

MISSOURI CIVIL WAR POLITICS - ELECTION ANALYSIS - PRIMARY DOCUMENT ACTIVITY

MAIN IDEA

The election of 1860 was a defining turning point in United States history. By analyzing the opinions expressed in that election students will learn a great deal about the catastrophic events of the Civil War that followed, and Missouri's role in it.

TIME

45–60 minutes

GRADE LEVEL

8th grade–high school

BACKGROUND

On November 7, 1860, enfranchised citizens of the United States voted overwhelmingly over the issue of slavery expansion. Abraham Lincoln won the office of president with the smallest popular vote margin in the history of the country. This set the stage for the coming Civil War. In Missouri, people voted along regional lines, with St. Louis electing Republicans under Frank Blair Jr. and the tobacco-growing regions of the state voting for John C. Breckinridge. The vast majority of the state voted for middle-of-the-road candidates Stephen Douglas and John Bell, who both had moderate support for slavery but firm opposition to secession. These opinions foreshadowed Missouri's role as a border state in the Civil War.

OBJECTIVES

Students will...

1. Increase their familiarity with primary documents and how they are used.
2. Use data to form conclusions.
3. Understand the political views of Missourians during the Civil War.
4. Understand why Missouri had the tenuous position of a border state.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Gerteis, Louis S. *Civil War St. Louis (Modern War Studies)*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.
- Rombauer, Robert J. *The Union Cause in St. Louis in 1861: An Historical Sketch*. St. Louis: Press of Nixon-Jones Printing Co., 1909.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M., Fred L. Israel, and David J. Frent, eds. *The Election of 1860 and the Administration of Abraham Lincoln*. Philadelphia: Mason Crest Publishers, 2003.
- Snead, Thomas L. *The Fight for Missouri: From the Election of Lincoln to the Death of Lyon*. Independence, MO: Two Trails, 1997.

MATERIALS

Missouri Civil War politics worksheet (one for each student)

Pens/pencils

Colored pencils/markers (one red, blue, green, and brown for each student)

Missouri Republican article #1 (one for each group)

Missouri Republican article #2 (one for each group)

Election of 1860 info sheet

GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

GLE	Content
SOCIAL STUDIES	
SS7.A Identify, select, use, and create appropriate resources for social science inquiry	Students will use and interpret primary documents.
SS2a.H Understanding the causes and consequences of the Civil War	Students will analyze the election of 1860 and how it precipitated the Civil War.
SS7.A Using primary and secondary sources	Students will analyze two primary documents and contextualize them.
COMMUNICATION ARTS	
Listening and Speaking 2A	Students will present their findings in a clear, concise manner.
Information Literacy 1B	Students will use primary sources to acquire relevant information.
Information Literacy 1C	Students will record information in an organized fashion.

PROCEDURE

Phase	Description
Introduction	<p>Step 1: As a class, read the Election of 1860 info sheet.</p> <p>Step 2: Ask students, “Why do you think Missouri voted for Stephen Douglas when only one other state did so?” and “What do you think the election of 1860 can tell us about why Missouri became a border state?”</p>

Main

Step 3: Tell students they will be investigating documents and data that will help to answer those questions. Pass out the Missouri Civil War politics worksheet.

Step 4: Divide the class into groups of two or three.

Step 5: Have them complete section 1 of the Missouri Civil War politics worksheet.

Step 6: Once students are done, have them present their findings. Ask them, “What do you think Missourians thought about slavery and secession?” and “How do you think this affected their position in the Civil War?”

Step 7: Have students complete section 2 of the Missouri Civil War politics worksheet.

Step 8: Ask students, “Did Missourians vote differently based on the region they lived in?” and “If yes, why do you think that might be?” and “How might these divisions affect Missouri in the Civil War?”

Step 9: Pass out *Missouri Republican* article #1 and #2 and have students complete the Missouri Civil War politics worksheet, section 2.

