# Election of 1860 Debate

**Description**:  We will put on a mock debate between the four candidates involved in the Election of 1860 – Abraham Lincoln, Stephen A Douglas, John Breckinridge, and John Bell.  Each debate team will have a set of roles that need to be filled.  Your team needs to decide who will be doing what.

**Debate Team:**

2 – Debaters

(Responsible for filling out script with appropriate answers based on reading article and textbook.  Debaters will take turns in debate responding to questions.)

2 – Supporters

(Responsible for writing a 1-paragraph paper describing "why they are voting for [their candidate]."  They can take on the role of a factory worker, slave, slave owner, or a farmer.  Testimonials will be read aloud during debate.)

3 – Campaign Managers

(Responsible for creating the propaganda needed for the election.  You might create mock campaign buttons, posters, or flyers.  Most important though, they are responsible for creating a campaign poster that shows the party platform (what their candidate believes) on the poster.)

**Grade:**  Each participate will receive a 10-point grade for their production and time-on-task during this debate.

Debate Script:

To be used by the debaters.  Use this to follow along during the debate, but write your answers in your notebook.  You can have both papers to read from during your debate.


**Moderator:** Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to tonight's debate.  As you all know, we live in a moment in our nation's history unlike any other.  Kansas and Nebraska are erupting in violence.  Recently, abolitionist John Brown brought violence to a federal arsenal, and the Supreme Court has recently said that no slave, ever, even if freed, can become a citizen.  The challenges that remain ahead are not small, however, through debate, we all hope we can rise above.

> First, let us go around the hall and we'll have each candidate introduce himself, where he is from, and what political party he represents.

**Lincoln:** _____

**Douglas:** _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Bell:** _____

**\*\*Each group is to cheer for their candidate after he speaks**


**Moderator:**  This position of President is a very difficult one.  What experience do you have that you believe makes you ready to hold this position?

**Lincoln:** _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Douglas:** _____

**Bell:** _____


**Moderator:**  Now, let us begin the debate.  We will start with the issue of slavery.  If you were President, how would you handle this issue as we move into the future?

**Douglas:** _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Lincoln:** _____

**Bell:** _____

**Moderator:** Think about what has happened recently – the violence in "Bleeding Kansas", John Brown's attempt to arm slaves in order to lead a violent revolt. If you had your way with slavery, how do you think the people would respond? Also, is there a peaceful way out of this?

**Lincoln**: _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Douglas:** _____

**Bell:** _____

**Moderator:** Thank you gentlemen for your response. We will take a short break now and hear from real voter testimonials. (Each team will now send one person to read their paragraph testimonials).

**Douglas:** _____

**Lincoln:** _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Bell:** _____

**Moderator:** There has been a lot of talk lately about letting new territories decide slavery for themselves. What are your thoughts about "popular sovereignty?"

**Lincoln**: _____

**Douglas:** _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Bell:** _____

**Moderator:** The North has more fields and a larger agricultural output than the South. Yet, instead of slave labor the North has invested in advanced machinery and technology. Why can't the South do the same?

**Breckinridge**: _____

**Douglas:** _____

**Lincoln:** _____

**Bell:** _____

**Moderator:**  Mr. Lincoln, you are clearly the anti-slavery candidate.  How do you think the American people will respond if you are elected?

**Lincoln**: _____


**Moderator:**  Mr. Douglas, same question to you, how do you think American's will respond if you are elected?

**Douglas**: _____


**Moderator:**  Mr. Breckinridge, how do you envision the United States 10 years from now?

**Breckinridge:** _____


**Moderator:**  Mr. Bell, same question, how do you envision the United States 10 years from now?

**Bell:** _____


**Moderator:**  We will conclude the structured debate style now with the last of our voter testimonials.  Lets hear what other people have to say regarding their candidate!

**Douglas:** _____

**Lincoln:** _____

**Breckinridge:** _____

**Bell:** _____


**Moderator:**  We have concluded the structured question part of this debate.  We will now move to an "open forum."  Any candidate can now wish to debate another candidate about their party platform.  Candidates are to raise their hand and they will be called on to engage another candidate.

(We will continue with this as time allows).


**Moderator:**  Thank you all for this peaceful and friendly debate.  Your participation is essential to a functioning democracy.