



# THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE – A PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TEACHER VERSION

**Subject Level:**

High School History

**Grade Level:**

9-12

**Approx. Time Required:**

45-60 minutes

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will be able to use a primary source to understand a historical event.
- Students will be able to read and interpret tables of data from the 1820 Census.
- Students will be able to explain the relationship between the Missouri Compromise and 1820 Census data for Maine and Missouri.

## Activity Description

Students will examine tables of data from the 1820 Census to understand the implications of the Missouri Compromise, specifically in Maine and Missouri.

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**Suggested Grade Level:**

9-12

**Approximate Time Required:**

45-60 minutes

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**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will be able to use a primary source to understand a historical event.
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- Students will be able to explain the relationship between the Missouri Compromise and 1820 Census data for Maine and Missouri.

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**Topic:**

- Missouri Compromise

**Skills Taught:**

- Analyzing a primary source
  - Identifying cause and effect
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## Materials Required

- The student version of this activity, 6 pages
- Calculators

## Activity Item

The following item is part of this activity. The item, its source, and instructions for viewing it online appear at the end of this teacher version.

- Item 1: 1820 Census Tables

For more information to help you introduce your students to the U.S. Census Bureau, read "[Census Bureau 101 for Students](#)." This information sheet can be printed and passed out to your students as well.

## Standards Addressed

See charts below. For more information, read

"[Overview of Education Standards and Guidelines Addressed in Statistics in Schools Activities](#)."

### Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

| Standard   | Strand                                | Cluster                               |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <p><b>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7</b></p> <p>Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.</p>  | RH 9-10 - History/<br>Social Studies  | Integration of<br>Knowledge and Ideas |
| <p><b>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7</b></p> <p>Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> | RH 11-12 - History/<br>Social Studies | Integration of<br>Knowledge and Ideas |

## UCLA National Standards for History: U.S. History Content Standards

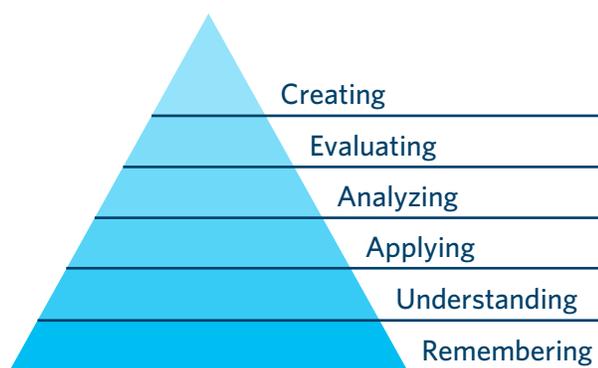
| Era                                      | Standard  |
|--|---|
| Era 4 - Expansion and Reform (1801-1861) | <b>Standard 3:</b> The extension, restriction, and reorganization of political democracy after 1800 |

## UCLA National Standards for History: Historical Thinking Standards

| Standard   | Description  |
|--|--|
| Standard 2: Historical Comprehension               | <b>Utilize visual and mathematical data.</b> Students will examine tables of 1820 Census data to understand the implications of the Missouri Compromise in Maine and Missouri. |
| Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation | <b>Hypothesize the influence of the past.</b> Students will use 1820 Census data to make educated guesses about the Missouri Compromise's influence in Maine and Missouri.     |

## Bloom's Taxonomy

Students will **analyze** census data for Maine and Missouri to determine the implications of the Missouri Compromise.



## Teacher Notes

### Before the Activity

Students should have a basic understanding of the following ideas and concepts:

- Regional tensions in the decades leading up to the Civil War, and the connection between those tensions and representation in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives
- The Missouri Compromise (including its repeal and ruling as being unconstitutional) and the connection between the passage of this legislation and the aforementioned regional tensions about representation
- The Three-Fifths Compromise

Teachers should be aware that **Item 1** includes 1820 Census data for Maine and Missouri in easy-to-read tables and in their original format (alongside the other states and territories that were part of that census).

Teachers could review the “Jefferson method” of apportionment with students. This document ([www.census.gov/population/apportionment/about/history.html](http://www.census.gov/population/apportionment/about/history.html)) provides more information about this method and others, dating back to the first census in 1790.

Teachers should lead a class discussion about the connection between slavery and the economy in both the North and South during the 1820s, asking students:

- What was the main source of income in the North in the 1820s?
- What were the primary industries in the North at that time? What about in the South?
- What were the characteristics, demographics, or backgrounds of the people working in industries in the South? How about in the North?

