

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Curriculum Unit



The Center for Learning

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass

Curriculum Unit

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Introduction

Frederick Douglass was born in Maryland on a plantation in 1817. Not knowing his parents or even their identity, he was raised by a grandmother figure until he was able to work as a slave on the plantation. At the age of eight, he became a house slave in Baltimore in the Hugh Auld family, where he learned to read and consequently began to experience an increasingly intense desire for freedom. Before his escape to New York City and New Bedford, Massachusetts, at the age of twenty-one, he worked as a field hand under grueling and inhumane circumstances and was later in servitude to Hugh Auld again in Baltimore, where he learned the trade of caulking. This last experience as a slave enabled him to escape. Three years later, in 1841, Douglass attended a convention of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society in Nantucket, where he was spontaneously asked to speak about his life. Despite a lack of formal education, he spoke so eloquently and impressively that he was urged to join the society as a traveling lecturer. He humbly accepted and lectured as a fugitive slave in the Northeast for the next four years. In 1845, he wrote his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* in response to critics' doubts about his authenticity as a fugitive slave. Fearing recognition and re-enslavement upon publication of his narrative, Douglass fled to England and lived in exile for two years. He returned to the United States after English supporters raised the money to purchase his freedom. Back in the United States, he continued to fight for the abolition of slavery; he founded a black newspaper, *The North Star*, and worked for the Underground Railroad. He also helped recruit black soldiers for the Union Army during the Civil War. Before his death in 1895, Douglass also held two government positions, those of marshal and recorder of deeds in Washington, D.C., and United States minister to Haiti. In 1855, he updated his autobiography, entitling it *My Bondage and My Freedom*, as a testament of the immorality of slavery.

The themes of injustice, manipulation, dehumanization, and hypocrisy—with an emphasis on the hypocritical Christianity of many slaveowners—dominate Douglass's narrative. Henry David Thoreau reinforces these characteristics of the institution of slavery in his essays "Slavery in Massachusetts" and "A Plea for Captain John Brown." Douglass's character is, in contrast to that of most of his masters, one of integrity, forthrightness, and a courageous passion for and dedication to truth. Paul Laurence Dunbar, in his poem "Douglass," invokes the spirit of Douglass's relentlessly strong and guiding character in the post-Reconstruction days of continued racial discrimination, injustice, and hardship in which Dunbar lives.

The relevance of these works' testimonies and themes to today's world is evident in the face of current civil wars, the violation of human rights by political regimes, the wake of terrorism as a universal problem, and the struggle for the establishment and realization of truly democratic societies.

Teacher Notes

The *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* is an autobiographical work that challenges the reader intellectually, morally, and emotionally. Douglass's use of tone, wit, and irony to describe and narrate the profound content of his life story challenges readers to reflect on their own attitudes toward slavery, to understand and empathize with the slave's experience, and to explore the themes of injustice and hypocrisy as these themes relate to history and the present.

This unit includes a poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar which relates the themes of oppression and injustice in Douglass's life to Dunbar's time after abolition. Through rich figurative language, Dunbar reinforces Douglass's charismatic characteristics of eloquence, fortitude, leadership, and persuasion as an abolitionist and a man. The unit also includes two essays by Henry David Thoreau which offer insightful literary experiences from an abolitionist's point of view.

The unit provides opportunities to analyze, compare, and respond to Douglass's, Dunbar's, and Thoreau's tones and messages from the unique points of view of each—Douglass, a fugitive slave; Dunbar, an African-American predecessor of the civil rights movement; and Thoreau, a New England abolitionist. In addition to lessons involving analysis of tone, mood, diction, figurative language, and theme, the unit includes research projects, character studies, oral argumentation, and discussions of philosophical and psychological aspects of the works. Vocabulary lists and quizzes and a culminating test are provided in the supplementary materials.

Reading assignments are as follows:

Preface for Lesson 1

Chapter 1 for Lesson 2

Chapters 2–4 for Lesson 3

Chapters 5–7 for Lesson 4

Chapters 8–9 for Lesson 5

Chapter 10 for Lesson 6

Chapter 11 and the appendix for Lesson 7

“Douglass” by Paul Laurence Dunbar for Lesson 8

“Slavery in Massachusetts” by Henry David Thoreau for Lesson 9

“A Plea for Captain John Brown” by Henry David Thoreau for Lesson 10

Inexpensive editions of the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and of *Civil Disobedience and Other Essays* (which includes “Slavery in Massachusetts” and “A Plea for Captain John Brown”) are available through Dover Publications, New York.

Answers to handouts will vary unless otherwise indicated. Students may need additional paper to complete some handouts. Teachers should consider the necessity of making an appropriate statement about the time period and the language, particularly the use of the word *nigger*, which students will encounter in Lesson 4 materials.

Lesson 1

Introduction to Frederick Douglass

Objectives

- To examine indirect characterization of Douglass
- To become familiar with the themes of manipulation and hypocrisy
- To examine tone and mood
- To identify fact versus opinion and evaluate the validity of the opinions

Notes to the Teacher

In the preface to the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, William Lloyd Garrison admires and reveres Douglass's character, describing Douglass's lecturing debut as a salvific, blessed occurrence. He calls Douglass a prodigy and suggests he is a hero. Having devoted the first half of the preface to describing Douglass, Garrison concentrates in the second half on denouncing slavery and its supporters. In this section, he refers to and depicts the themes of injustice and hypocrisy as they are intimately related to the institution of slavery. His final purpose is to assert Douglass's validity and honesty in his narrative and to urge readers to develop the same opinion.

Wendell Phillips's letter to Frederick Douglass is likewise admiring and reverent toward Douglass, with particular respect to Douglass's courageous risk of writing so candidly about his life as a slave. Phillips remarks upon Douglass's early recognition and understanding of the injustice of slavery and its most immoral and despicable effect, the "cruel and blighting death which gathers over [the slave's] soul." He also, like Garrison, notes the fact that Douglass's experience was in one of the more lenient slave states; thus the atrocities recounted in the narrative make what one might imagine occurring further south more abominable. Finally, Phillips affirms the unbiased truth in Douglass's work and follows with a denouncement similar to Garrison's of the North's neglect and refusal of aid and support for both slaves in the South and fugitive slaves in the North.

In this lesson, students focus on the characteristics of Douglass that Garrison and Phillips enumerate as both an introduction to Frederick Douglass and a guide against which

to measure their own opinions of Douglass's character as they read. Students also identify and analyze passages that express Garrison's and Phillips's opinions of Douglass and the narrative. The lesson focuses on the significance of tone as a literary technique and guides students to analyze Garrison's and Phillips's tones for objectivity and bias. Finally, students identify and interpret passages that refer to the themes of injustice and hypocrisy.

Procedure

1. Instruct students to read the preface by William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips's letter to Douglass.
2. Ask students to list at least ten characteristics of Douglass that Garrison notes and at least five that Phillips notes. Point out that Garrison describes Douglass's character clearly and directly, while Phillips describes it indirectly at points. For example, when Phillips states, "I was glad to learn, in your story, how early the most neglected of God's children waken to a sense of their rights . . .," he implies Douglass is perceptive and insightful.

Suggested Responses:

Garrison

1. *has endured suffering*
2. *virtuous character traits*
3. *integrity (head and heart one)*
4. *loyal to and thoughtful of fellow slaves*
5. *humble*
6. *passionate (pathos)*
7. *eloquent*
8. *witty*
9. *capable of enlightening others' minds*
10. *strong in reasoning*
11. *courageous*
12. *honest, not exaggerating*
13. *"in physical proportion and stature commanding and exact"*
14. *"in intellect richly endowed"*
15. *"in natural eloquence a prodigy"*

16. *"in soul manifestly 'created but a little lower than the angels'"*

17. *gentle and meek but manly*

Phillips

1. *perceptive and insightful*

2. *truthful, candid, sincere*

3. *just and fair (unbiased)*

4. *courageous*

5. *"endeared to many"*

6. *responsible in part for the eventual end of slavery (heroic)*

3. Ask students to note what characteristics are consistent between the authors (*courageous; truthful; just and fair; endearing*).

4. Ask students to think about what purpose(s) Garrison and Phillips must have had for writing the preface to Douglass's narrative based on the characteristics they each highlight about Douglass.

Suggested Responses:

- *They wish to establish the idea that Douglass's work is truthful and valid.*
- *They wish to emphasize that Douglass honestly wanted to portray the unexaggerated truth, not to seek revenge but rather to enlighten people to the reality of slavery.*
- *They wish to express their deep admiration and respect for Douglass, a respect that all who hear him speak seem to feel.*

5. Direct students to refer periodically to the lists of characteristics as they read the narrative and to compare their own impressions of Douglass and his narrative with Garrison's and Phillips's descriptions.

6. Remind students that the literary technique of tone is the attitude of the writer toward his or her topic. Discuss how tone is conveyed through diction. For example, the statement, "It was my happiness to become acquainted with Frederick Douglass," has a different tone by replacing the word *happiness* with *salvation*, or *misfortune*, or *undoing*. The tone changes from positive to ecstatic, to negative, to ominously disastrous.

7. Distribute **Handout 1**. Students may find it helpful to work with a partner to complete the handout. Read the directions with students, and guide them through the first passage if necessary. Students should complete part B on their own paper. Have students discuss responses in small groups or as a class.

Suggested Responses:

Part A.

1. *ecstatic, effusive; opinion*

2. *reverent, salvific; opinion*

3. *pragmatic, practical, passionate; opinion*

4. *decisive, matter-of-fact; opinion*

5. *incredulous, outraged; fact*

6. *forthright, challenging; opinion*

7. *sarcastic, sardonic; opinion*

8. *indignant, compassionate; fact*

9. *confident, trusting, adamant; opinion*

10. *admiring, affectionate; fact/opinion*

Part B.

