

Small Group American Literature 2024 Summer Assignment

Name _____

Date _____

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

**Answer the following questions as you read each chapter.

Chapter 1

1. Explain what Douglass knows about his family and his birth.
2. Explain a slave's calendar.
3. Explain how Douglass was able to see his mother occasionally. What happens to his mother and how does he feel afterward? Explain.
4. Explain why Douglass thinks it is harder to be a slave if your father is also the slave's master.
5. Describe Douglass's first master.
6. Describe overseer Plummer.
7. Describe the first horrible incident of cruelty that Douglass sees. How does the event affect him?
8. Why doesn't Douglass include profanity in his book?

Chapter 2

1. Describe the plantation where Douglass lives. With what family does he live?
2. Describe the slaves' yearly allowance.
3. Describe Mr. Severe, the overseer.
4. Describe Mr. Hopkins, the overseer.
5. Explain how slaves feel about working on the Great Farm. What is the irony of this situation?
5. Explain the slaves' singing. What does Douglass say that other people do not realize about the singing?

Chapter 3

1. Describe Colonel Lloyd's garden and the steps taken to protect the garden.
2. Describe the job of Barney and young Barney. How are they treated?
3. Explain the situation with the slave meets his master and does not know who he is. What does the slave tell the master and what happens to the slave? Why is this done?
4. Define the prejudice which is found among slaves. Why is this ironic?

5. Explain the final three sentences of the chapter.

Chapter 4

1. In what ways is Mr. Austin Gore a first-rate overseer? Give examples.

2. Explain the story about Demby. What does the story tell about slaves, about Gore and about the society at that time?

3. What proof does Douglass give that whites can get away with murdering slaves?

Chapter 5

1 Describe Douglass's early life as a slave.

2. Describe how the slave children are fed. What simile does Douglass use?

3. Where will Douglass now go and how does he feel about it? Why? How does he feel about leaving the plantation?

4. Describe Douglass's preparations before leaving for Baltimore.

5. Why does Douglass only say that he left on a Saturday? (Why not a date?)

6. What does Douglass see when he enters the Auld's home? How does he feel?

7. What do the Aulds call Douglass?

8. Why does Douglass view his arrival in Baltimore as a "gateway" and "providence"? (Explain the symbolism)

9. Explain the final paragraph of the chapter.

Chapter 6

1. Describe Douglass's new mistress and how she treated him in the beginning.

2. Describe how Douglass felt when he first learned how to read. Why did the lessons stop? How did this affect Douglass?

3. Cite the reasons Mr. Auld tells his wife for not teaching slaves to read.

4. According to Douglass, what is behind the white man's power and what does he now understand as the pathway from slavery to freedom? (Metaphor)

5. Explain what Douglass means when he says that he owed both Mr. and Mrs. Auld for this incident.

6. Compare and contrast the treatment of slaves on the plantation to the treatment of slaves in town.

7. Describe the lives of Henrietta and Mary.

Chapter 7

1. For how long does Douglass live with the Auld's?
2. Explain what Douglass means when he says, "Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me" (22; ch. 7).
3. How does Douglass continue learning how to read?
4. Describe the tone of the sentence "...for it is almost an unpardonable offence to teach slaves to read in this Christian country."
5. How do the little white boys treat Douglass? Explain.
6. Explain how the book *Columbian Orator* affects Douglass.
7. Find the personification (24).
8. In what ways does reading become more of a curse to Douglass?
9. What does Douglass say about suicide?
10. Describe the impact of the incident of the two Irishmen.
11. What promise does Douglass make to himself? What must he do in order to do this?
12. How and why does Douglass learn how to write?

Chapter 8

1. Why does Douglass have to return to his place of birth?
2. Describe the valuation process. In what ways does Douglass think this procedure is harder for him than for other slaves?
3. With whom does Douglass prefer to live? Why?
4. Explain the incident between Master Andrew and Douglass's brother.
5. Describe what is done with Douglass's grandmother.
6. Why will Douglass have to go to St. Michael's? How does he feel about leaving?
7. How has Master Hugh changed?
8. What information is Douglass able to garner during his trip in the boat? Why is this information so valuable?

Chapter 9

1. What date is Douglass finally able to offer? Where is he?
2. What fears and pains return to Douglass?
3. Describe the slaves who are with Douglass.

4. Explain what Douglass says about religion in this chapter.
5. Describe Captain Auld. In what ways is he worse than someone who is born a slaveholder?
6. Describe Mr. Cookman and how he treats the slaves.
7. What happens with the first school for slaves?
8. Tell the story of Henny.
9. Describe Douglass's job and what keeps happening to him.
10. Why does Douglass continue to want to go to Master William Hamilton's house?
11. Where will Douglass now be sent? Why?

Chapter 10

1. Describe Douglass's early life on the farm with Mr. Covey. How did this experience change Douglass?
2. Describe Edward Covey. What do the slaves call him? Why?
3. Describe Caroline and Covey's plans for her.
4. In what way does Douglass say Covey broke him? Be specific (38).
5. On page 39, Douglass states, "You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man." Explain.
6. How is Douglass treated when he reaches his master's store?
7. How does Sandy try to help Douglass? What does this tell us about the survival of the slaves?
8. Douglass says that his "battle with Mr. Covey was the turning point in my career as a slave" (43; ch.10). Explain.
9. Douglass says, "I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact" (43; ch. 10). Explain.
10. What explanation does Douglass give for Mr. Covey not turning Douglass over to the sheriff or the law?
11. Explain the point Douglass is making when he delivers the story about Christmas, liquor, molasses, etc.
12. How does Douglass's life change when he goes to live with Mr. Freedland?
13. Describe Freedland.
14. Explain the point Douglass makes about religious slaveholders.

15. Describe Douglass's Sabbath school and how he feels running the school.
16. In 1835 what does Douglass resolve? What plans does he make?
17. Look at page 50. Douglass outlines the fears the slaves have in trying to escape. Analyze his fears and the effects they have on the slaves.
18. Explain what happens to thwart the escape attempt.
19. Explain how Mrs. Freedland treats Douglass. Why?
20. Who rescues Douglass from prison? Why?
21. Describe the fight that takes place in the shipyard. How is Douglass later treated by the Aulds? Why doesn't the sheriff do anything about the incident?
22. At the end of chapter 10 we see that Douglass is indeed becoming his own man. How? Explain.

Chapter 11

1. Explain why Douglass says he cannot give the details of his escape.
2. Explain Douglass's stated views regarding the Underground Railroad.
3. Why is Douglass so discontent when he begins hiring his time?
4. Describe the fight between Master Hugh and Douglass.
5. How does Douglass view himself after he escapes?
6. How does Douglass feel after he escapes? Explain.
7. Explain the motto Douglass adopts.
8. How does David Ruggles help Douglass? Why does Douglass introduce him by name?
9. Describe the wedding.
10. How is Douglass treated in New Bedford?
11. Describe how and why Douglass changes his name.
12. Describe Douglass's views of New Bedford and the condition of the colored people.
13. Explain the story of the man who threatens to inform on an escaped slave.
14. Explain the importance of "The Liberator" to Douglass.
15. Why is Douglass reluctant to talk to groups in the beginning?