

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass Questions

Chapter I

1. What does Douglass's description of his age and parenting reveal about the effects of slavery on those enslaved?
2. Describe Douglass's relationship with his mother.
3. Describe the incident between Aunt Hester and Captain Anthony. What do you think is the purpose of including the incident in his narrative?

Chapter II

4. Explain the structure and ownership of the plantation on which Douglass lived.
5. Describe the clothing received by the slaves. Why does Douglass spend time detailing this information in his narrative?
6. In what ways does Douglass describe Mr. Severe? How did he differ from Mr. Hopkins?
7. Explain why Douglass compares working at the Great House Farm like being elected to Congress. What do you think he was attempting to instill in his readers about the nature of slavery?
8. Explain Douglass's discussion of slave singing. What proslavery arguments do you think he was challenging?

Chapter III

9. In what ways does Douglass juxtapose the splendor of Colonel Lloyd's plantation with the treatment of his slaves? Provide specific points of juxtaposition.
10. What purpose does Douglass's inclusion of the story of the slaves' chance encounter with Colonel Lloyd on the road serve? What does he say about the nature of truth in regards to slave views and comments of their masters?

Chapter IV

11. Douglass quotes the slaveholder maxim, "It is better that a dozen slaves suffer under the lash, than that the overseer should be convicted, in the presence of the slaves, of having been at fault." Discuss this quote in relation to Mr. Gore and his "savage barbarity".
12. Describe at least one of the examples Douglass provides to demonstrate "that killing a slave, or any colored person... is not treated as a crime."

Chapter V

13. Are you surprised by Douglass's feelings at the knowledge that he would be leaving the plantation to live with Hugh Auld in Baltimore? Why or why not?
14. Explain the effect that moving to Baltimore had on Douglass's life.

Chapter VI

15. How does Douglass explain the effect of slavery on white people by discussing Mrs. Auld? (also discussed in chapter VII).
16. Explain how Douglass came to the decision to learn to read. How were both this mistress and his master involved in that decision?
17. What were the differences in slavery between the city and the plantation, according to Douglass?

Chapter VII

18. How did Douglass continue his education after Mrs. Auld stopped teaching him to read.
19. What was surprising to you about Douglass's description of his interactions with this new teachers?
20. Describe the effect reading *The Columbian Orator* had on Douglass. Be specific.

21. What negative effect did Douglass encounter in furthering his education?
22. Describe Douglass's interaction with the two Irishmen at the wharf. What did he take away from their interaction (immediately and after)?
23. How did Douglass teach himself to write?

Chapter VIII

24. Why did Douglass return to the plantation? What happened when he returned?
25. What purpose does Douglass have in relating what happened to his grandmother after the death of Master Andrew, especially since the information is inaccurate (his grandmother was cared for by Thomas Auld until her death in November 1849)?

Chapter IX

26. Describe the new experiences and challenges Douglass faced after being moved to live with Thomas Auld. Provide some of the ways that he described Thomas Auld.
27. Douglass says, "Master Thomas was one of the many pious slaveholders who hold slaves for the very charitable purpose of taking care of them." Why does he include this line and what pro-slavery argument is he attacking (this might require a bit of research)?

Chapter X

28. Describe Covey's actions as a slave master. Provide at least three specific things Douglass mentions.
29. Describe the reason Douglass defied Covey. What action did he take and how did his master (Mr. Auld) and Mr. Covey respond? How did this incident alter Douglass's perspective of his life?
30. Explain why Douglass sees the holiday break awarded to slaves negatively. Be specific with at least two examples.
31. How does Douglass describe the religion of the South? Explain in detail.
32. Provide at least three reasons slave master like Mr. Hopkins would give for whipping slaves.
33. Explain what Douglass did with Henry and John Harris on the Sabbath. Why might this be seen as a revolutionary act of resistance? Do you think it is more or less meaningful an act of resistance than Douglass's physical actions against Covey?
34. Why does Douglass make a point of challenging the notion "that we slaves do not love and confide in each other"?
35. Why do you think that Douglass spends half a page discussing a hypothetical failed escape and then quotes Patrick Henry? What reaction is he trying to induce from his reader?
36. Detail the escape plan and its uncovering. What happened to the conspirators?
37. Why did Douglass and the white shipbuilders come into conflict? What was the difficulty faced by Douglass and Master Hugh in dealing with the issue?
38. What effect did Douglass's improved working conditions have on his interest in freedom? Why?

Chapter XI

39. Why does Douglass say he will not provide the details of his escape? Why does he argue that his reasons should be adopted by those involved in the underground railroad?
40. Why did Master Hugh stop allowing Douglass to hire his own time?
41. What condition did Douglass find himself in once he arrived in New York?
42. How did Douglass come to have his last name? What had been his prior last names?

43. What were Douglass's impressions of New Bedford? Why do you think he takes time to describe these impressions?

44. What influenced Douglass to become a more vocal abolitionist?

Appendix

45. What differences does Douglass find between "Christianity of Christ" and the "Christianity of this land"? Be specific.

Creative Comparison Project

Below is the rubric that will be used to grade your creative project. Remember, the project is due in the first week of the fall semester, with the presentation to follow afterwards. As you work on your project, you (or you and your partner) should keep an eye on the bulleted information below to make sure that you meet all expected requirements.

Creative Project Construction and Research (100 points)

- **Appropriate choice of individual or group for comparison with Douglass** (20 points)
 - See assignment page for some ideas. Do not feel that you must choose something from that list as there are many instances of views and narratives from oppressed groups around the world throughout history. If you are unsure if your choice is appropriate, please email me.
 - Your grade here is not only on choosing an appropriate group or person, but also on producing a creative project that is appropriate in content and presentation as well. Keep in mind that this is an academically focused school project. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of your project, please email me.
- **Clear use of research on chosen individual or group evident in creative project** (40 points)
 - Specific terminology used
 - Direct and legitimate comparisons evident
 - Direct and legitimate contrasts evident (if applicable)
- **Included correctly-formatted bibliography of research sources** (25 points)
 - Though encyclopedic sources can be included and might be useful as a starting point, students should also find more academically-focused sources as well, which could include:
 - Autobiographies, biographies, narrative essays, memoirs, or historical examinations of narratives and other books from the City of Lubbock libraries, the Texas Tech University library, etc.
 - Digitized books online, such as through Google Books (books.google.com), which has digitized selected sections of books or full works.
 - Other digital PDF versions of narratives in the public domain. This could also include free e-book versions of narratives through Amazon and other companies.
 - Database sources from academic journals or other sources, such as JSTOR, etc.
 - Bibliography must be in either Chicago Manual of Style or MLA format. Information for both formats can be found online.
- **Creativity and effort** (15 points)
 - Much of your success in IB will be about how diligent you are as a student and your willingness to embrace different ideas, perspectives, and experiences. Thus, these points should be garnered by any student who demonstrates a willingness to start their IB education off on dedicated footing.

Presentation rubric and information will be discussed in the first week of the fall semester