Garrison

1. *"it was my happiness to become acquainted with Frederick Douglass"; positive; opinion*

2. *"many sufferings he has endured"; compassionate, sympathetic; opinion*

3. *"his virtuous traits of character"; admiring; opinion*

4. *"whose minds he has enlightened . . . and who have been melted to tears by his pathos"; reverent, effusively ecstatic; fact*

5. *"in soul . . . but a little lower than the angels"; reverent; opinion*

6. *"capable of high attainments . . . a chattel personal, nevertheless!"; appalled, indignant; opinion/fact*

7. *"most abundant, far surpassed, brilliant career"; praising, effusive; opinion*

8. *"He has borne himself with gentleness . . . of character . . . hearts of others"; admiring, praising; opinion*

9. "Let the calumniators of the colored race despise themselves . . . of human excellence"; indignant, disdainful, passionate; opinion
 10. "It may, perhaps, be fairly questioned, whether any other portion of the population of the earth could have endured the privations, suffering, and horrors of slavery, without having become more degraded in the scale of humanity, than the slaves of African descent"; confrontational, challenging; opinion
 11. "it proves at least"; firm with conviction; fact
 12. "very properly, to the best of his ability"; approving, admiring, encouraging; opinion
 13. "tearful eye, heaving breast, afflicted spirit, unutterable abhorrence, immediate overthrow, execrable system, trembling for the fate of this country in the hands of a righteous God, flinty heart"; vehement, disdainful, threatening; opinion
 14. "I am confident that . . . nothing has been set down in malice, nothing exaggerated . . . to slavery as it is"; emphatically affirming; opinion
 15. "deplorable, shocking outrages, like a brute, those professing to have the same mind [as] Christ"; appalled, indignant; fact with scattered opinion
 16. "The effect of a religious profession . . . anything but salutary . . . in the highest degree pernicious"; disdainful, condemning, matter-of-fact; fact/opinion
 17. "be faithful, be vigilant, untiring, break every yoke"; passionate, encouraging, emphatic; opinion
- of the injustice done them"; just, compassionate, indignant; fact/opinion
3. " . . . and renders your early insight the more remarkable"; admiring, respectful; analytical; opinion
 4. "Tell us whether, after all, half-free colored man of Massachusetts, worse off than the pampered slave"; incredulously sarcastic, condemning; fact
 5. "We know, bitter drops, necessarily in the lot of every slave, essential ingredients . . . of the system"; compassionate, condemning; fact
 6. "After all, I shall read your book with trembling for you . . . "; admiring of Douglass, condemning of the state of the Union; fact
 7. "But it will be owing only to your labors . . . if, some time or other, the humblest may stand . . . "; admiring of Douglass, condemning of the state of the Union, gives due credit; fact
 8. "Yet it is sad to think that the very throbbing hearts which welcome your story . . . are all beating contrary . . . "; lamenting, disgusted; opinion
 9. "saved, so as by fire, from the dark prison-house, free, illegal pulses"; compassionate, indignant; opinion, fact
 10. " . . . till we no longer merely 'hide the outcast,' or make a merit of standing idly by while he is hunted in our midst . . . "; disgusted yet hopeful; fact/opinion
8. Ask students to think about what purposes are conveyed through Garrison's and Phillips's tones.

Suggested Responses:

- They wish to establish the idea that Douglass's work is truthful and valid.
- They wish to emphasize that Douglass honestly wanted to portray the unexaggerated truth, not to seek revenge but rather to enlighten people to the reality of slavery.

Phillips

1. "before he is ready to lay the first stone of his anti-slavery life"; unremitting, intense; opinion
2. "I was glad to learn . . . how early the most neglected of God's children waken to a sense of their rights and

- They wish to express their deep admiration and respect for Douglass, a respect that all who hear him speak seem to feel, and to influence the readers' feelings in this way.
 - They aim to condemn the institution of slavery and all who support it directly and indirectly.
 - They wish to convey the idea that God denounces the institution of slavery, its supporters, and its components.
 - They wish to encourage the reader to denounce slavery and its supporters and to work actively to end it.
 - They wish for truth and justice to be rendered ultimately.
9. In preparation for identifying and interpreting passages referring to the themes of injustice and hypocrisy, discuss the meaning of these terms with students. Ask students to look up both the definitions and etymologies of these words. (Injustice is from Latin, meaning "wrongful action." Hypocrisy is derived from Old French, Latin, and Greek words meaning "playing a part" or "pretending.") Have students use logic and their prior knowledge to brainstorm ways in which the institution of slavery in the United States involved injustice and hypocrisy.
 10. Distribute **Handout 2** for students to complete. Discuss their interpretations either in small groups or in a whole-class setting.

Suggested Responses:

Garrison

1. Injustice; Douglass had the potential for intellectual and spiritual greatness. He simply lacked the knowledge that a formal education would afford him. Ironically, he was treated and regarded as an animal with no mind or heart. This was unjust because he was deprived of human dignity and of growing to realize his potential.
2. Both; Douglass disproves the words of those who regard blacks as inferior. His intellectual achievements, morality,

and personal dignity mocks those who would mock him. Their words are unjust because they are untrue, unjustified. They are hypocritical because they are foolishly mistaken.

3. Injustice; Douglass experienced extreme indignity, deprivation, manipulation, hopelessness, loneliness, and helplessness as a slave. Those in control were "pitiless," selfishly inflicting mental and physical tortures without the least compassion. There was no possibility for happiness or pleasure unless one became like an animal, an "extinct man." The injustice is clear. This is immoral and dehumanizing.
4. Hypocrisy; Many skeptics of the truth of Douglass's narrative are prejudiced and hateful persons who simply refuse to admit its validity. Douglass's narrative is truth, and skeptics will find it impossible to disprove his story.
5. Hypocrisy; Douglass describes how the religious slaveholders are even more cruel and merciless than those who do not profess to be religious. They are hypocrites, as their conduct is the antithesis of the Christian message and ideal.

Phillips

1. Injustice; The abuse of the slave's inner being, his soul or spirit, is more profound and destructive than the physical abuse wrought upon him or her.
2. Injustice; Slavery, as Douglass attests, is necessarily and unavoidably cruel and destructive to the spirit and body of the slave. It is essentially an unjust institution.
3. Injustice; More than fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, freedom does not exist truly in the United States. Douglass risks his life by writing the truth about how the Southern slaveholders treat their slaves. His peril is an injustice in general, made hypocritical by the fact that the United States claims to represent and embody freedom for all persons.

4. *Hypocrisy; The North, which is supposed to be free, is not a refuge for Douglass, as there are prejudiced persons there and he is not truly protected from being recaptured.*
 5. *Hypocrisy; Unfortunately, those in the North who believe and sympathize with Douglass and his narrative are a minority. The “free” North is not at heart in sympathy with or supportive of Douglass and his fellow slaves.*
11. Assign students the reading of chapter 1 in preparation for Lesson 2.

Tone

Part A.

Directions: Read the following quotations from the preface and Phillips's letter. Locate each quotation in the text. Highlight words in the sentence or passage which convey the writer's attitude toward the particular passage topic. Then in the middle column, label the tone of the sentence or passage. Finally, label each quotation as fact or opinion. Decide whether the opinions are valid (soundly founded on fact or evidence) or biased (questionably partial). Be prepared to discuss your evaluations.

Quotation	Tone	Fact or Opinion
Garrison		
1. "Fortunate, most fortunate occurrence!"		
2. " . . . and consecrated him to the great work of breaking the rod of the oppressor, and letting the oppressed go free!"		
3. "It was at once deeply impressed upon my mind, that, if Mr. Douglass could be persuaded to consecrate his time and talents . . . "		
4. "I therefore endeavored to instill hope and courage into his mind, in order that he might dare to engage in a vocation so anomalous and responsible for a person in his situation . . . "		
5. "Let it never be forgotten Is it possible for the human mind to conceive of a more horrible state of society?"		
6. "Reader! are you with the man-stealers . . . , or their down-trodden victims? . . . If with the former . . . If with the latter, what are you prepared to do and dare in their behalf?"		
Phillips		
7. "Indeed, those who stare at the half-peck of corn a week, and love to count . . . are seldom the 'stuff' out of which reformers and abolitionists are made."		
8. " . . . you began, I see, to gauge the wretchedness of the slave . . . by the cruel and blighting death which gathers over his soul."		
9. "Everyone who has heard you speak has felt, and I am confident, everyone who reads your book will feel, persuaded . . . "		
10. " . . . endeared as you are to so many warm hearts by rare gifts, and a still rarer devotion of them to the service of others."		

Part B.

Directions: Identify at least ten additional passages in Garrison's preface and at least ten in Phillips's letter with distinct tones. Follow the directions in part A, noting significant words and labeling the tone of each passage and whether it is factual, a valid opinion, or a biased opinion. Be prepared to share your responses.

Theme: The Hypocrisy and Injustice of Slavery

Directions: Read the following quotations from Garrison's preface and Phillips's letter. The passages concern either hypocrisy or injustice or perhaps both. Locate each passage in the text, reread it, and label it accordingly as referring to the theme of hypocrisy or injustice. In some cases, you may label it as both. Then paraphrase the author's words, and explain how the passage concerns injustice or hypocrisy (or both).

Quotation	Hypocrisy, Injustice, or Both	Paraphrase/ Explanation
Garrison		
1. "Capable of high attainments . . . a chattel personal, nevertheless!"		
2. "Let the calumniators of the colored race . . . excellence."		
3. "Yet how deplorable was his situation! . . . —thus demonstrating that a happy slave is an extinct man!"		
4. "Skeptics of this character abound. . . . but they will labor in vain."		
5. "A slaveholder's profession of Christianity is a palpable imposture. . . . He is a man-stealer."		
Phillips		
1. " . . . you began, I see, to gauge the wretchedness of the slave . . . by the cruel and blighting death which gathers over his soul."		
2. "We know that the bitter drops . . . They are the essential ingredients, not the occasional results, of the system."		
3. "You, too, publish your declaration of freedom with danger compassing you around."		
4. "In all the broad lands . . . The whole armory of Northern Law has no shield for you."		
5. "Yet it is sad to think that these very throbbing hearts . . . are all beating contrary to the 'statute in such case made and provided.'"		

Lesson 2

An Unknown Identity in a Cruel World

Objectives

- To analyze the tone and its underlying physical and psychological sources
- To analyze mood
- To begin to characterize Frederick Douglass's masters
- To evaluate the morality of denying one knowledge of one's identity

Notes to the Teacher

In chapter 1, Douglass relates the circumstances comprising his earliest years as a slave child. He describes with subtle moralistic disdain his own and what is many other slaves' ironic existence as a mulatto slave, the child of a black slave woman and a white master, which makes his master also his father. In these situations, the child's fate always follows the mother's, making the child a slave. One overriding point in this chapter is that his true identity concerning his birth, his parents, and his age is unknown and was purposely kept from his knowledge. His interest in these details about himself were seen as "improper and impertinent, and evidence of a restless spirit," the kind of spirit Douglass did indeed possess increasingly during his slavery. Douglass also describes his first master, Captain Anthony, and Captain Anthony's overseer, Mr. Plummer. He devotes the second half of the chapter to describing the barbarity of both. He ends with a gruesome and gripping example of Captain Anthony's sadistic tendencies toward Douglass's Aunt Hester.

Douglass's style is matter-of-fact, but a distinct tone underlies his apparent objectivity. In essence, he is scornful, moralistic, and passionately critical of the facts of his life as a slave, beginning with his earliest experiences in the world of slavery. This tone, which continues through the narrative, creates a mood in the reader of being appalled and indignant toward slavery and its perpetrators and compassionate toward its victims.