Conclusion	<p>Step 11: Ask students to recap what they learned about Missouri's Civil War politics. On a separate sheet of paper have them answer the questions from the beginning of the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why did Missouri vote for Stephen Douglas?• Why do you think Missouri became a border state?
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**THE CIVIL
WAR IN
MISSOURI**



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www.civilwarmo.org

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The Election of 1860

Main Idea

The 1860 election, in which Abraham Lincoln was elected, was very important. The chaos that occurred during the campaign foreshadowed the war that was coming.

Presidential Election (Learn More Link) – see below

- In 1860 the political parties were more divided than today. There were:
 - 2 Democratic candidates
 - 1 Republican candidate
 - 1 Constitutional Union candidate
- Their disagreements were mainly about the expansion of slavery. The election was intense in the entire country, including Missouri.
- The winner of the election in Missouri was Stephen Douglas, of the Democratic Party, who was moderate in his opinions. By voting for him, Missourians showed that they rejected the arguments of Republicans and secessionists. This is why they became a border state. They wanted to keep slavery and stay in the Union.

Governor and State Assembly (Learn More Link – see below)

- In April of 1859 the Democratic Party selected Claiborne Fox Jackson as its candidate for governor.
- His closest competition was Sample Orr from the Constitutional Union Party.
- The election was close, but Jackson was declared the winner. It did not take long for Jackson's true colors to become clear. In his inaugural address he said that he would side with the South.

Conclusion

- The election of 1860 showed that Missourians desired to preserve the Union and slavery with it.
- Missourians, without knowing it, had elected a secessionist, Governor Jackson. He had campaigned as a middle-ground Democrat, but would try to drive Missouri into the Confederacy.
- The stage had been set for the power struggle that would bring Missouri to the edge of chaos.

Vocabulary

Popular sovereignty - a doctrine, held chiefly by the opponents of the abolitionists, that the people living in a territory should be free to choose their own policies, including whether or not to have slavery.

Sectional - pertaining or limited to a particular section; local or regional.

Border states - the slave states of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, which refused to secede from the Union in 1860–1861.

Defunct - no longer in effect or use; not operating or functioning.

Secession - the withdrawal from the Union of 11 Southern states in the period 1860–1861, which brought on the Civil War.

Democratic Party – The principal pro-slavery party of the era, it was divided over whether to embrace popular sovereignty or a policy of extending slavery into the territories.

Republican Party – Formed in 1854, it developed a platform that included opposition to the expansion of slavery.

Constitutional Union Party – Established in 1860, the party wanted to avoid disunion over the issue of slavery.

Learn More Sections

Presidential Election

In the 1860 election the nation and its political parties were divided far more than they are today. In today's elections two major candidates are chosen, one Republican and one Democrat. In 1860 even members of the same party had a hard time agreeing. The Democratic Party chose two candidates. The Republican Party took three votes to choose Abraham Lincoln, and there was even a third party, the Constitutional Union party. **The disagreements were mainly about slavery and its expansion into the territories.**

Stephen Douglas represented one wing of the Democratic Party, advocating popular sovereignty. John C. Breckinridge was chosen by the other, advocating that enslaving people was a right. The Republicans nominated the “Rail Splitter,” Abraham Lincoln, who opposed slavery’s expansion into the territories. Last, the Constitutional Union party nominated John Bell, arguing against the formation of sectional parties and disunion over the slavery issue.

The election was intense in the entire country, including Missouri. Robert Rombauer recounts in his book *The Union Cause in St. Louis in 1861*:

“It happened on election day a party of St. Louis hunters visited F. Kennett’s castle at Selma. . . . B. G. Farrar, who afterwards became a General in the Union service, was the only Republican in the party, and arrived at the polling place at a store in the woods, was warned by a countryman not to dare to cast a Republican vote. Farrar answered he will vote as he pleases and by way of caution and in full view of the countryman loaded his double-barreled gun with a full complement of buckshot, and cast his vote for Lincoln.”¹

This type of showdown was an extreme example, but in St. Louis interruptions of Lincoln speakers became so common that Republicans formed an organization called the Wide Awakes to protect against this type of behavior.

The winner of the election in Missouri was Stephen Douglas. He went on to lose the national election to Abraham Lincoln. However, the fact that Missourians voted for this middle-of-the-road candidate foreshadowed the position Missouri held in the Civil War as a border state.