### During the Activity

Depending on students’ level of background knowledge, this activity should be teacher-led — meaning the teacher should complete the activity with students, stopping to answer questions and discuss concepts.

Teachers should also review **Item 1** with students to make sure they understand the data.

### After the Activity

Teachers should lead a class discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of political compromise.

### Extension Idea

Teachers could have students read and discuss Thomas Jefferson’s April 22, 1820, letter to John Holmes ([teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/letter-to-john-holmes](http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/letter-to-john-holmes)). Holmes was one of the first two senators from Maine following the Missouri Compromise. In the letter, Jefferson voiced his concern that despite the recently passed Missouri Compromise legislation, Americans’ conflicting views of states’ rights, slavery, westward expansion, and the powers of the federal government could bring the United States to the verge of civil war.

## Student Activity

Click [here](#) to download a printable version for students.

## Activity Item

The following item is part of this activity and appears at the end of this student version.

- Item 1: 1820 Census Tables

## Student Learning Objectives

- I will be able to use a primary source to understand a historical event.
- I will be able to read and interpret tables of data from the 1820 Census.
- I will be able to explain the relationship between the Missouri Compromise and 1820 Census data for Maine and Missouri.

1. In February 1820, the U.S. Congress faced a difficult challenge concerning the regulation of slavery. The pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions in Congress were intensely divided on whether to admit the Missouri territory as a state that allowed slavery or as a state that forbade it. At the time, equal numbers of states (11) permitted and prohibited slavery, so many Americans feared upsetting the balance of “free states” and “slave states.”

Why was maintaining the balance between free and slave states in the Senate so important? Why did people fear either a majority of free states or a majority of slave states?

**Opponents of slavery in the United States were worried that an increase in congressional power among slave states would lead to the expansion of slavery. Proponents of slavery had the opposite concern. Slaveholders claimed that enslaved people were imperative to their economic viability.**

2. In March 1820, Congress reached a compromise on the issue by admitting Missouri as a slave state while also admitting Maine (which had been part of Massachusetts) as a free state. The decision also included an amendment that forbade slavery in all U.S. land north of the 36°30' parallel — except for land in Missouri. This legislation became known as the Missouri Compromise, but it was temporary. Why didn't the Missouri Compromise last?

**The Missouri Compromise was later repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Act and declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in the Dred Scott decision.**

3. Use **Item 1: 1820 Census Tables** to answer the following questions and prompts.

- a. What information is presented in the tables? Be as specific as you can, providing examples where appropriate.

**The original table shows the numbers of people in each state and territory that fall into different categories by age, race, and gender, and by free or enslaved status. Student examples may vary but could include: The tables for Maine and Missouri include age groups younger than 14; 14 to younger than 26; 26 to younger than 45; and 45 and older.**

- b. The 1820 Census began approximately six months after Congress passed the Missouri Compromise. Looking at the 1820 Census data for the newly formed states of Maine and Missouri, what evidence do you see of this decision?

**Missouri, a slave state according to the Missouri Compromise, has data on the numbers of enslaved people in the state (the total being in the thousands). There are no data on enslaved people in Maine, however, because Maine was a free state according to the legislation (meaning slavery was not permitted there).**

- c. Between Maine and Missouri, which state had the greater number of “free colored persons,” and does this make sense in historical context? Why or why not?

**In 1820, Maine had more “free colored persons” (929) than did Missouri (347). Student answers about historical context may vary but should include that the finding makes sense because the Missouri Compromise outlawed slavery in Maine.**

- d. Look at the final column, labeled “Representative Numbers,” in the Maine and Missouri “free colored persons” tables. These numbers represent the total population (both free and enslaved) in each state, adjusted according to the Three-Fifths Compromise, which was used to determine the number of delegates that state would have in the House of Representatives. In 1821, the ratio for apportionment was one representative per 40,000 people.

Using this information and what you know about the “Jefferson method” of apportionment, estimate the number of delegates that Maine and Missouri would have in the House of Representatives in 1821. Show your work.

**Maine would have 7 representatives and Missouri would have 1.**

**For Maine:  $298,335/40,000 = 7.46$ , which rounds down to 7 per the “Jefferson method”  
For Missouri:  $62,496/40,000 = 1.56$ , which rounds down to 1 per the “Jefferson method”**

4. Based on your calculations from question 3d, do you think the Missouri Compromise was successful in maintaining a balance of power in Congress? (Keep in mind that both Maine and Missouri, like all other states, were also allowed two senators in the Senate and that this designation was not dependent on population.) Explain your answer.

