouri was admitted as a slave state, allowing slavery within its borders.
 - ii. Maine Enters as a Free State: Maine was admitted as a free state, prohibiting slavery within its borders.
 - iii. Slavery Line Established: A line of latitude, known as the 36°30' parallel, was established as the dividing line between free and slave territories in the western territories of the Louisiana Purchase.
- III. Significance:
 - a. Temporary Resolution: The Missouri Compromise temporarily resolved the issue of slavery expansion and maintained a balance between free and slave states in the Senate.
 - b. Preserving the Union: At the time, it was seen as a way to preserve the unity of the United States by avoiding disputes over the expansion of slavery.
- IV. Impact:
 - a. Slavery in the Louisiana Territory: The compromise allowed slavery to continue in Missouri but prohibited it in the northern part of the Louisiana Territory (above the 36°30' parallel).
 - b. Political Balance: The Missouri Compromise maintained the political balance between free and slave states in Congress.
 - c. Sectional Tensions: Over time, sectional tensions between the North and the South would persist, as the issue of slavery continued to be a source of conflict.
- V. Temporary Resolution:
 - a. The Missouri Compromise was considered a temporary solution to the issue of slavery expansion. It did not address the fundamental moral and political disagreements over slavery.
- VI. Repeal and the Kansas-Nebraska Act:
 - a. The Missouri Compromise's balance was upset by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which allowed settlers in the Kansas and Nebraska territories to decide whether or not to permit slavery. This effectively repealed the compromise's prohibition of slavery in certain territories.
- VII. Prelude to the Civil War:
 - a. The Missouri Compromise was one of several compromises and acts related to slavery in the years leading up to the American Civil War. It reflected the deep-rooted divisions between the North and the South over the issue of slavery and territorial expansion.