Governor and State Assembly

In April of 1859 the Democratic Party selected Claiborne Fox Jackson as its candidate for governor. Jackson knew that his best chance of election was to support Stephen Douglas. He did so even though he was secretly in favor of secession. In reaction to this decision, supporters of John Breckinridge nominated their own candidate, Mosby Parsons. Also, a group of defunct parties, like the Whig and Know-Nothing parties, chose Sample Orr for the Constitutional Union Party. Finally, the Republicans put forth James B. Gardenhire as their choice. **The election was close, electing Jackson with 47 percent of the vote. Sample Orr finished second with 42 percent. After winning, Jackson’s true allegiances became clear. In his inaugural address in reaction to South Carolina’s secession from the Union, Gov. Jackson said,**

“The first drop of blood shed in a war of aggression upon a sovereign State will arouse a spirit which must result in the overthrow of our entire Federal system, and which this generation will never see quelled. . . . The destiny of the slave-holding States of this Union is one and the same. So long as a State continues to maintain slavery within her limits, it is impossible to separate her fate from that of her sister States.”²

¹ Rombauer, Robert J. *The Union Cause in Saint Louis 1861: An Historical Sketch*. Saint Louis: Press of Nixon-Jones Prtg Company, 1909.

² Rombauer. *The Union Cause in Saint Louis 1861*.

Missouri Republican article from November 3, 1860

The Chairman...
 Men's Democratic
 Ken's Club, for the
 our standard bear-
 that evening at
 invited to attend
 able and eloquent
 upon the political
KRON, Captain.

A. Association—
 tion **THIS EVENING**—
 President
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 Headquarters this
 form (black seats)
CAPTAIN.

wards, Co. No. 8
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 equipped with reg-
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 Market.
KEY, Captain.

members of the
 Headquarters, on
 of President.
AMES GEORGE.

DOWN?
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 rupulous cabinet,
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 ference in their
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 since the people
 l Convention, that
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 & **DOUGLAS** crush-
 . **BRECKINRIDGE**
 th. Will the free
 is country indorse
 ll they not, on the
 but undaunted

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE, WOULD BE
 elected next Tuesday to that high office, by a
 ermanent majority. As it is, he will receive a
 nder number of votes at the polls than either
 of the other candidates; and yet Mr. Cass
 talks "about getting him down." Mr. Cass
 deceives himself—Mr. **DOUGLAS** will have a seat
 in the Senate long after he is rejected by the peo-
 ple of this State, and forgotten—and the less he
 says about getting other people down the better.

CHOICE BETWEEN THEM.

The Black Republicans are trying to elect a
 President for the North.

The Secessionists are trying to elect a President
 for the South.

The National Democracy are trying to elect a
 President for the whole country, North and
 South.

The Black Republicans are trying to elect an
 ill-looking gentleman who owes all his distinction
 to the fact that he aspired to defeat **STEPHEN A.**
DOUGLAS for the United States Senate.

The Secessionists are trying to elect (?) a good
 looking gentleman who gained popularity by ad-
 vocating non-intervention on the stump with
STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, and who was elected Vice
 President, chiefly by the influence and efforts of
STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS.

The National Democracy are trying to elect the
 man who defeated the ill-looking gentleman and
 helped the good-looking gentleman—a man who
 has been known for twenty-five years for his pa-
 triotism, statesmanship and distinguished ability—
 the author of the Kansas-Nebraska bill—the
 advocate of the Compromise Measure—the op-
 ponent of the Wilmot Proviso—the warm friend
 of a Homestead law—the enemy of proscription—
 and the earnest defender of popular rights.
STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS is that man.
 "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve."

TOOTING HIS OWN HORN.

If Mr. Senator **GREEN** were half as good at
 blowing the trumpet of Mr. **BRECKINRIDGE**, as
 he is at tooting his own, we should trouble far

DISUNION.

