



Compromise Scenario Cards

ALABAMA

You are a farmer, and you rent the land you farm. You do not own slaves. You believe that white men are the only real, legal, moral and civil proprietors of your state and country. You cannot vote.

CONNECTICUT

You are an emancipated black man. You are a tailor, and you are saving your salary to buy your wife and children from their owners. You are treated like a second-class citizen. You cannot vote.

DELAWARE

You are a farmer who owns three slaves. You believe you should be able to bring your property into any state or territory that you want. You believe that manual labor is the proper work for slaves.

GEORGIA

You are a wealthy tobacco planter originally from New York. Your plantation has 250 slaves. You believe the slaves are better off here in America than they would be in Africa. You are also a U. S. senator.

INDIANA

You are an 18-year-old carpenter's apprentice. You do not want to compete for a job with a black man, who will work for less wages. You are in favor of keeping the status quo. You cannot vote.

ILLINOIS

You are a farmer. You don't have an opinion on slavery, but you think the Southern states have too much influence in the government. You are in favor of new states joining the Union.

KENTUCKY

You raise and train racehorses. You own ten slaves. You treat them well, and you believe they are happy, content, and devoted to you and your family. You believe the Union will dissolve if legislators cannot compromise.

LOUISIANA

You are an overseer on a large cotton plantation in charge of 500 slaves. You believe they are better suited for the climate and labor than white men. You cannot vote.

MARYLAND

You are a cotton broker. You believe Cotton Is King. The more cotton the North needs, the more you profit. Slavery makes good economic sense to you.

MASSACHUSETTS

You are a newspaper editor in the city, and you ardently believe that it is the government's responsibility to abolish slavery. You write editorials denouncing the evils of slavery. Your views are not always popular.

MISSISSIPPI

You are a lawyer, and your best clients are plantation owners. You uphold the Slave Code, but you privately have doubts about the morality of slavery and question that the Constitution protects the institution of slavery.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

You are country doctor. You believe slavery will eventually and gradually die out as the South becomes more industrial. You are concerned that the majority of presidents have been slaveholders.

NEW JERSEY

You are a college graduate and a teacher who was tutor to a planter's family in the South. When you were warned not to teach the slaves, you left your position to return home. You believe that slaves should be repatriated to Africa.

NEW YORK

You are a minister who traveled through the South. You witnessed a slave auction. You are opposed to slavery on moral grounds and believe it is inconsistent with the Declaration of Independence.

NORTH CAROLINA

You own a small farm. You resent the plantation aristocracy and would like to see them overthrown. You believe Southerners should invest their money in the South rather than send it North. You see slavery as a necessary economic evil.

OHIO

You are a store clerk. You are a Quaker and a secret member of the Union Humane Society. You keep your membership secret because your neighbors do not agree that all men are born equal.

PENNSYLVANIA

You live in a town near the Mason-Dixon line. Sometimes escaped slaves stop by your house for help, but you don't want to break the law by helping them. You deny any knowledge of them when their owners post a reward.

RHODE ISLAND

You are a wealthy merchant whose family fortune was made in the slave trade. You now own a mill that processes cotton imported from the South. You employ immigrant labor. You dispute charges that mill workers are like slaves. You are making your family's second fortune.

SOUTH CAROLINA

You are a slave trader. Your business auctions three classes of slaves: servants, town slave, and field hands. You would like to expand your business. The more cotton the world needs, the more slaves you can auction.

TENNESSEE

You are a poor farmer. You don't own slaves and cannot afford to rent them to help with the harvest. You remember Gabriel Prosser and you are worried about slave rebellion.

VERMONT

You believe a free man has more motivation to work and succeed than an enslaved man. You believe where the manual labor of a country is performed by slaves, labor dishonors the hands of free men.

VIRGINIA

You are a free black man. You must carry a certificate of freedom, have a license to do business, and observe a curfew. You own three barber shops and several slaves.

ARKANSAS

You are a veteran of the Mexican-American War. Your service and the sacrifice of your comrades helped the United States acquire the new territories. You believe you have a right to establish slavery in the territories as long as it is below the line established by the Missouri Compromise.

IOWA

You are a banker. You own two slaves: a housekeeper and a handy man. Sometimes you rent out the handy man so that you can earn extra income. You believe abolitionists are attacking the Southern way of life and that abolition and the Union cannot co-exist.

FLORIDA

You are a slave catcher. Slavery is protected by the Constitution. You believe the Southern economy will collapse without the institution of slavery.

WISCONSIN

You live in a city and have never met a black person but you believe everything that you have heard about slaves: that they are lazy and shiftless. You don't have strong convictions one way or the other; you are too concerned with keeping a steady job to support your family.

TEXAS

You are a slave whose master is a Fire-Eater—he believes the North wants to rule the South and he thinks the South would be better off not being part of the Union. Your master is a good Christian who finds biblical justification for slavery. He believes that you are happy. You cannot vote.

MAINE

Your free state was created as a result of the Missouri Compromise. You are opposed to slavery, and in 1836 you petitioned Congress to abolish slavery and the slave trade in Washington, D.C. You believe that there is a law higher than the Constitution.

MISSOURI

You are a river boat captain. Your state was created as a result of the Missouri Compromise. You think the balance of power between the slave states and the free states is important. You are concerned that North will become too powerful because of greater representation in Congress.