**No, because it did not account for different population sizes. Apportionment per the 1820 Census resulted in unequal representation in the House for the two states — Maine had seven delegates and Missouri had only one. The balance of power was limited to the Senate.**

**TEACHER NOTE: The 12 non-slave states had 123 representatives, while the 12 slave states had 90. The cause for no balance in the House was mainly due to the increase in populations in non-slave states. Twenty-two of the 32 new representatives came from non-slave states.**

5. How are the effects of the Missouri Compromise visible in data from the 1820 Census?

**Student answers will vary but should reference data from Item 1.**

Item 1: 1820 Census Tables

| Maine Free Colored Persons |                          |                          |                         |                        |                            |                            |                           |  |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Males                      |                          |                          |                         | Females                |                            |                            |                           | Representative Numbers<br>(State Population) |
| Males under 14 years       | Males of 14 and under 26 | Males of 26 and under 45 | Males of 45 and upwards | Females under 14 years | Females of 14 and under 26 | Females of 26 and under 45 | Females of 45 and upwards |  |
| 170                        | 86                       | 91                       | 90                      | 168                    | 115                        | 126                        | 83                        | 298,335                                      |

Item 1: 1820 Census Tables (Continued)

| Missouri Slaves      |                          |                          |                         |                        |                            |                            |                           |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Males                |                          |                          |                         | Females                |                            |                            |                           |
| Males under 14 years | Males of 14 and under 26 | Males of 26 and under 45 | Males of 45 and upwards | Females under 14 years | Females of 14 and under 26 | Females of 26 and under 45 | Females of 45 and upwards |
| 2,491                | 1,511                    | 852                      | 487                     | 2,281                  | 1,461                      | 855                        | 284                       |

| Missouri Free Colored Persons |                          |                          |                         |                        |                            |                            |                           |  |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Males                         |                          |                          |                         | Females                |                            |                            |                           | Representative Numbers<br>(State Population) |
| Males under 14 years          | Males of 14 and under 26 | Males of 26 and under 45 | Males of 45 and upwards | Females under 14 years | Females of 14 and under 26 | Females of 26 and under 45 | Females of 45 and upwards |  |
| 93                            | 40                       | 36                       | 17                      | 62                     | 39                         | 34                         | 26                        | 62,496                                       |



# Item 1: 1820 Census Tables (Continued)

Aggregate amount of each description of persons in the **United States** and their **Territories**, according to the Census taken in virtue of the act of Congress of the 14th of March, 1820, and the act of the 5d of March, 1821; compiled from returns received at the Department of State.

