Pre-Civil War Discussion Questions

**Discussion Questions:**

*Discuss each of the following questions with a partner and answer on a blank sheet of notebook paper.*

1. How did the Wilmot Proviso reinvigorate tensions between slave states and free states?
2. Describe the formation and platform of each the Free Soil and Republican parties.
3. What was the popular sovereignty movement and how did it essentially side-step the slavery issue?
4. Explain the primary components of the Compromise of 1850 and discuss how certain components increased sectional tensions.
5. What three men formed what is known as the “Great Triumvirate” and why were they named as such?
6. Defend or challenge the following statement: “so you’re the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war.” (Lincoln upon meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe).
7. How did Stephen Douglas circumvent the issue of a northern route (through Chicago) for the transcontinental railroad?
8. In what way did the Kansas-Nebraska Act negate the Missouri Compromise of 1820?
9. Explain the term “bleeding Kansas”.
10. Discuss the Dred Scott Supreme Court case.
    1. What was the issue in the case?
    2. What was the holding by the court?
    3. How did the Dred Scott decision impact American politics and create increased sectional tensions?

**Debate Statement:**

*Defend one of the following viewpoints as the primary cause of the Civil War:*

1. Slavery
2. Constitutional Disputes
3. Economic Differences
4. Political Blunders and Extremism