**“A” Sample Responses**

**1. Why did Northerners find *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* so compelling? Why did southerners find it so repellent?**

Uncle Tom's Cabin published in 1852 by Harriet Beecher Stowe was the 2nd best-selling book of the century, with over 310,000 copies sold. Though technically a fictional novel, Northerners found the book compelling as they got a real personal look at to the life of a slave and the cruelty of southern plantation owners towards their slaves, of which was the first time for many. Harriet Beecher Stowe humanized African American slaves with her heroine character Eliza Harris as well as Tom which fueled the abolitionist movement up North. The scene in which Tom’s white slave owner demands and later threatens Tom to whip a fellow slave for being unable to work was particularly disturbing and portrayed slave owners as selfish, cruel, and inhumane. Southerners, on the other hand, were disgusted and threatened by the book's slanderous depiction of slave owners and what they considered a perverse perspective of slavery (while also pointing out it was not based on actual characters/people). The book undid all of the plantation owners' efforts in polishing the paternalistic image of slavery of which they were so desperately trying to sell to the North in order to justify the dying institution. The work Southerners did in bettering slave living conditions and 'saving' black souls with the institution of churches on plantations meant nothing when Northerners were exposed to the reality of slavery that Stowe presented.

**2. What were the key points of the Supreme Court ruling in the *Dred Scott* case?**

During the ruling of the court case *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, Chief Justice Roger Taney made two key points as to why Dred Scott, despite living in Minnesota with his slave owner which was free territory for years, was not a free man. The first point being that the US didn’t have to honor any rights Dred Scott had as an American citizen because black men (free or otherwise) had no rights under the Constitution. As he elaborated, the Constitution had been written by white men for white men and had not intended to include blacks (free or otherwise) in terms of rights of citizenship. Taney’s analysis of the Constitution denounced blacks as second class citizens at best and akin to property (as written in the ⅗ clause and Article IV Section 2.). Taney’s second point being that because the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional (based on his argument that the federal government had no authority in the Constitution to limit slavery), the territory of which Dred Scott had been living in was not considered a free territory so under the Fifth Amendment the court could not deprive Dred Scott’s master his right to property, or in this case, Scott.