We have not
 this subject, but
 to reflect upon
 doubt that aims
 are loyal to the
 it in a most im-
 occasion is real

EMERSON

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MR. FAIRBANKS

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Missouri Republican article from November 4, 1860

MARSHY MONDAY, 5TH NOV-1860

Let of the Douglas Civil Guards to recall our judgments in full uniform of regt, and also the Young Men's Democratic Union, Broken Rangers, Workingmen's Clubs and Associations are called out by the friends of the Union, Douglas and him out in their might. The time is short election, and let all the friends of the new meeting unite them the **GRAND KINGS** of the arena.

JAMES H. LUCAS,
Chairman of Central Committee
JAMES G. BARRY,
Asst Executive Committee of D. C. O.

The Presidential election is concerned is nearly at an end. What remains is for the people to deposit their ballot box, and then for the good of the country to acquiesce in the decision he polls by those who have the authority. It is a high prerogative, determining who shall preside over the of so mighty a nation—a prerogative, not always exercised with sound discretion in many instances, grossly abused, and with no man because he may happen come to us to the merits of a candidate all trust, but we have a right to demand that after having exercised this privilege to the will of the majority, as exit the ballot box. We deny that there is any thing in the election now so close at hand, if out of the rule which has governed which preceded it. While we see a fair prospect of the election, by the vote of New York, we that his election, or itself, will justify us at accession on the part of South or any other State. We even deny to that sympathy which they are seeking all over the country—for they, and they will be held responsible for his should that calamity be brought upon here a sane man anywhere who will not if Mr. DOUGLAS' nomination had been with the same cordiality that attended EARL'S nomination four years ago, he would be elected by three-fourths of the electors of the Union. Need proofs be cited fact? They are to be found in every held since the nomination was made. But the sudden, ungrateful opposition under the orders of the Administration, after agreements in the Southern States had their design to destroy the Democratic rather than to permit it to succeed, with EARL at its head—nothing but the disunion introduced into the party in

The Union must be sustained, and they who would never it are traitors to their country and their God.

The spirits of departed great men must look down on us and mourn that we are becoming so degenerate, turning our backs on the cause of '76. Well may foreign powers look at us and point the finger of scorn when they see the in-estates broils that are rending our glorious nation. If hot-headed fanatics, North or South, East or West, are to rule this people, well may our women weep and brave men bow down their heads in shame and beat their breasts, crying, "Ishabod, Ishabod!"

It cannot, must not be. The prayer of the nation should be that the coming contest should make us rise, Phoenix like, from the ashes of consumed strife to a new and higher life, determined to keep inviolable and undivided our glorious stars and stripes.

Will our Constitution make a nation of man or woman to breathe one word of dissension—Can the Union be divided and stand? As well might the stars of heaven sweep down and retain their places, as for this people to become two. It is a moral as well as a political impossibility.

One as much wiser as he was better than we, has said "Howe divided against itself cannot stand. What is it desires this separation? Is it the base and sly of our country? Is it the office seeker, crack-brained politician, ranting Abolitionists, enraged, perhaps disappointed fire eaters, and misguided preachers, that would draw down the very bolts of heaven on a devoted people? Blind Pharisees are they all—blind to their own destruction, only seeing that perchance they may gorge and fatten themselves on the wealth of the Union, though they must, Sempron-like, perish in its downfall.

Oh, that there were some Hercules who could pour the waters of "Peneus" and "Alpheus" among us, and clear our wide domain of all the foul filth that is festering discontent and dissatisfaction among us. It must, it will be so, and if the people will come boldly to the rescue, the "Little Giant" will go forth in his might and make a glorious revolution in the political arena. He is the man for the times. Old Buck has held the reins and guided, with his minions, the chariot too long; but it is not yet too late. Union and liberty have been ours too long to perish so ignobly. The conflict is deepening, and we will come out victorious! Yes, the people must and will remain firm and true to their glorious birth-right, obtained through blood of their ancestors. Long live the Union!

New Haven, Mo.