| STATES AND TERRITORIES.        | Free white females of forty-five and upwards, including heads of families. | Foreigners not naturalized. | Number of persons engaged in Agriculture. | Number of persons engaged in Commerce. | Number of persons engaged in Manufactures. | SLAVES.                     |   |   |                                  |                             |   |   |                                  |                               |   |   |                                    | Total amount in each state and territory. | Representative numbers. |               |               |              |                  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|---|
|                                |  |                             |   |  |  | MALES.                      |   |   |                                  |                             |   | FEMALES.                                  |                                  |                               |   |   |                                    |   |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
|                                |  |                             |   |  |  | Males under fourteen years. | Males of fourteen and under twenty-six. | Males of twenty-six and under forty-five. | Males of forty-five and upwards. | Males under fourteen years. | Males of fourteen and under twenty-six. | Males of twenty-six and under forty-five. | Males of forty-five and upwards. | Females under fourteen years. | Females of fourteen and under twenty-six. | Females of twenty-six and under forty-five. | Females of forty-five and upwards. |   |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
| Maine                          | 18,527   | 1,680                       | 55,031                                    | 4,297                                  | 7,643                                      | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                             | -   | 66  | 298,335                            | 298,335                                   |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
| New Hampshire                  | 19,925   | 124                         | 32,284                                    | 1,068                                  | 8,699                                      | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                             | -   | 139   | 244,161                            | 244,161                                   |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
| Massachusetts                  | 46,171   | 3,425                       | 63,460                                    | 13,201                                 | 33,464                                     | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                             | -   | 128   | 323,287                            | 323,287                                   |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
| Rhode Island                   | 7,137  | 237                         | 12,559                                    | 1,162                                  | 6,091                                      | 2                           | 1                                       | 14  | 2                                | 3                           | 22                                      | 3   | 22                               | 3                             | 22  | 44  | 83,039                             | 83,039                                    |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
| Connecticut                    | 24,978   | 568                         | 50,518                                    | 3,581                                  | 17,541                                     | -                           | -                                       | 15  | 24                               | 13                          | 47                                      | 865                                       | 659                              | 1,421                         | 961                                       | 950   | 675                                | 100                                       | 275,248                 | 275,248       |               |              |                  |   |
| Vermont                        | 15,236   | 935                         | 50,951                                    | 776                                    | 8,484                                      | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                             | -   | 15  | 255,764                            | 255,764                                   |                         |               |               |              |                  |   |
| New York                       | 79,385   | 15,101                      | 247,648                                   | 9,113                                  | 60,038                                     | 1,861                       | 1,624                                   | 932                                       | 671                              | 1,544                       | 1,579                                   | 3,011                                     | 3,347                            | 1,903                         | 4,195                                     | 4,126                                       | 2,158                              | 701                                       | 1,372,812               | 1,372,812     |               |              |                  |   |
| New Jersey                     | 18,053   | 1,529                       | 49,812                                    | 1,850                                  | 15,941                                     | 860                         | 1,583                                   | 917                                       | 628                              | 392                         | 1,285                                   | 1,056                                     | 656                              | 3,328                         | 1,116                                     | 1,090                                       | 987                                | 766                                       | 149                     | 277,375       | 277,375       |              |                  |   |
| Pennsylvania                   | 59,592   | 10,728                      | 140,801                                   | 7,083                                  | 60,215                                     | 1                           | 1                                       | 18  | 65                               | 3                           | 2                                       | 36  | 85                               | 5,666                         | 3,348                                     | 3,890                                       | 4,063                              | 4,073                                     | 1,951                   | 1,049,398     | 1,049,398     |              |                  |   |
| Delaware                       | 3,289  | 331                         | 13,259                                    | 513                                    | 2,821                                      | 1,244                       | 859                                     | 337                                       | 135                              | 979                         | 611                                     | 553                                       | 130                              | 2,812                         | 1,317                                     | 1,207                                       | 1,143                              | 2,742                                     | -                       | 79,943        | 79,943        |              |                  |   |
| Maryland                       | 15,807   | 3,776                       | 79,135                                    | 4,771                                  | 18,640                                     | 24,756                      | 14,846                                  | 10,718                                    | 6,073                            | 22,740                      | 13,405                                  | 9,562                                     | 5,220                            | 7,829                         | 5,293                                     | 3,756                                       | 3,568                              | 7,857                                     | -                       | 407,250       | 364,389       |              |                  |   |
| Virginia                       | 35,686   | 2,142                       | 276,422                                   | 4,509                                  | 32,536                                     | 96,381                      | 52,791                                  | 45,438                                    | 23,164                           | 92,168                      | 51,972                                  | 40,691                                    | 21,748                           | 8,145                         | 3,884                                     | 3,153                                       | 2,683                              | 7,640                                     | 2,50                    | 1,065,566     | 895,303       |              |                  |   |
| North Carolina                 | 25,135   | 415                         | 174,196                                   | 2,551                                  | 11,844                                     | 48,914                      | 27,511                                  | 19,595                                    | 10,731                           | 45,055                      | 25,663                                  | 18,226                                    | 9,422                            | 3,415                         | 1,728                                     | 1,109                                       | 1,143                              | 3,129                                     | 1,737                   | 1,345         | 638,629       | 556,821      |                  |   |
