

The Fugitive Slave Law QUESTIONS

For this assignment, you will read 2 selections on the Fugitive Slave Law, which was part of the Compromise of 1850. One is from a northerner who opposed enforcement of the law. The other is from a Southerner who was angry that the law was not enforced. Answer the following questions, based on your reading of these selections.

Renewing the Sectional Struggle, 1848 – 1854
Pages 407 – 410

Joshua Giddings Rejects Slave Catching (1850)

1. Define the following words:
 - a. abettor
 - b. galling
 - c. posse
 - d. accessory
 - e. quiver
 - f. constrained
 - g. famish
 - h. benumb
 - i. constabulary
 - j. compel
 - k. metamorphose
 - l. bayonet
 - m. bid
 - n. scorn
 - o. libel
2. How convincing is Giddings' charge that Northerners would be accessories to the murder of slaves if they enforced the Fugitive Slave Act?
3. What makes the murder of slaves even worse than a regular murder?
4. What "higher law" is Giddings referring to? Who else advocated obeying a higher law? How does Giddings' position relate to the Southern belief in nullification?

Robert Rhett Resents a Hoax (1851)

1. Define the following words:
 - a. hoax
 - b. statute
 - c. custom-house
 - d. formidable
 - e. artifice
 - f. expedient
 - g. rigor
 - h. endeavor

- i. embarrassment
 - j. resort
 - k. remedy
2. What obstacles are there to enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law?
 3. Evaluate Rhett's charge that the Fugitive Slave Law was a "deliberate hoax".