In this lesson, students practice the skill of close reading by identifying passages that reflect Douglass's tone and, in turn, create the mood; students analyze and label the tones and

moods of the passages. This exercise serves to help students understand the content of Douglass's work more deeply by realizing how the work is able to affect the reader so profoundly. The effect (the mood created) is due not only to the content but also to the manner in which Douglass describes it, that is, his passionate tone underlying his factual relation of details. It was this humble, noninflammatory manner of relating shocking and unbelievable facts that apparently captivated abolitionist listeners who became his avid supporters and remarked upon his eloquence.

Students also begin to complete a chart of details about Douglass's various masters. This chart will be complete in Lesson 6 and will serve as notes for a written character profile of his masters. Finally, students learn to appreciate the significance of knowing one's identity in terms of one's birthday, the circumstances surrounding one's birth, one's family, and even one's true name through an exercise that also leads to a discussion of the morality and psychological effects of denying a person such knowledge.

Procedure

1. Ask students to define two important literary elements—*tone* and *mood*.

Suggested Responses:

Tone is the author's attitude toward the topic, conveyed through style and diction.

Mood is the feeling aroused in the reader by the content and tone of the text.

2. Elicit students' responses to chapter one. Discuss with students how the content and Douglass's style work together to create a certain feeling (mood) in the reader. Explain that through closely reading various passages in chapter one, they can understand how Douglass creates this mood not only through the profundity of the words' actual meaning (the content) but also through his attitude toward what he is writing (tone).

3. Distribute **Handout 3**. Review the words and their definitions with students. Students may take turns reading the word and its definition aloud and giving an original example of a statement using the tone. Consider providing several statements that lend themselves to various tones (for example, “The man looks strange”; “The tragedy has had unforeseeable and unthinkable consequences”; “To be or not to be; that is the question”; and “The intricacy of the new computer program will require the most scrupulous technicians to properly install it”). Instruct students to keep **Handout 3** available for use with **Handout 4**.
4. Distribute **Handout 4**. Students may work in pairs or independently to complete the handout. When they have finished, they may review their answers in pairs or small groups initially, followed by a teacher-led class discussion. Help students to summarize the tone and mood of the chapter.

Suggested Responses:

1. Tone—*sardonic, taunting*
Mood—*appalled*
2. Tone—*sardonic*
Mood—*sardonic*
3. Tone—*moralistic, scornful*
Mood—*compassionate, sad*
4. Tone—*sardonic*
Mood—*disdainful*
5. Tone—*candid, sympathetic*
Mood—*compassionate, sad*
6. Tone—*candid, sympathetic, sentimental*
Mood—*depressed, empty*
7. Tone—*contemptuous, moralistic, scornful*
Mood—*disdainful, indignant*
8. Tone—*cynical, scornful*
Mood—*appalled, indignant*
9. Tone—*cynical, scornful, argumentative*
Mood—*justified*

10. Tone—*horrified, passionate, dramatic, somber*

Mood—*compassionate, horrified, sad, shocked, indignant*

Summary of tone and mood—*The tone is sardonic, passionate or dramatic, and critical; the mood is indignant and compassionate.*

5. Instruct students to review the description of Douglass’s first master, Captain Anthony, including the scene involving Aunt Hester. Introduce a brief discussion about Douglass’s first master by asking students to describe Captain Anthony in their own words. Discuss whether he was probably a typical master. Tell students that they will keep a chart of details about Douglass’s masters as they read. This chart will help them later to compose a profile of his masters (in Lesson 6). List the following terms on the board, and instruct students to provide what details about Captain Anthony they can after having read chapter 1: *master; chapter and pages; location; situation; religion; personality; examples*. If there is no information for a certain category, students should leave it blank. Review students’ charts, and direct students to keep the charts for future use.

Suggested Responses:

Master—*Captain Anthony*

Chapter and pages—*Chapter 1; (pages may vary from text to text)*

Location—*Talbot County, Maryland; two to three farms on a plantation*

Situation—*Not considered rich; owned thirty slaves*

Religion—

Personality—*inhumane; cruel; “hardened by a long life of slaveholding”*

Examples—*took pleasure in whipping slaves; tortured Aunt Hester*

6. Point out to students that chapter 1 focuses on two topics—the topic of a slave’s identity and the topic of Douglass’s first master, Captain Anthony. Regarding

the topic of a slave's identity, Douglass explains and describes how he, like all slaves, was denied knowledge of his age, birthday, parents, and possibly even the arguably legitimate status of freedom as his master's son. His ignorance of these personal details affected him profoundly, as they struck him as unjust and implied that he was regarded as less than a person. Elicit students' comments about these facts.

7. Tell students they are going to do an exercise to help them empathize with Douglass and to appreciate his comments about the importance of knowing his identity. Distribute **Handout 5**. Direct students to supply the information for part A. Have students work with partners or in small groups of four as they discuss which categories are most important to them and their identities.
8. Ask students to choose independently the four identity categories listed in part A of **Handout 5** which they feel least able to deny (in the sense of parting with). Instruct students to write those four items on separate paper. Next, ask students to exchange their papers with a partner. Each partner must cross out one of the four categories and return the handout to its owner. The owner then eliminates another category. Finally, students exchange their papers with a partner (the same or a different one) again, and each partner crosses out a final category, leaving one remaining and returning the paper to its owner.
9. Give students time to respond in writing to the follow-up questions in part B of **Handout 5**. Ask students to share their responses with a partner or in a small group. Then conduct a whole-class discussion. Discuss whether knowledge of these personal facts is a basic human right, why such information is so significant to a person, and why denying someone this information, if it is known, is arguably immoral. Elicit students' comments about the exercise and their feelings of empathy with Douglass.

Suggested Responses:

- *Knowledge of these personal facts is a human right; it is personal information.*
 - *Such information is significant to a person because it lends one a sense of self and a sense of one's existence in time and place and in relation to other human beings.*
 - *Denying such information to another is arguably immoral because to do so suggests that the person is more of an animal than a human being. It suggests that the person's existence, uniqueness, and personality are insignificant.*
10. Assign students chapters 2–4 as reading preparation for Lesson 3.

Tone Words and Definitions

Directions: Use the following tone words to identify Frederick Douglass's tone in his work.

allusive—containing or given to passing and casual references to something not fully expressed; symbolic

benevolent—characterized by or expressing goodwill or kindly feelings

burlesque—involving ludicrous or mocking treatment of a solemn subject

candid—frank; outspoken; sincere; honest; open

compassionate—expressing deep sorrow or sympathy for someone struck by misfortune, accompanied by a desire to alleviate the suffering; sympathetic

complimentary—of the nature of, conveying, or expressing a compliment or praise

concerned—interested, involved; troubled or anxious

condescending—expressing an air of superiority; stooping to a lower level or beneath oneself as a favor

confident—sure of oneself and one's abilities

contemptuous—showing or expressing strong dislike; scornful

contentious—characterized by argument or controversy

cynical—distrusting the motives of others; pessimistic

detached—impartial or objective; disinterested

didactic—teaching or intending to teach a moral lesson; instructive

diffident—hesitant in acting or speaking through lack of self-confidence; distrustful

disdainful—expressing feelings that someone or something is unworthy of notice; scornful

dramatic—expressed with or as if with action; vivid

effusive—extravagantly or unduly demonstrative; overflowing

facetious—not meant to be taken seriously or literally; amusing; humorous

factual—relating to or containing facts; restricted to involving fact as opposed to theory or imagination; actual

flippant—frivolously disrespectful, shallow, or lacking in seriousness

impartial—not partial or biased; fair; just

incisive—clear and direct

indignant—expressing strong displeasure at something considered offensive or insulting; expressing righteous anger

inflammatory—tending to arouse anger, hostility, or passion

informative—giving information; instructive

insipid—without distinctive, interesting, or stimulating qualities; bland

insolent—rude, disrespectful; insulting

ironic—the meaning intended is contrary to that seemingly expressed; to say one thing and mean another

irreverent—showing lack of respect

learned—of or showing knowledge or learning; well-informed

moralistic—expressing ideas on the principles of proper conduct or on the distinction between right and wrong

objective—not influenced by personal feelings or prejudice; unbiased

lugubrious—mournful, dismal, or gloomy, especially in an exaggerated manner

patronizing—behaving in a condescending manner

pedantic—displaying affection for learning; overemphasizing minute details

petty—having or showing narrow ideas or interests; narrow-minded

pretentious—characterized by the assumption of importance; making an exaggerated outward show

restrained—devoid of excess or extravagance; repressed

sardonic—characterized by scornful derision or bitter irony; mocking; cynical

satiric—characterized by the use of irony, sarcasm, or ridicule

scornful—full of contempt or disdain; despising

sentimental—expressive or appealing to the tender emotions

somber—extremely serious; solemn; grave

sympathetic—expresses compassion or sympathy; sharing the same feelings as another

taunting—reproaching in a scornful manner; mocking; making fun of

turgid—inflated; overblown

urgent—expressed with insistence

vibrant—pulsating with vigor and energy; lively

whimsical—displaying characteristics of playful expression; fanciful

Tone and Mood

Directions: The first chapter of Frederick Douglass's work establishes a certain tone for the remaining chapters and creates a certain mood in the reader. Douglass conveys tone and creates a mood through the details he chooses to relate about his early years in slavery and the words he uses to describe such facts. Read the following quotations and summaries of the main ideas in chapter 1. If necessary, locate each quotation in the text. Then evaluate the tone Douglass uses and the mood he creates. You may label each as having more than one tone and mood.

Quotation/Summary	Tone	Mood
1. Most slaves "know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters . . . to keep their slaves thus ignorant."		
2. To ask his master about his birthday was deemed "improper, and impertinent, and evidence of a restless spirit."		
3. Mothers are separated from their babies by twelve months, probably to "hinder the development of the child's affection toward its mother, and to blunt and destroy the natural affection of the mother for the child. This is the inevitable result."		
4. Slaves are seldom given permission to be in the field later than sunrise—a permission that gives the master "the proud name of being a kind master."		
5. "Death soon ended what little [communication] we could have had while she lived, and with it her hardships and suffering."		

Quotation/Summary	Tone	Mood
6. "Never having enjoyed, to any considerable extent, her soothing presence, her tender and watchful care, I received the tidings of her death with much the same emotions I should have probably felt at the death of a stranger."		
7. " . . . [T]he fact remains, in its glaring odiousness," that slave children are slaves even if their fathers are white masters, "and this is done too obviously to administer to their own lusts, and make a gratification of their wicked desires profitable as well as pleasurable; for by this cunning arrangement . . . " the slaveholder is both master and father to the slave.		
8. A mulatto slave whose master is his father is often treated worse or more harshly and must be sold to be saved from such treatment.		
9. Slaves' appearances are changing because of mixed black-white relations between slave women and their white masters. The result of light-skinned slaves contradicts the notion that it is race that makes them justifiably slaves.		
10. "It struck me with awful force. It was the blood-stained gate, the entrance to the hell of slavery, through which I was about to pass. It was a most terrible spectacle. I wish I could commit to paper the feelings with which I beheld it. . . . I was so terrified and horror-stricken at the sight, that I hid myself in a closet, and dared not venture out till long after the bloody transaction was over. I expected it would be my turn next."		