A GLORIOUS CAREER.

failed to intervene in favor of the DOUGLASS party. The adoption of a policy nor even their withdrawal. So always from the beginning of DOUGLASS' views of claims. As Democrats the Democratic party, sustain him till the last day, because he is a man of fair mind, because he is fair and because his election him an able President, would redound to the c

Every Douglas man is vote his testimony to the and the merits of his ex do this, regardless as prophecies about the de the triumph of the Rep of any such triumph do the time for voting on one great day and pi that is, to vote his epial like an intelligent, in freeman, who has well c is, and has determined t

The Black Republican ing shouts of victory be to frighten off or dishe as to reduce the vote of at the ballot-box. Let faction. Every Dougl every vote of all eve who declare that they a orotically and practic should find its way to t misting. It is impo that should declare their fa country may see its stru be elected President. I at this election; BULL vention must not fail. that it will not fail, fo principle, cherished in But it should not shw weakness, from a defa porters absenting them as idea that their votes one of these votes will them there are, the mo of the principle spring its enemies.

It is now superfluous to discourse at length ty. All; then, that w now is that, secured at cally the only doctrine; United States will list, territorial government.



**MISSOURI CIVIL WAR POLITICS - ELECTION ANALYSIS - PRIMARY DOCUMENT ACTIVITY -
PART 1**

Inquiry Question: Based on how Missourians voted in the 1860 presidential election, what can we tell about their political views in the lead-up to the Civil War? How did these views affect Missouri's position as a border state in the war?

Instructions: Use Table 1 (Voter Distribution) and Table 2 (Candidate Views) to theorize what the majority of Missourians thought about the following issues:

Slavery: _____

Secession: _____

Table 1: Voter Distribution

Name	Party	Popular Vote Nationally	Popular Vote in Missouri
Stephen Douglas	Democrat	29.5%	35.5%
John Bell	Constitutional Union	12.5%	35.3%
John C. Breckinridge	Southern Democrat	18.1%	18.9%
Abraham Lincoln	Republican	39.9%	10.3%

Table 2: Candidate Views

Name	Party	Positions
Stephen Douglas	Democrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported popular sovereignty in all of the territories; author of the Kansas-Nebraska Act - Moderately pro-slavery - Opposed to secession - Experienced politician
John Bell	Constitutional Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported popular sovereignty in Western territories, but not the Louisiana Purchase Territory (including Kansas and Nebraska) - Mixed slavery stance - Strongly opposed to

		secession
John C. Breckinridge	Southern Democrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported expansion of slavery into all territories - Strongly pro-slavery - Open to secession as right of states³
Abraham Lincoln	Republican	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opposed to extension of slavery into all territories - Moderately anti-slavery - Strongly opposed to secession⁴

³ Jeffery A. Jenkins and Irwin L. Morris, "Running to Lose?: John C. Breckinridge and the Presidential Election of 1860," *Electoral Studies* 25, no. 2 (June 2006): 314.

⁴ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Fred L. Israel, and David J. Frent, eds., *The Election of 1860 and the Administration of Abraham Lincoln* (Philadelphia: Mason Crest Publishers, 2003).

**MISSOURI CIVIL WAR POLITICS - ELECTION ANALYSIS - PRIMARY DOCUMENT ACTIVITY -
PART 2**

Inquiry Question: How did Missouri regions vote in the presidential election of 1860?

Instructions: Use Table 3 (Data for the Election of 1860 in Missouri by County) to fill out the blank Missouri map using the following color code, based on who won that county in the election of 1860.

- Lincoln: Red
- Douglas: Blue
- Bell: Green
- Breckinridge: Brown

Table 3: Data for the Election of 1860 in Missouri by County

<u>County</u>	<u>Lincoln</u>	<u>Breckinridge</u>	<u>Douglas</u>	<u>Bell</u>
Adair	185	339	616	293
Andrew	97	319	819	677
Atchison	68	63	645	165
Audrain	1	206	580	289
Barry	1	286	257	333
Barton	28	93	107	76
Bates	30	348	511	386
Benton	74	100	574	306
Bollinger	23	99	250	166
Boone	12	652	578	1,671
Buchanan	452	614	1,626	1,287
Butler	1	17	235	88
Caldwell	43	186	263	367
Callaway	15	472	839	1,306
Camden	6	132	269	224
Cape Girardeau	175	325	543	651
Carroll	3	276	752	552
Carter	0	83	4	16
Cass	23	607	242	715
Cedar	4	277	324	266
Chariton	1	295	692	608
Christian	0	368	120	342
Clark	277	497	542	752
Clay	0	305	528	1,045
Clinton	11	314	368	674
Cole	114	487	430	226