| South Carolina (except Newbaw) | 12,934   | 1,205                       | 161,560                                   | 2,588                                  | 6,488                                      | 30,546                      | 31,484                                  | 30,868                                    | 14,417                           | 48,564                      | 32,064                                  | 29,690                                    | 15,550                           | 1,537                         | 719                                       | 639   | 504                                | 1,194                                     | 820                     | 4             | 490,509       | 389,394      |                  |   |
| Georgia                        | 9,041  | 465                         | 104,183                                   | 2,159                                  | 3,557                                      | 33,204                      | 19,541                                  | 16,249                                    | 6,922                            | 22,111                      | 19,879                                  | 15,651                                    | 6,089                            | 550                           | 195                                       | 180   | 146                                | 349                                       | 209                     | 139           | 340,989       | 281,126      |                  |   |
| Alabama                        | 2,895  | 162                         | 30,642                                    | 432                                    | 1,412                                      | 9,665                       | 6,563                                   | 4,200                                     | 1,552                            | 9,140                       | 6,141                                   | 3,779                                     | 1,039                            | 118                           | 83  | 68  | 49                                 | 91  | 69                      | 35            | 127,901       | 110,539      |                  |   |
| Mississippi                    | 1,596  | 181                         | 22,033                                    | 294                                    | 650  | 7,016                       | 4,600                                   | 4,061                                     | 1,173                            | 6,677                       | 4,307                                   | 3,506                                     | 974                              | 87                            | 62  | 53  | 38                                 | 84  | 52                      | 39            | 75,448        | 62,320       |                  |   |
| Louisiana                      | 3,102  | 3,145                       | 53,941                                    | 6,251                                  | 6,041                                      | 11,675                      | 10,576                                  | 10,520                                    | 3,495                            | 10,763                      | 11,672                                  | 7,753                                     | 5,505                            | 2,248                         | 876                                       | 913   | 470                                | 2,209                                     | 1,537                   | 854           | 153,407       | 125,779      |                  |   |
| Tennessee                      | 15,638   | 312                         | 101,919                                   | 882                                    | 7,860                                      | 20,314                      | 10,078                                  | 6,529                                     | 2,856                            | 19,251                      | 11,153                                  | 7,152                                     | 2,764                            | 700                           | 323                                       | 240   | 238                                | 532                                       | 297                     | 224           | 173           | 422,813      | 390,769          |   |
| Kentucky                       | 20,799   | 529                         | 123,161                                   | 1,617                                  | 11,779                                     | 31,469                      | 17,152                                  | 10,944                                    | 4,569                            | 29,251                      | 17,467                                  | 11,801                                    | 4,279                            | 583                           | 281                                       | 284   | 343                                | 488                                       | 254                     | 244           | 280           | 564,517      | 515,623          |   |
| Ohio                           | 23,689   | 3,595                       | 110,991                                   | 1,459                                  | 18,936                                     | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | 1,057                         | 544                                       | 568   | 315                                | 994                                       | 549                     | 466           | 260           | 381,434      | 361,434          |   |
| Indiana                        | 5,074  | 853                         | 61,515                                    | 429                                    | 3,229                                      | 43                          | 37                                      | 11  | 7                                | 40                          | 21                                      | 51  | 10                               | 275                           | 146                                       | 141   | 92                                 | 251                                       | 137                     | 120           | 68            | 147,178      | 147,102          |   |
| Illinois                       | 1,803  | 598                         | 12,295                                    | 253                                    | 1,007                                      | 170                         | 179                                     | 135                                       | 66                               | 139                         | 128                                     | 71  | 31                               | 86                            | 71  | 55  | 25                                 | 104                                       | 50                      | 44            | 22            | 55,211       | 54,843           |   |
| Missouri                       | 1,902  | 497                         | 14,247                                    | 465                                    | 1,953                                      | 2,491                       | 1,511                                   | 852                                       | 487                              | 2,281                       | 1,461                                   | 855                                       | 284                              | 93                            | 40  | 36  | 17                                 | 62  | 39                      | 34            | 26            | 66,586       | 62,496           |   |
| Territory of Michigan          | 366  | 656                         | 1,468                                     | 392                                    | 196  | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | -                           | -                                       | -   | -                                | 35                            | 27  | 11  | 30                                 | 20  | 16                      | 13            | 131           | 8,896        | -                |   |
| Territory of Arkansas          | 426  | 54                          | 3,613                                     | 79                                     | 179  | 323                         | 376                                     | 145                                       | 78                               | 293                         | 268                                     | 137                                       | 79                               | 18                            | 13  | 11  | 2                                  | 8   | 3                       | 1             | 3             | 14,273       | -                |   |
| District of Columbia           | 1,531  | 564                         | 863                                       | 512                                    | 2,184                                      | 1,245                       | 775                                     | 671                                       | 516                              | 1,511                       | 990                                     | 696                                       | 373                              | 796                           | 338                                       | 349   | 288                                | 828                                       | 549                     | 548           | 592           | 31,039       | -                |   |
| <b>Grand Total.</b>            | <b>462,419</b>   | <b>53,633</b>               | <b>2,065,495</b>                          | <b>73,297</b>                          | <b>349,247</b>                             | <b>342,460</b>              | <b>202,248</b>                          | <b>162,950</b>                            | <b>77,015</b>                    | <b>222,014</b>              | <b>201,969</b>                          | <b>151,922</b>                            | <b>70,329</b>                    | <b>47,640</b>                 | <b>24,035</b>                             | <b>23,442</b>                               | <b>17,586</b>                      | <b>45,869</b>                             | <b>28,764</b>           | <b>27,169</b> | <b>18,873</b> | <b>4,651</b> | <b>9,634,754</b> | - |

[www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/1820/data/tables/1820a-02.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/1820/data/tables/1820a-02.pdf)

Click on the link above and navigate to Page 5 of the PDF (Page 18 of the original document) to view the original table online.