An Exercise in Identity

Part A.

Directions: Supply the information requested.

1. Name

Significance of name (Why did your parents choose this name for you?)

2. Age

3. Birthplace

4. Birthday

How it is celebrated

5. Siblings

Relationship with siblings (How close are you?)

6. Mother

Relationship with mother (How close are you?)

7. Father

Relationship with father (How close are you?)

8. Grandparents and extended family (What is their presence and significance in your life?)

Lesson 3

Injustices, Irony, and Wit

Objectives

- To identify, understand, and analyze verbal and situational irony
- To analyze and evaluate the logic of injustices
- To respond argumentatively to injustices and illogicality
- To develop an understanding of the nature of prejudice

Notes to the Teacher

In chapters 2–4, Frederick Douglass describes Colonel Lloyd and his family, his plantation and some of the neighboring farms he owned, and some of the numerous injustices committed against his slaves (which number from three hundred to four hundred). In chapter 2, Douglass relates the slaves' feelings about the Great House Farm (Colonel Lloyd's home plantation) with wit, comparing their manipulative efforts to be selected and their pride in being selected to go there to the pride of a representative in Congress and his willingness to deceive the people in order to be elected. Douglass prefaces this description of the slaves' awe for the Great House Farm with an enumeration of the meager monthly and annual allowances of each slave. He also provides detailed descriptions of two successive overseers: Mr. Severe, who, he wittily comments, is appropriately named, and Mr. Hopkins, who was more mild and well-regarded by the slaves, but whose office was short-lived, most likely for his lack of severity. By preceding the description of the slaves' awe toward the place of their misery with details of the harsh circumstances comprising life at the Great House Farm, Douglass emphasizes the irony of their feelings. Douglass ends chapter 2 with a commentary on the ironic nature of slaves' songs, noting that their singing, incorrectly presumed to be evidence of their contentment, is an expression of their anguish, grief, and despondency.

Chapter 3 describes several injustices against Colonel Lloyd's slaves at the Great House Farm. These include punishing slaves for stealing fruit from his famous garden, or for being suspected of trying to do so; whimsically and undeservingly punishing the two slaves

(a father and a son) who care for his riding equipage; granting freedom to his three sons and three sons-in-law to whip slaves at their whims; and punishing slaves for being honest when questioned about their masters or owners and about the quality of their lives. As in chapter 2, Douglass ends the chapter noting an ironic situation, that of the tendency for slaves to identify their master's "greatness" with their own esteem, and to defend competitively their masters when encountering slaves of a different master. In chapter 4, Douglass describes the barbarity of Mr. Gore, the overseer who replaced the more moderate and humane Mr. Hopkins. Describing Mr. Gore's cruelty leads him to give several further examples of savage injustices committed by other whites in the form of murders that went unaddressed judicially.

This lesson guides students to understand and differentiate between verbal and situational irony. Amidst describing the harsh realities and grave injustices experienced on Colonel Lloyd's plantation and out-farms, Douglass notes certain ironic aspects of the slave life with wit, evincing both insightful and cleverness in his perception of the circumstances. Students are guided to see the relationship between verbal irony and wit on the part of the author. This part of the lesson also includes an examination of the nature of prejudice, since one of the situational ironies concerns slaves' tendency toward prejudices. Students also reflect upon the injustices Douglass enumerates and describes, evaluating the logic and reasoning of the perpetrators. By responding in an oral argumentative manner to the perpetrators' actions and reason(s), students are challenged to affirm their own senses of reason and what is just.

Procedure

1. Define both *verbal irony* and *situational irony*. Provide examples of each. Ask students to brainstorm additional examples from literature, television, movies, and their own lives.

Suggested Response:

Verbal irony occurs when a writer or speaker says one thing but really means the opposite. Situational irony occurs when

what actually happens is the opposite of what is expected or appropriate.

2. Distribute **Handout 6**. You may need to note to students that the examples of irony for numbers 4 and 5 are from chapter 2. After students complete the handout, review their responses.

Suggested Responses:

1. Textual Example—“Mr. Severe was rightly named: he was a cruel man.”

Kind of Irony—*verbal*

2. Textual Example—A representative could not be prouder of his election to a seat in the American Congress, than a slave on one of the out-farms would be of his election to do errands at the Great House Farm.”

Kind of Irony—*situational*

3. Kind of Irony—*situational*

Irony—The slaves so coveted the opportunity to go to the Great House Farm and to be selected among all others that they would act opposite to their true feelings toward the overseers. Moreover, congressional office-seekers are expected to be honest and to possess integrity, not to be deceptive and manipulative.

4. Textual Example—“The same traits of character might be seen in Colonel Lloyd’s slaves, as are seen in the slaves of the political parties.”

Irony—This is verbal irony because congressmen are referred to as figurative slaves, forced to do whatever the political party compels them to. This is situational irony because it compares slaves to congressmen in character.

5. Textual Example—“Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy.”

Irony—People tend to associate singing with happiness, contentment, or light-heartedness.

6. Kind of Irony—*situational*

Irony—Punishment should be merited. The Barneys were treated oppositely to how justice would dictate.

7. Textual Example—“ . . . slaves, when inquired of as to their condition and the character of their masters, almost universally say they are contented, and that their masters are kind.”

Irony—*verbal*

8. Kind of Irony—*situational*

Irony—Slaves despised their masters, not honored them; yet, they evinced pride in the social esteem of their masters, and pride in being owned by such a well-regarded master even though he was sometimes held in high social regard because of morally dishonorable characteristics (for example, being a severe master).

3. Ask students to find definitions for *wit* and *witty* in the dictionary.

Suggested Responses:

wit—the ability to perceive unexpected connections between ideas, things, or situations, and express them in a brief, clever, and often sharp way

witty—possessing wit; amusingly clever

Call students’ attention to the examples of verbal irony (items 1, 4, and 7) in **Handout 6**. Ask students to explain, orally or independently in writing, why these examples of irony may be characterized as examples of wit or wittiness.

Suggested Responses:

1. The first example is witty because Douglass’s tone is sharp, and the fact that Mr. Severe is (ironically) so aptly named is almost amusing, though in a darkly humorous way.
2. The example in item 4 is witty because Douglass draws a comparison between two socially polar opposites—slaves and U.S. congressmen, thus perceiving an unexpected connection between the situation of each. He furthermore amusingly suggests that congressmen willingly enslave themselves, albeit figuratively. In contrast, it is understood and assumed that no Southern slave is willingly enslaved. The implication is that such congressmen are fools.

3. *The example in item 7 is witty because Douglass briefly and sharply notes the ironic situation in which a slave commonly finds himself, that of having to lie to save his life, literally or figuratively, despite his instinct, desire, or inclination to be honest.*
4. Direct students to reread the last paragraph in chapter 3, from which the textual example for item 8 comes. Discuss with them what Douglass means when he states that, "Moreover, slaves are like other people, and imbibe prejudices quite common to others. They think their own better than that of others." Ask students to define the term *prejudice* (*an opinion formed before knowing the facts*). Have them note the meanings of its prefix and root: *pre*, meaning "before," and *judice*, meaning "judgment." Douglass implies that prejudices are a human trait; he also implies that the nature of prejudices involves an element of superiority versus inferiority. Discuss these implications with students. Consider having students discuss in small groups the two implications in terms of their validity, followed by a debate over the validity of each. Students may also explore the validity and significance of these two implications in a journal form of writing.
5. Distribute **Handout 7**. Instruct students to locate and reread the passage associated with each of the injustices and illogicalities listed. In order to complete part A, students must analyze and evaluate the justice and logic of each circumstance or occurrence. For part B, students may work independently, with a partner, or as part of a small group. Consider dividing the list and assigning certain numbers to certain students. Students may respond to the injustices and illogicalities both in writing and orally.

Suggested Responses:

Part A.

1. *The slaves were given insufficient food and were compelled to spend their scarce spare time foraging. The fact that they worked manually implies that they*

had hearty appetites; thus, they must have been hungry. It seems illogical to underfeed them since the landowners must have desired quality production from them. Their clothing and blankets were also insufficient, both in quality, as it did get cold in Maryland, and in quantity, as working hard in the elements must have worn their clothes threadbare. Children were made to suffer with no shoes and practically no clothes. Too little time to sleep, especially when one must work as the slaves did, was arguably a form of torture.

2. *The slaves were clearly underfed and hungry. The fruit garden was tantalizing and even a torture to see without the ability to partake of it. The fact that any slave with tar on him or her was assumed to be trying to steal fruit and was punished was arguably psychological torture. Douglass notes that the slaves developed a paranoid fear of being found with tar on them.*
3. *Old Barney and young Barney were treated unfairly according to Colonel Lloyd's mood and whims. They were held accountable for circumstances beyond their control and were not recognized for their efforts to be perfect, as the colonel expected.*
4. *Douglass implies that Colonel Lloyd's sons and sons-in-law engaged in whipping slaves for sport or amusement, at least at times. Their legitimacy in doing so was never questioned. The slaves must have feared these six men who would whip them without cause (as if whipping them was ever morally legitimate).*
5. *Slaves learned that they must lie to save their lives and to be allowed to remain with their friends and family. Honesty is virtuous, but the slaves were punished harshly and extremely for telling the truth. It was illogical for the masters and owners to question them and expect an honest answer. Clearly, they asked only in order to hear what they wanted to, an affirmation despite its falseness.*

6. *Slaves lived in perpetual fear of Mr. Gore and masters or overseers like him. They had no opportunity to defend themselves against unmerited punishment or unjust and untrue accusations. One might be tortured both physically and psychologically in this way at any moment.*
 7. *Demby was instinctively protecting himself. Though he was being disobedient for not coming out of the water (whether or not the whipping he was escaping was for another disobedient act or not), Mr. Gore displayed no regard for Demby's life. His manner of killing him, moreover, was savage and gruesome.*
 8. *Mr. Gore's defense of his killing Demby reveals extreme illogic and paranoia on his part. Others in white society who accepted this invalid reasoning also manifested illogic and paranoia. His defensive explanation of his actions shows that the masters know that the only way they can control other human beings is through harsh physical and psychological force. Mr. Gore and other masters and overseers fear the slaves' potential for rebellion. Illogically, they fear that the slaves would, in turn, enslave the whites if just one slave, Demby, was not stopped from rebelling. No one considered his murdering Demby to be wrong, as his horrid crime went uninvestigated. It even made him famous.*
 9. *Mrs. Hicks murdered a slave because her baby was crying too long at night. Her act is not only unjust but also illogical. The slave was justifiably and understandably exhausted from sleep deprivation. Instead of evincing compassion or tenderness for her crying baby, which would be expected from its mother, she exhibited barbarity toward the baby's surrogate caretaker.*
 10. *Mr. Beal Bondly showed no respect or regard for the life of the old man whom he shot and killed. The offense he took at the old man's accidental trespass was illogical because the man did so unintentionally. His reaction was unjustified and illogically extreme. The man would have left willingly if Mr. Bondly had simply told him to. Colonel Lloyd evidently did not value the man's life much either. If Mr. Bondly paid him for the old man, this is evidence that he was mere chattel. If Mr. Bondly avoided paying the colonel by "justifying what he had done," this is illogical, as his act was not justified.*
6. Assign students the reading of chapters 5–7 for Lesson 4.