Cooper	20	281	988	952
Crawford	35	192	169	243
Dade	8	305	282	406
Dallas	20	172	225	288
Daviess	33	265	692	545
De Kalb	7	213	239	243
Dent	7	338	207	243
Dunklin	0	79	150	209
Franklin	494	108	888	577
Gasconade	433	51	188	157
Gentry	201	259	873	517
Greene	42	414	298	986
Grundy	129	190	416	507
Harrison	297	50	910	319
Henry	16	232	623	703
Hickory	15	143	298	197
Holt	202	171	453	348
Howard	0	247	939	920
Howell	0	91	136	176
Iron	109	36	349	194
Jackson	191	943	1,095	1,473
Jasper	38	192	407	424
Jefferson	149	155	490	419
Johnson	18	527	617	1,224
Knox	161	301	687	520
Laclede	6	276	189	335
Lafayette	24	371	774	1,577
Lawrence	59	516	138	445
Lewis	43	597	468	833
Lincoln	3	396	806	725
Linn	105	219	521	546
Livingston	20	470	401	578
McDonald	3	195	206	138
Macon	134	414	1,176	655
Madison	9	98	305	226
Maries	7	309	98	95
Marion	235	432	1,240	1,386
Mercer	80	169	682	491
Miller	23	495	94	193

Mississippi	1	185	233	305
Moniteau	87	332	476	546
Monroe	8	408	680	1,086
Montgomery	45	83	612	658
Morgan	18	204	550	321
New Madrid	0	160	117	223
Newton	22	255	654	406
Nodaway	148	274	546	265
Oregon	2	245	66	45
Osage	258	308	235	190
Ozark	0	155	81	69
Pemiscot	0	70	118	154
Perry	139	63	467	217
Pettis	9	211	369	615
Phelps	37	430	254	199
Pike	15	420	1,117	1,300
Platte	6	877	845	1,208
Polk	4	477	125	730
Pulaski	7	281	107	62
Putnam	111	246	590	369
Ralls	1	149	391	585
Randolph	0	520	360	821
Ray	9	233	881	1,006
Reynolds	4	85	123	38
Ripley	0	232	78	74
St. Charles	533	64	832	619
St. Clair	1	249	344	338
St. Francois	19	141	592	421
St. Genevieve	48	72	351	217
St. Louis	9,946	611	9,266	4,932
Saline	0	366	563	1,035
Schuyler	14	251	455	267
Scotland	197	187	741	436
Scott	6	192	215	243
Shannon	2	123	27	38
Shelby	90	293	476	702
Stoddard	0	198	230	385
Stone	0	112	83	31
Sullivan	83	575	557	373

Taney	0	287	97	43
Texas	6	511	61	194
Vernon	0	380	151	207
Warren	95	89	510	307
Washington	28	62	635	493
Wayne	3	291	185	245
Webster	7	376	172	335
Wright	0	369	44	128
TOTAL	17,029	31,374	59,093	57,975

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⁵ “The 1860 Election in Missouri.” <http://www.missouridivision-sev.org/election.htm>.

Map of the state of Missouri, divided by state

Instructions: color each county by who earned the most votes in the election of 1860.



MISSOURI CIVIL WAR POLITICS - ELECTION ANALYSIS - PRIMARY DOCUMENT ACTIVITY - PART 3

Inquiry Question: What reasons did supporters give for voting for Stephen Douglas, who went on to win the state of Missouri in the election of 1860?

Instructions: Read the two editorials from the *Missouri Republican* and list the reasons they give for supporting Stephen Douglas over his opposition in the election of 1860.

Article 1	Reason #1:
	Reason #2:
	Reason #3:
	Reason #4:
	Reason #5:
Article 2	Reason #1:
	Reason #2:
	Reason #3:
	Reason #4:
	Reason #5: