

THE NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Frederick Bailey, later Frederick Douglass, the slave narrator. He has inherited his slave status from his mother, Harriet Bailey. It is rumored that Douglass's father is white (probably Captain Anthony) but this does not affect his social standing since slavery is inherited through one's mother.

Captain Aaron Anthony- Douglass's first master and probably his father. Anthony is the clerk for Colonel Edward Lloyd, managing Lloyd's surrounding plantations and the overseers of those plantations. Anthony is a cruel man who takes pleasure in whipping his slaves, especially Douglass's Aunt Hester. He is called "Captain" because he once piloted ships up the Chesapeake Bay.

Harriet Bailey- Frederick's mother. Harriet is separated from him after his birth, and dies when he is seven years old. Throughout her life she tried to maintain family relations with him by walking 12 miles to see him at night four or five times during his lifetime.

Betsey Bailey- the grandmother who nurtures Frederick until he is six years old. He remains emotionally attached to her.

Thomas Auld-Aaron Anthony's son-in-law. Frederick becomes his property upon Anthony's death. He proves himself a cruel master, especially after he becomes religious.

Hugh Auld-the brother of Thomas Auld. Frederick is sent to live with Hugh in Baltimore. His home becomes a base for the young slave. Although Frederick leaves on occasions, he always seems to return. Hugh arranges for Frederick to learn the trade of caulker. Frederick makes his escape to freedom from Hugh Auld's Baltimore home.

DOUGLASS'S MASTERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

CAPTAIN ANTHONY

Andrew-oldest son

Richard-youngest son

Lucretia-daughter married **Capt. Thomas Auld**

Hugh Auld-brother of Thomas Auld

Rowena Hamilton-second wife of
Capt. Thomas Auld

COLONEL LLOYD

Edward-son

Murray-son

Daniel-son

Mr. Winder-son-in-law

Mr. Nicholson-son-in-law

STUDY QUESTIONS AND VOCABULARY

CHAPTER 1

Vocabulary

allusion

intimation

odious(ness)

deference

cudgel

conjecture

Allusion: Children of Ham – Genesis 9:20-27

1. In what state was Douglass born?
2. Why didn't he know how old he was?
3. Name his mother.
4. Who was rumored to be his father?
5. What happened to him before he was a year old?

6. Why does Douglass think this was done?
7. How does he feel when he hears of his mother's death?
8. Why do the slaves, who are also the children of the master, suffer more than the other slaves?
9. Who was Captain Anthony?
10. Who was Plummer **and** what kind of man was he?
11. What kind of man was Capt. Anthony?
12. Explain Aunt Hester's treatment.
13. Give **three (3)** examples of dehumanization in this chapter.
14. Who raised Douglass and the other children?

CHAPTER 2 (II)

Vocabulary

evince
ineffable
obdurate

1. Of whom did Douglass' master's family consist?
2. What were the principal products raised on the plantation?
3. Why were Peter, Isaac, Rick, and Jake envied by the other slaves?
4. Name the **two** farms nearest to the home plantation.
5. Which of the two farms was the seat of government for the 20 farms?
6. If a slave was convicted of a high misdemeanor, what was his/her punishment?
7. What other things happened at this farm?
8. Name the overseer of this farm.
9. Why is his name ironic?
10. What kind of overseer was Mr. Hopkins?
11. What name did the slaves give the home plantation?
12. Why didn't Douglass understand the songs sung by the slaves chosen to come to the Great House Farm on errands?
13. How did these songs make him feel?
14. When did the slaves sing the most? What do these songs represent?

CHAPTER 3 (III)

Vocabulary

defile
brook
ascertain
imbibe
execrate

Allusion: Job – from *The Bible*

1. What was the greatest attraction at the home plantation?
2. How were the slaves kept out of the garden?
3. What were Colonel Lloyd's prized possessions?
4. What happened if a slave told the truth?
5. what does the expression "a still tongue makes a wise head" mean?

CHAPTER 4 (IV)

Vocabulary

immutable
debase
homage
servile
reprove
consummate
expedient
arraign

1. Who succeeded Mr. Hopkins?
2. What kind of man was he?
3. If a slave was accused of a misdemeanor, what was the result?
4. Why did Mr. Gore kill Demby the slave?
5. Give **four (4)** examples of slaves being murdered **without** consequences to the murderer.

CHAPTER 5 (V)

Vocabulary-none

1. Why did Douglass have so much leisure time?
2. Why was he so cold in the winter?
3. What did he use for a bed?
4. What is **mush**?
5. Why didn't Douglass feel sad about leaving Col. Lloyd's plantation?
6. What does Douglass feel the move to Baltimore did for him?
7. Of all the slave children that could have been picked to go to Baltimore, to what does Douglass attribute his being picked to go?

CHAPTER 6 (VI)

Vocabulary-none

1. What was Douglass' new mistress like?
2. Why did Douglass learn to read?
3. How are the slaves in the city different from the slaves on the plantation?
4. Describe the cruelty of Mrs. Hamilton.

CHAPTER 7 (VII)

Vocabulary

chattel
precepts
urchin

1. Give **one** example to show how slavery changed Douglass' mistress.
2. Who helped teach Douglass to read **and** what reward did he give them?
3. Why does Douglass say that learning to read was a curse rather than a blessing?
4. Why did Douglass need to learn how to write?
5. How did he learn how to write?

CHAPTER 8 (VIII)

Vocabulary

profligate
dissipation

1. What is a **valuation**?
2. After the valuation and division of property, where was Douglass sent?
3. Who did Douglass say he would miss?
4. How did Master Andrew treat Douglass' little brother?
5. What happened to Douglass' grandmother?
6. By the end of this chapter, what is Douglass determined to do?

CHAPTER 9 (IX)

Vocabulary

sanction
sagacity
pernicious

1. What were Master Thomas Auld and his wife like?
2. What action, by slaveholders, was the height of meanness?
3. What was used to justify cruelty? Give an example.

4. What did religion do to a Master?
5. Who is Mr. Edward Covey (give his circumstances and reputation) **and** why was Douglass sent to live with him for a year?

CHAPTER 10 (IX)

Vocabulary

turbid
 ague
 goad
 quail (**not the bird**)
 imbue
 concert (**not the music**)
 perdition
 to hector
 redress

Allusion: Hamlet – “To be or not to be” Act III, scene i
 Patrick Henry – “Speech to the Virginia Convention” 1775

1. What kind of job did Douglass have for the first time in his life?
2. What happened to him after the first week with Mr. Covey?
3. Mr. Covey was one of the few slaveholders who did what?
4. What did the slaves call Mr. Covey and why?
5. What does Douglass say Covey turned him into?
6. What is an **apostrophe**? (**not** the piece of punctuation) What was the apostrophe on pages 76-77 about and to whom was he addressing?
7. What did the fight with Mr. Covey do for Douglass?
8. Why were the days between Christmas and New Year’s Day important to the slaves?
9. What purpose did these holidays serve?
10. How was Mr. William Freeland different from Mr. Covey?
11. According to Douglass, who were the worst slaveholders?
12. What did Douglass resolve to do in 1835?
13. What does the following quote mean? “. . .rather bear those ills we had/Than to fly to others, that we knew not of” ?
14. Why were the slaves going to take a water route as a means of escape?
15. Explain why Douglass, John, and Henry were taken to jail.
16. What was their greatest concern?

17. What did Douglass do with his pass? Henry?
18. Where was Douglass sent after Capt. Auld got him out of jail?
19. What was the reason for the fight Douglass found himself in and what happened to him physically?
20. What skill did Douglass learn at the shipyard of Mr. Walter Price?
21. How much did he make per day? Per week? What did he have to do with all of his money and why?

CHAPTER 11 (XI)

Vocabulary

imputation
 exculpate
 fetters
 avow
 myriad
 commensurate
 Spartan
 palpable
 habiliments
 scathing

Allusion: Sparta
 Matthew 25:35

1. Why doesn't Douglass give all the facts of his escape from slavery?
2. By giving Douglass part of the wages that he earned, what did Douglass believe of his master?
3. Why is September 3, 1838 significant to Douglass?
4. What was his motto?
5. Who was Anna Murray?
6. Why did Douglass change his name when he got to New Bedford?
7. What name was suggested for him?
8. What was *The Liberator*?
9. Who was Mr. Nathan Johnson?
10. What happened to Douglass when he spoke at an anti-slavery meeting in Nantucket?