Irony and Wit

Directions: Use the text to fill in the missing information in each column. “Textual Example” refers to an example from chapter two or three of the narrative. “Kind of Irony” refers to either verbal or situational irony. “Irony” refers to why the textual example is ironic.

Textual Example	Kind of Irony	Irony
1.		His name happens to fit him; it means exactly what he is.
2.		Slaves were immensely proud of and honored by being selected to go to the Great House Farm.
3. “The competitors for this office sought as diligently to please their overseers, as the office-seekers in the political parties seek to please and deceive the people.”		
4.	Verbal and Situational	

Textual Example	Kind of Irony	Irony
5.	Situational	
6. “They [old Barney and young Barney] were frequently whipped when least deserving, and escaped whipping when most deserving it.”		
7.		Honesty results in punishment, not reward, so the slaves always say the opposite of the truth when questioned.
8. “They seemed to think that the greatness of their masters was transferable to themselves.”		

Injustices and Illogicalities

Part A.

Directions: Analyze and evaluate the following unjust circumstances and occurrences noted by Frederick Douglass in chapters 2–4 of the narrative. Explain why they are unjust and/or illogical.

Chapter 2

1. Meager and insufficient allowances of food and clothing; little time to sleep

Chapter 3

2. Colonel Lloyd's famous fruit garden and the tarred fence
3. Old Barney and young Barney and their care of Colonel Lloyd's riding equipage
4. Colonel Lloyd's sons and sons-in-law's freedom to whip the slaves at their whims
5. The consequences of telling the truth about one's master

Chapter 4

6. No responding to or defending one's innocence when accused, especially with Mr. Gore

7. Demby and Mr. Gore

8. Mr. Gore's defense of his treatment of Demby and society's acceptance of this

9. Mrs. Hicks; no arraignment for her murderous actions

10. Mr. Beal Bondly and Colonel Lloyd's old slave

Part B.

Directions: Imagine that you can respond to the perpetrator of each of these circumstances and occurrences. How would you respond? Use your responses in part A to develop an argument against each.

Lesson 4

Baltimore: Enlightenment, Education, and the Resolve to Be Free

Objectives

- To analyze Frederick Douglass's character
- To analyze and explain the ironies that lead to Douglass's enlightenment and resolve to be free
- To research the effects of unjust treatment on perpetrators and their families

Notes to the Teacher

In chapters 5–7, Douglass describes leaving Colonel Lloyd's plantation in Talbot County and going to Baltimore to live with Mr. Hugh Auld, brother to his old master's son-in-law, Captain Thomas Auld. Douglass regards his being chosen as divine providence for two reasons. First, he was the only child chosen, for no apparent reason, among numerous slave children, and secondly, this change in his life enabled him later to escape to freedom. The change in location changed him as a slave and personally. Living in a city broadened his perspective socially; he observed that the way slaves were treated on the plantation was not the way they were treated in the city, where social pressures kept cruel and excessive treatment in check. Furthermore, living with the Hugh Aulds inadvertently afforded him insights into the power of the slaveholder and the way to emancipation. Douglass learned the alphabet and began to learn to read under the kind and compassionate tutelage of Mrs. Sophia Auld. However, her well-intentioned endeavors were interrupted by Hugh Auld's warnings that she would make Douglass unworthy of being a slave by teaching him to read and think for himself. Not only did she stop Douglass's lessons, but also she became adamantly against his attempts to continue his education on his own.

Douglass notes that slavery injured her spirit as much as it did his, as she abandoned her compassion and sensitivity for violence and rage. Nonetheless, the clever and ingenious young Douglass, now about twelve years old, devised ways to continue to learn to read and then went on to learn to write, figuring that the ability to write might be his eventual ticket to

freedom. Because he was such a deep and reflective thinker, he experienced great joy from the ability to read. However, Hugh Auld's warnings proved true, as his newfound insights into the nature and injustice of slavery made him a miserable slave. Reflecting on his fate, he became angry and despondent. He felt at once helpless, hopeless, and determined to try to escape.

Douglass reveals that he always had the sense that he would not be a slave for life. In these chapters, he describes the first steps in the process of his emancipation, an emancipation that was both internal and external, mental and physical. His character in these chapters is elucidated through his actions and his thoughts about his actions. Students are guided to note, summarize, and analyze the significance of Douglass's character as he describes his reactions to leaving the plantation, seeing Baltimore and meeting the Aulds, learning to read and write—both with Sophia Auld's help and clandestinely on his own—and experiencing mental emancipation as he read about the injustice and illegitimacy of slavery.

Douglass's experiences of learning to read and coming to understand how slaves are able to be mastered by being kept ignorant and illiterate are ironic occurrences in his life with the Hugh Aulds. His being a literate slave is an irony, if not a contradiction, that he feels and must live with painfully. In addition to focusing on his character, this lesson helps students note and explain the numerous ironies that occur and comprise this profound turning point in his life as a slave. The pathetic and tragic change in Sophia Auld as she adjusts to her social position as a slavemaster's wife is also worth noting and discussing. A research project is suggested to study the effects of injustice and violence on the perpetrators as well as the victims.

Procedure

1. Have the class brainstorm characteristics of Douglass which are evident so far in the narrative. Ask students to give an example or support their responses with references

to the text. Record their responses on the board or have students record them in their notes. Then ask students to focus primarily on chapters 5–7; have students cite characteristics they recall from their reading. Again, ask them to support their responses with textual references.

2. Distribute **Handout 8**. Consider having students work with a partner to complete the handout. Upon completion, review students' findings, and encourage students to add any characteristics and textual references from the class's list in procedure 1.

Suggested Responses:

Chapter 5

1. *For the first time, Douglass worked for reward, but for an extrinsic reward, not for pride in his appearance.*
2. *Douglass felt no ties to the place he called home as a very young child.*
3. *Douglass feels that he will be able to endure any hardships it may involve.*
4. *Douglass reasons that his new home will be no worse than what he is leaving.*
5. *Douglass wants to see Baltimore.*
6. *Douglass believes that the city will be exciting and worth seeing.*
7. *Douglass believes that there was no clear reason for his being chosen to go to Baltimore; he regards it as remarkable.*
8. *Douglass regards his being chosen as remarkable; he does not feel that he had qualities that made him exceptional among the slave children.*
9. *Douglass reveals that he has always had an intuitive sense about his fate as a slave; that is, he had the sense, for no apparent reason, that he would not always be a slave.*
10. *Douglass gives God all credit for his intuitive sense of his escape, his ability to escape eventually, and the hope that sustained him when escape seemed impossible.*

Chapter 6

11. *Douglass had “previous slumbering sentiments” about freedom, both mental freedom and physical freedom.*
12. *Douglass wanted to understand the pathway to freedom. Douglass had thought about, with confusion and perplexity, how blacks were kept successfully enslaved.*
13. *Douglass desired to be mentally free, to be able to think for himself and reflect deeply.*
14. *Douglass understands that slaves are treated more civilly in the city out of the masters' sense of shame and social propriety.*

Chapter 7

15. *Douglass exchanges bread for reading lessons with the children on the street. Douglass learned to write by pretending to challenge other boys to write better than he. He also copied young Master Thomas's copy-book in secret when Sophia was out of the house.*
16. *At twelve years old, Douglass is burdened by the thought of being a slave for life.*
3. Elicit students' comments on Douglass's character as a youth. Ask them to think about the following questions:
 - Is he average or exceptional for a boy of twelve (furthermore, one who is a slave)? (Douglass's character is average with respect to his unrootedness as a slave and his natural curiosity. It is exceptional for his confidence and courage, his humility, his intuition, his faith in God, and his profound reflectiveness in general and under such harsh circumstances.)
 - Is he mature—emotionally and intellectually? (He is both emotionally and intellectually mature for his age, evincing courage and hope in the face of misery and resourcefulness and innovation in the face of significant obstacles to his intellectual development.)

- Is he a leader or a follower? (*He is clearly a natural leader for his love of independent thought and his ability to overcome problems resourcefully, cleverly, and independently.*)
 - Is he someone they would like to know?
4. Review the definitions of *verbal irony* and *situational irony* with students. (Verbal irony occurs when the stated words mean something other than their apparent meaning. Situational irony occurs when an event does not occur as it would be expected to occur.) Point out to students that Douglass's education and enlightenment in chapters 5–7 occur amid and as a result of several ironic circumstances. Discuss how Douglass's being an educated (literate) slave is ironic. (*His mind is free, but he is not physically free.*) Ask students to recall how Douglass learned to read and what motivated him to want to continue after Sophia stopped teaching him and started discouraging him.

Suggested Responses:

Douglass first learned from Sophia, then from boys on the street with whom he bargained by giving them bread. He learned to write by playing a game with street boys, in which he pretended to challenge them to write better than he could, as well as by copying Master Thomas's old copy-book when no one was around. Hugh Auld's discouraging words to Sophia served to motivate Douglass to want to learn to read and write, for Hugh Auld warned her that Douglass would attain mental freedom.

5. Distribute **Handout 9**. Upon students' completion of the handout, review and discuss their explanations.

Suggested Responses:

1. Situational irony—*By the age of twelve, most children have developed feelings of security and sentimentality in connection with their home. Douglass feels no regret despite his having no ties to anywhere or anyone else.*

2. Verbal irony—*Learning inherently implies growth and positive outcomes, not regression or negativity. Hugh Auld means that learning would make the best slave miserable because it would make him or her reflect on and think about his or her situation. In essence, however, learning enhances anyone by helping one to develop one's mental and emotional faculties.*
3. Situational irony—*Normally, one would be content and happy as a result of being able to read, especially if one were a slave. A slave would have the unexpected reaction of being discontented and unhappy only because he or she would be mentally free but still physically bound.*
4. Verbal irony—*These contrasts in perspective are ironic because Hugh Auld's words were intended to indirectly discourage Douglass from continuing to learn by directly discouraging Sophia from teaching him. The effect of his discouragement was to encourage Douglass, however.*
5. Situational irony—*Hugh Auld's vehemence against Douglass's education served to convince Douglass of the importance and power of becoming literate.*
6. Situational irony—*Sophia Auld gave Douglass both the impetus and the foundation for learning to read. Hugh Auld, through his efforts to discourage her from continuing to teach Douglass, gave Douglass the motivation and resolve to become completely literate on his own precisely because of the so-called dangers it promised to render upon his intellect, understanding, and ability to be controlled as a slave.*
7. Situational irony—*Supposedly, slaves are for the benefit of the masters. One normally hears and thinks about the injuries that slavery inflicts upon the slaves, both physically and spiritually. In this case, Sophia Auld's character and spirit were just as injured by her becoming involved as the mistress to Douglass's master.*

8. Situational irony—*When Douglass first met Sophia Auld, she seemed angelic. She was nonjudgmental and nondiscriminatory. She was filled with compassion and goodwill toward all persons. Her violent opposition to Douglass's continued education is contrary to all aspects of her initial character. She almost seems to have metamorphosed into a distorted caricature of a slavemaster's wife.*
 9. Verbal irony—*Douglass, who was always hungry on Colonel Lloyd's plantation, has not only plenty of bread to eat in Baltimore, but also little regard for it compared to the regard he has for the bread of knowledge. The abilities to read and write have become his sustenance and are what he values most.*
 10. Situational irony—*Initially, Douglass desired to be able to read and valued it immensely. It brought him joy, stimulation, a sense of empowerment, and a sense of freedom. These are normal and expected results of reading. It is not expected to feel like a curse. It came to feel so precisely because it gave him a sense of empowerment and freedom, but only mentally, not physically. He was still a bound slave. The stimulation it provided had to be enjoyed in secrecy and solitude, for he could share his new knowledge and thoughts with no one. The fact that he could read and understand anything he read had to be a secret.*
7. Assign students to research the character of a well-known perpetrator of violence or tyranny (for example, Hitler). Instruct them to look for evidence of injurious consequences upon the perpetrator's character as a result of his or her tyranny. Allow students to report their findings orally or in writing.
 8. Assign students to read chapters 8–9 for Lesson 5.
6. Ask students to focus on number 7 in **Handout 9**. Ask them to speculate about why Sophia changed. Offer the explanation that sometimes when a person is forced to fill a role that is out of character and contrary to his or her disposition, he or she may embrace it excessively and distortedly, becoming distorted oneself. It was unnatural for Sophia to be a violent slavemistress. Her efforts to conform to her husband's (and society's) expectations were manifestly a contortion and distortion of her nature.

The Development of Young Douglass

Directions: Find and record supportive evidence of the following character traits in the young Frederick Douglass. At the bottom of the handout, add any additional characteristics you found in chapters 1–7.

Chapter 5

1. Douglass is unrooted inwardly (in himself).

2. Douglass is unrooted externally (in place).

3. Douglass is confident and courageous.

4. Douglass is practical.

5. Douglass is curious.

6. Douglass is hopeful.

7. Douglass believes in divine intervention and providence.

8. Douglass is humble.

9. Douglass has integrity (is true to himself) and is intuitive.

10. Douglass has faith in God.

Chapter 6

11. Douglass is reflective, a deep thinker.

12. Douglass is intellectually curious.

13. Douglass is independent, especially intellectually.

14. Douglass is perceptive and insightful.

Chapter 7

15. Douglass is resourceful, innovative, and clever.

16. Douglass is reflective and sensitive.

Enlightenment through Irony

Directions: Label the following situations or quotations as verbal irony or situational irony. Then explain why each is ironic.

Quotation	Irony	Explanation
Chapter 5		
1. Douglass feels no regret or sorrow about leaving his childhood home.		
Chapter 6		
2. "Learning would <i>spoil</i> the best nigger in the world."		
3. ". . . if you teach that nigger . . . how to read . . . it would make him discontented and unhappy"		
4. "What he most dreaded, that I most desired. What he most loved, that I most hated. That which to him was a great evil, to be carefully shunned, was to me a great good, to be diligently sought. . . ."		
5. ". . . the argument which he so warmly urged, against my learning to read, only served to inspire me with a desire and determination to learn."		

Quotation	Irony	Explanation
6. "In learning to read, [Douglass owes] almost as much to the bitter opposition of [Mr. Auld] as to the kindly aid of [Sophia]."		
Chapter 7		
7. "Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me."		
8. "She finally became even more violent in her opposition than her husband himself."		
9. "This bread I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge."		
10. ". . . I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing."		

Lesson 5

Slavery's "Infernal Character": Christian Hypocrisy

Objectives

- To add to the character analysis of Frederick Douglass's masters
- To analyze Douglass's tone
- To use Douglass's tone as a model in writing or in a speech

Notes to the Teacher

In chapters 8 and 9, Douglass describes the character of the masters, elucidating two particular traits that made them most cruel. In chapter 8, he explains how the slaves were valued as property and divided upon the death of his old master, Captain Anthony. His tone is critical and condemning as he depicts the heartlessness of the masters as they divided families and friends with no regard for the slaves' relationships among themselves. He is compassionate and sympathetic toward the slaves and their fears of both being separated from loved ones and becoming the property of Master Andrew, who was exceptionally cruel. Douglass is unrelenting in his sympathy toward his grandmother and his condemnation of the treatment she received, that of being left to die alone. This chapter, in short, depicts the complete lack of regard for the slaves as human beings and even as living beings with the capacity to feel and form attachments to others. In chapter 9, Douglass describes with disdain and sarcasm the Christian hypocrisy that marked the characters and actions of many slaveholders. He notes the ironic effect of religious revivals on the masters, that of making them crueler by affording them an excuse for their cruel actions through distorted interpretations of Bible verses. Douglass is disgusted by and incredulous toward the selfishness, greed, insensitivity, and brutality of the so-called Christian masters whom he experienced in Talbot County. They had surplus food, and they prayed to God for continued and increased prosperity, yet they starved their slaves. They claimed to be Christians, yet they would not allow the slaves to learn about or practice religion. They used biblical references to slaves being obedient to their masters as justification for whipping and punishing slaves.

In this lesson, students review their notes on Captain Anthony from Lesson 2 and add to them with character notes on Douglass's subsequent masters: Colonel Lloyd's sons and sons-in-law, particularly Master Daniel; Mr. Hugh Auld in Baltimore; Master Thomas Auld in St. Michael's; and Mr. Covey in St. Michael's (who is described more in chapter 10). Students complete these notes in Lesson 6 and use them to compose a character profile of Douglass's masters. **Handout 10** guides students to identify and analyze Douglass's tone in chapters 8 and 9 toward the subjects of slave division and Christian hypocrisy. Students then model his tone orally or in writing about a passionate subject of their choice.

Procedure

1. Direct students to take out their notes on Douglass's master, Captain Anthony, from Lesson 2. Write the following masters' names on the board, and instruct students to locate the chapter(s) in which Douglass describes them and to complete the chart notes for each one: Master Daniel (one of Colonel Lloyd's sons); Hugh Auld; Thomas Auld; Edward Covey. Note that Edward Covey is mentioned in the final paragraph of chapter 9 and will be described further in chapter 10. Students begin their notes on him and add to them in Lesson 6 after reading chapter 10. Remind students that for some masters there may be no information for a certain category. These are left blank. Review students' responses with them.

Suggested Responses:

Master—*Daniel Lloyd*

Chapter—*chapter 5*

Location—*Talbot County, Maryland; Colonel Lloyd's plantation*

Situation—*Colonel Lloyd's son*

Religion—

Personality—*likes to hunt; not entirely inhumane*

Examples—*Douglass found his birds after he shot them; he became attached to Douglass and protected him from older boys; he divided his cakes with Douglass; he seldom whipped Douglass.*

Master—*Hugh Auld*

Chapter—*chapters 5–8*

Location—*Baltimore, Maryland*

Situation—

Religion—

Personality—*kind initially; opposed literacy in slaves; became unkind under the influence of brandy*

Examples—*He always gave Douglass enough to eat; he did not whip Douglass; he forbade Sophia to teach Douglass and warned against the dangers of a literate slave; he became negative under the influence of brandy.*

Master—*Thomas Auld*

Chapter—*chapter 9*

Location—*St. Michael's, Maryland*

Situation—*slaveholder by marriage*

Religion—*professed to be Christian*

Personality—*mean, cruel, cowardly, inconsistent, hypocritical*

Examples—*He did not give his slaves enough to eat; he tortured a lame young woman, justifying it with Biblical verses; he was insecure in his role as a master and could not command the respect of his slaves.*

Master—*Edward Covey*

Chapter—*chapters 9–10*

Location—*seven miles from St. Michael's, Maryland*

Situation—*poor man, a farm-renter; used others' slaves who were lent to him for one year during which he broke them*

Religion—*professed to be Christian*

Personality—*mean*

Examples—

2. Remind students that some of Douglass's key characteristics are honesty and integrity. This is evident in the style and

content of his narrative. He gives due credit to those who were kind or fair, and he reveals his true thoughts and feelings without concern for the reader's reaction. Douglass is the opposite of cruel and vindictive, or hypocritical. These traits in the slaveholders clearly arouse a passionate response in him. In chapter 8, he condemns with disdain the unnecessary cruelty of the slaveowners as they divide the slaves among themselves and get rid of his grandmother who is too old to be useful anymore. In chapter 9, he mixes sarcasm with incredulity and scorn as he relates the ways of those slaveowners and masters who professed to be Christians.

3. Distribute **Handout 10**. Direct students to refer to **Handout 3** from Lesson 2 for useful terms to describe the tone. Students may also find it helpful to review their responses with a partner or in a small group prior to the class discussion with the teacher. Review and discuss students' responses.

Suggested Responses

1. *Scornful, detesting*

The helplessness, powerlessness, and robbed sense of self of the slaves was acutely apparent at the valuing and division of them.

2. *Incredulous, indignant*

The slaves were treated as inanimate with no senses or at most as animals with no feelings.

3. *Passionate, compassionate, incredulous*

The slaves' personhood and humanness—their personal and intimate relationships—were disregarded, ignored, and taken from them with no sensitivity.

4. *Somber, candid*

Douglass suffered personally as well as with and for his fellow slaves as a result of being sensitive and having experienced the small kindnesses of the Hugh Aulds.

5. *Inflamed, scornful, incredulous, indignant, angry*
Douglass's grandmother was treated with extreme ingratitude and disrespect for her services throughout her life. She was made to suffer emotionally and psychologically by being isolated in the woods to die. She was, in essence, imprisoned, in solitary confinement, for life.
6. *Cynical, bitter, scornful*
Clearly, Master Thomas was a hypocrite, for if he were truly a religious convert, he would have at least become humane if not emancipated his slaves.
7. *Sardonic*
Master Thomas was an evil man who manipulated religion and the Bible itself for his savage and barbaric intentions.
8. *Sardonic, sarcastic*
Master Thomas was a ridiculous hypocrite and fake. He and the preachers (except for Mr. George Cookman) were entirely false in what they professed to be and believe in.
9. *Sarcastic, incredulous*
The town of St. Michael's was full of impious people posing as pious Christians.
10. *Sarcastic, sardonic*
Master Thomas was completely devoid of piety as well as pity. He was selfish and inhumane.
4. Discuss with students why Douglass uses a sarcastic, sardonic, passionate tone in chapters 8 and 9. (*He finds the slaveowners and masters' behavior offensive in a very personal way. First, he is hurt by their disregard for and insensitivity toward slave relationships and toward his grandmother. Secondly, he is scornful of their hypocritical, manipulative ways with respect to the profound subject of religion and God.*) Review with students how Douglass describes and expresses his feelings about the topics of slave division and Christian hypocrisy. (*He analyzes and explains the circumstances in addition to giving examples of the points he is making.*)
5. Assign students the task of using Douglass's tone as a model either in writing or orally. If done orally, students should prepare a speech. Direct students to choose a topic about which they are passionate; the topic should be one they oppose or about which they feel strongly negative. Tell students to write an essay or prepare a speech in which they describe the topic and denounce it with analyses, explanations, and examples of its negative aspects.
6. Assign students the reading of chapter 10 for Lesson 6.

The Infernal Character of Slavery

Directions: Identify the tone(s) Frederick Douglass expresses in the following quotations from chapters 8 and 9. Then explain Douglass's use of such a tone in relating this content.

Chapter 8

1. "Here again my feelings rose up in detestation of slavery. I had now a new conception of my degraded condition. . . . I left Baltimore with a young heart overborne with sadness, and a soul full of apprehension."

2. "At this moment, I saw more clearly than ever the brutalizing effects of slavery upon both slave and slaveholder."

3. "I have no language to express the high excitement and deep anxiety which were felt among us poor slaves during this time. Our fate was to be decided. We had no more voice in that decision than the brutes among whom we were ranked. A single word from the white men was enough—against all our wishes, prayers, and entreaties—to sunder forever the dearest friends, dearest kindred, and strongest ties known to human beings."

4. "I suffered more anxiety than most of my fellow-slaves. I had known what it was to be kindly treated. . . . "

5. "If any one thing in my experience, more than another, served to deepen my conviction of the infernal character of slavery, and to fill me with unutterable loathing of slaveholders, it was their base ingratitude to my poor old grandmother . . . virtually turning her out to die!"

Chapter 9

6. "In August, 1832, my master attended a Methodist camp-meeting . . . and there experienced religion. . . . It neither made him to be humane to his slaves, nor to emancipate them. If it had any effect on his character, it made him more cruel and hateful in all his ways. . . . "
7. "Prior to his conversion, he relied upon his own depravity to shield and sustain him in his savage barbarity; but after his conversion, he found religious sanction and support for his slaveholding cruelty."
8. "He made the greatest pretensions to piety. His house was the house of prayer. He prayed morning, noon, and night. He very soon distinguished himself among his brethren, and was soon made a class-leader and exhorter. His activity in revivals was great, and he proved himself an instrument in the hands of the church in converting many souls. His house was the preachers' home. They used to take great pleasure in coming there to put up; for while he starved us, he stuffed them."
9. "While I lived with my master in St. Michael's, there was a white young man, a Mr. Wilson, who proposed to keep a Sabbath school for the instruction of such slaves as might be disposed to learn to read the New Testament. We met but three times, when Mr. West and Mr. Fairbanks, both class-leaders . . . came upon us with sticks . . . and forbade us to meet again. Thus ended our little Sabbath school in the pious town of St. Michael's."
10. "Finally, my benevolent master, to use his own words, 'set her adrift to take care of herself.' Here was a recently converted man, holding on upon the mother, and at the same time turning out her helpless child, to starve and die! Master Thomas was one of the many pious slaveholders who hold slaves for the very charitable purpose of taking care of them."

Lesson 6

Slavery and Freedom Personified and Symbolized

Objectives

- To compose a character profile of Frederick Douglass's masters
- To analyze Douglass's tone in his apostrophe to the ships and his personification of slavery and freedom
- To identify and examine the climax and its symbolism
- To analyze and evaluate the slavemasters' manipulative methods

Notes to the Teacher

Chapter 10 is the longest chapter in the narrative, and it contains the climax. In this chapter, Douglass relates significant steps he took toward his liberation, a freedom he sought both figuratively and literally, both psychologically and physically. The climax is his fight with Edward Covey, from which point on he never was whipped again. He describes the outcome of this fight as a turning point and a resurrection of his spirit, his manhood, his self-confidence, and his determination to be free in all respects. He subsequently acted to help others achieve such freedom by holding a Sabbath school at which he taught his fellow slaves to read and by talking with his most intimate fellow slaves about freedom, manhood, self-respect, dignity, and the importance of at least trying to gain one's freedom rather than accepting the fate of being a slave for life.

A mood of anticipation is aroused in the reader as Douglass relates an increasing restlessness and yearning concerning his fate. The threat of hopelessness in his outlook was overcome by self-confidence, self-respect, and resolve. He notes reflectively toward the end of the chapter that his thoughts and feelings about seeking freedom were most profound when his situation with particular masters was least intolerable. When he lived with Mr. Covey and had to concentrate on survival, he had no time or energy to think about his situation and his fate. Similarly, when he worked in Mr. Gardner's shipyard, he had no time to reflect on that which he most desired. When he lived with Mr. Freeland, however, he notes that

his situation was tolerable and, aside from being a slave, not entirely unpleasant. Yet, it was during that time that he planned to escape. His unsuccessful attempt to run away with a few fellow slaves actually placed him in what would be a position of greater advantage for his escape, that of living again in Baltimore and working in a shipyard as a skilled tradesman. Working as a self-contracting caulker, he experienced a certain amount of freedom in the form of leisure time, time to reflect, and the semblance of being his own master.

The desperation in Douglass's desire for freedom and his utter detestation of his circumstances in life reach a climax in this chapter as well. His apostrophe to the ships on the Chesapeake Bay and his personification of slavery and freedom both profoundly express, with increased intensity, the spiritual misery he experienced as a slave and his urgent need to escape or die in trying to escape. **Handout 11** guides students to analyze and understand these two important figurative images he uses to describe his feelings and circumstances. In this lesson, discuss the narrative's climax (his fight with Covey) and its symbolism (resurrection). Students explain the slavemaster's manipulative methods of psychologically binding slaves to their fates. Also, students complete their notes on Douglass's masters by adding Mr. Covey and Mr. Freeland. Students use their notes to compose a written profile of the masters' characters.

Procedure

1. Direct students to complete their chart notes on Douglass's masters by adding information about Edward Covey and William Freeland.

Suggested Responses:

Master—*Edward Covey*

Chapter—*chapters 9–10*

Location—*Seven miles from St. Michael's, Maryland*

Situation—*poor man, a farm-renter; used others' slaves who were loaned to him for one year during which he broke them*

Religion—*professed to be Christian*

Personality—*mean, deceptive, fraudulent, proud*

Examples—*He whipped Douglass for his awkwardness. He gave his slaves enough to eat but too little time to eat (less than five minutes). He was sneaky and unable to be deceived by his slaves. He was extremely deceptive himself. He was a religious hypocrite. He bought a female slave to be a breeder, forcing a hired slave to breed with her. He was hard-working, one of the few slaveholders who could and did work with his hands. He was proud; he did not have Douglass publicly whipped in order to save his own reputation.*

Master—*William Freeland*

Chapter—*chapter 10*

Location—*three miles from St. Michael's, Maryland*

Situation—*not rich, but an educated Southern gentleman*

Religion—*no pretensions to or professions of religion*

Personality—*unpretentious, open, and frank; some regard for honor, justice, and respect for humanity*

Examples—*He gave both enough to eat and sufficient time to eat. He worked his slaves hard but not excessively. He provided good tools.*

2. Assign students a written composition in which they describe the general character of a slavemaster, based on Douglass's experiences with his various masters. Encourage students to review their notes on each master. Direct them to draw comparisons and contrasts, note similarities, and form a general profile of the Maryland slavemaster based on such comparisons.
3. Ask students to recall how Douglass figuratively describes slavery and freedom in this chapter. Remind students that he addresses inanimate objects as symbolizing freedom at one point and personifies slavery and freedom at another point. Students may recall his apostrophe to

the ships on the Chesapeake Bay as he watched them from Mr. Covey's land and his gruesome personifications of slavery and freedom as he laid his plans to escape from Mr. Freeland's. Explain to students that apostrophe is the direct address of an inanimate object.

4. Distribute **Handout 11**. Students may find it helpful to locate in their text the passages in parts A and B. Upon completion of the handout, review their responses.

Suggested Responses:

Part A.

1. *resentment, envy*
2. *desperation, yearning*
3. *desperation, hopelessness, helplessness*
4. *determination, fearlessness*
5. *excitement, hope, urgency*
6. *resolve, stubbornness, practicality, reasoning*
7. *resolve, patience*
8. *patience, courage, strength, reasoning*
9. *hope, reasoning*
10. *faith, optimism*

Part B.

1. Aspects of personification—*Slavery stands and glares; it wears robes; it feasts greedily.*

Literal meaning—*Slavery is a harsh, frightening reality. It both physically and spiritually hurts and kills millions of people.*

2. Aspects of personification—*Freedom stands and beckons and offers hospitality.*

Literal meaning—*Freedom is elusive, a seemingly impossible and doubtful potential, but it nonetheless is constantly enticing with its promise of succor and refuge.*

5. Discuss the mood that these images create for the reader; ask students to share their feelings as they read these passages. Discuss with students why the images in

each passage are effective. (In the apostrophe, the ships effectively represent freedom because they are able to leave the bay for the larger ocean, which represents the world beyond the land of slavery. In the personification, the image of slavery is effective because of its gruesome, greedy traits that represent the slaveholders' actions. The image of freedom is effective because its dim, distant, half-frozen state represents its inaccessibility and immobility or inability to reach out to offer help.)

6. Discuss the narrative's climax. Direct students to locate and reread the passage in which Douglass describes the fight with Mr. Covey, beginning with the paragraph in which he states, "You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man" and ending with the statement, "From this time I was never again what might be called fairly whipped, though I remained a slave four years afterwards. I had several fights, but was never whipped." Focus in particular on the point at which he writes, "This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. . . ." Ask students to respond to the following items:

- Why did this battle have the effect of "reviving [his] sense of manhood"? (*It gave him a sense of self-determination and empowerment.*)
- Identify the extended metaphor he uses to describe the event. (*"It was a glorious resurrection, from the tomb of slavery, to the heaven of freedom. My long-crushed spirit rose. . . ."*)
- Explain the metaphor. (*Douglass felt his spirit and sense of self had been suppressed and denied, leaving a feeling of their having been killed. The freedom he refers to is psychological, for he freely determined his own actions when he fought and resisted Covey as opposed to being forced by another to act and obey. This gave him an intense sense of self-empowerment.*)
- Explain the statement, ". . . 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." (*Douglass was physically enslaved, but he regained and held on to his sense of self-empowerment and self-determination. These are not qualities of a slave, particularly a contented one, as he states at the end of the chapter.*)

Point out that Douglass's manhood was resurrected, which made him unfit to be a slave: "I have found that to make a contented slave, it is necessary to make a thoughtless one. It is necessary to darken his moral and mental vision, and, as far as possible, to annihilate the power of reason . . . he can be brought to that only when he ceases to be a man." When he fought Covey, Douglass's moral and mental vision were enlightened; his reason was stimulated; and his sense of dignity as a man was restored.

7. Discuss with students how, in contrast to Douglass's strong sense of self-determination, which he could exercise during whatever free time he was allotted, many of the slaves lacked this inner trait. Assign students to reread the passage in which he describes the holidays and to explain in a paragraph the slavemasters' manipulative methods of psychologically binding the slaves to their fate. Direct students to explain how this method was used to disgust the slave with freedom and what the slave believed to be freedom by encouraging and at times forcing the slave to see only the abuse of freedom.

Suggested Response:

Douglass describes how the masters would give the slaves holidays but encourage them to spend their free time in ways that would make them miserable and desirous of returning to their work. "The holidays are part and parcel of the gross fraud, wrong, and inhumanity of slavery." Douglass states that the masters liked to "disgust their slaves with freedom" by misleading them to believe that freedom meant excessiveness and overindulgence. The slaves would become sick and weary of the effects of overindulgence, particularly in alcohol, and thus welcome the end of the holidays and their miserable drunkenness. Douglass notes that this manipulative

method was used at other times too; it was a common practice to disgust the slave with that which he desired by forcing him to indulge in it excessively, to the point of becoming sick. In this way, the slave was led to believe that freedom, including the freedom to have as much as one wants of something, was a miserable experience and one he or she could not handle. The slave was thus led to believe that what was really the abuse of freedom was the experience of true freedom.

8. Distribute **Handout 12**. Assign students to small groups. Ask them to discuss and record their group responses to the questions regarding the masters' manipulation of the concept of freedom. Tell students to respond to each question as fully as possible; each response should consist of three to four sentences. Note that some students may not be familiar with the psychological theory of behavior modification referred to in question 4.

Suggested Responses:

1. *The slave, conscious of his state of deprived freedom, is misled to believe that what he most desires is a miserable and undesirable experience. He is forced to dislike "freedom" and chooses slavery because of his misconception of freedom.*
2. *In reasonable and moderate proportions, such activities as sports, drinking, dancing, and playing music are enjoyable and relatively harmless. It is the abuse of these by participating excessively in them that leads to one being hurt, sick, or tired of participating. Furthermore, most of the slaves desired to engage themselves in such activities for the respite they afforded.*
3. *This treatment is inhumane because it is abusive and damaging to the slave's body, mind, and spirit. First, this treatment abuses the body of the slave by forcing one to overindulge in food or drink. Secondly, it abuses the mind of the slave by distorting his concept of freedom, which is a natural and naturally desirable state for human beings.*

Thirdly, it abuses the slave's spirit by manipulating one into thinking that slavery is more desirable than freedom.

4. *This method is effective because though the slaves' initial partaking of the "source of freedom" is pleasurable, excessive indulgence in it sickens them physically so that they come to loathe even the thought of the source. Thus, slaves may come to regard certain "freedoms" or even their idea of freedom itself as loathsome and undesirable. This method is related to the practice of conditioning in behavior modification.*
5. *This method of leading slaves to believe that freedom is a miserable experience by their overindulging in a representative source of freedom shows that the enjoyment of freedom requires responsibility. The slaves were forced to experience the abuse of freedom. Freedom must be used or exercised with discretion for an enjoyable and fulfilling effect, and this requires responsibility.*
9. Assign students to read chapter 11 and the appendix for Lesson 7.

Images of Slavery and Freedom

Part A.

Directions: Identify Douglass's tone in each of the following parts of his apostrophe to the ships on the Chesapeake Bay.

1. "You are loosed from your moorings, and are free; I am fast in my chains, and am a slave! You move merrily before the gentle gale, and I sadly before the bloody whip! You are freedom's swift-winged angels, that fly round the world; I am confined in bands of iron!
2. O that I were free! O, that I were on one of your gallant decks, and under your protecting wing! Alas! betwixt me and you, the turbid waters roll. Go on, go on. O that I could also go! Could I but swim! If I could fly! O, why was I born a man, of whom to make a brute!
3. The glad ship is gone; she hides in the dim distance. I am left in the hottest hell of unending slavery. O God, save me! God, deliver me! Let me be free! Is there any God? Why am I a slave?
4. I will run away. I will not stand it. Get caught, or get clear, I'll try it. I had as well die with ague as the fever. I have only one life to lose. I had as well be killed running as die standing.
5. Only think of it; one hundred miles straight north, and I am free! Try it? Yes! God helping me, I will. It cannot be that I shall live and die a slave.
6. I will take to the water. This very bay shall yet bear me into freedom. The steamboats steered in a north-east course from North Point. I will do the same; and when I get to the head of the bay, I will turn my canoe adrift and walk straight through Delaware into Pennsylvania. When I get there, I shall not be required to have a pass; I can travel without being disturbed.
7. Let but the first opportunity offer, and, come what will, I am off.
8. Meanwhile, I will try to bear up under the yoke. I am not the only slave in the world. Why should I fret? I can bear as much as any of them. Besides, I am but a boy, and all boys are bound to some one.
9. It may be that my misery in slavery will only increase my happiness when I get free.
10. There is a better day coming."

Part B.

Directions: Identify the aspects of personification in each of the following images. Then explain in literal terms what Douglass conveys figuratively in each image.

1. "On the one hand, there stood slavery, a stern reality, glaring frightfully upon us,—its robes already crimsoned with the blood of millions, and even now feasting itself greedily upon our own flesh."
2. "On the other hand, away back in the dim distance, under the flickering light of the north star, behind some craggy hill or snow-covered mountain, stood a doubtful freedom—half frozen—beckoning us to come and share its hospitality."

The Manipulation of Freedom

Directions: Respond to the following questions concerning the slavemasters' treatment of slaves during the holidays and their manipulative method of "disgusting the slave with freedom."

1. Why does Douglass assert that this practice is “one of the grossest frauds committed upon the downtrodden slave”?
2. Why are the slaves attracted to and willing to become engaged in such activities in the first place, if they lead only to misery?
3. Why is this treatment inhumane? Specifically, how does it abuse the slave in body, mind, and spirit?
4. Why is this method of “disgusting the slave with freedom” effective? To what psychological theory is this method related?
5. What does this method of manipulating the concept of freedom show about the relationship between freedom and responsibility?

Lesson 7

Truth and Clarity:

The Point of Douglass's Narrative

Objectives

- To explore Frederick Douglass's opinion about the price of escaping
- To analyze Douglass's fulfillment in being his own master
- To summarize examples of the theme of hypocrisy
- To understand the purpose of the appendix

Notes to the Teacher

In the final chapter of the narrative, Douglass relates, in as much detail as he felt safe disclosing at the time of his writing, the facts of his escape. He describes the restlessness and discontent he felt as a slave, the patient and calculated manner in which he managed to earn some money of his own, the fears and misgivings he experienced as he prepared to leave, and finally, the exhilaration followed by insecurity and loneliness that he experienced after successfully escaping. Douglass notes that the most painful part of his escape was leaving his friends, whom he truly loved, forever. He surmises that thousands of slaves would attempt to escape if it were not for their unwillingness to sever their intimate relationships with their fellow slaves. It was more important to Douglass, however, to escape the hypocrisy and injustice by which he felt himself surrounded and deeply offended. Upon escaping, he married a free black woman he had known, and he soon experienced joy in being his own master. Though he still lived with the fear and insecurity of being recaptured and taken back to slavery, he courageously sought work and pursued his interest in the Abolitionist movement. The latter, of course, led to his becoming a formal speaker and eventually writing his narrative.

In the appendix, Douglass explains that his condemnation of Christianity throughout the narrative is not the condemnation of Christianity proper but the fraudulent form of Christianity practiced by Southern slaveholders and Northern supporters of slavery, including those in the North who supported slavery

passively by doing nothing to help end it or to provide succor and refuge for refugee slaves. He summarizes the hypocritical practices of a slaveholder who calls himself Christian and compares the hypocrisy of American Christians who are slaveholders or in union with slaveholders to the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees who strived to appear pious and devout but who, in essence, were selfish, greedy, unloving, unjust, and merciless. He concludes by inserting a satirical poem written by a Northern Methodist preacher who visited the slaveholding South and was appalled by the hypocrisy and violence he witnessed. As Douglass chooses to conclude his narrative on this note, it is clear that he, too, was most appalled by the injustice, violence—physical, mental, and spiritual—and hypocrisy of slavery. This is evident in the work as he relates his own increasing consciousness and reflectiveness in successive chapters. In particular, he was intensely offended by the hypocrisy he witnessed. Douglass aims to impress upon the reader the gross injustices committed in the name of fairness, righteousness, custom, and social expectation.

In this lesson, students review the theme of hypocrisy in the narrative. They synthesize the major examples of hypocrisy in the work. Students explore and analyze the psychological implications of Douglass's opinion about why more slaves did not attempt an escape and his sense of fulfillment in being his own master. Finally, lead a discussion about Douglass's purpose for the appendix.

Procedure

1. Review with students what Douglass says (in chapter 11) motivated him to plan his escape. Direct them to the passage beginning, "In the early part of the year 1838, I became quite restless." Guide them to see that it was the hypocrisy and injustice of his situation that became intolerable to him. Remind students that these are two major themes in the work.

2. Distribute **Handout 13**. Remind students that *hypocrisy* means falseness; in addressing the hypocrisy, they should think about and explain the falseness of each person or situation in the handout. Review and discuss students' responses; encourage them to elaborate upon their responses both orally and in writing during the class discussion.

Suggested Responses:

1. *The masters cannot be answered honestly. The practice of asking the slaves if their masters are good and kind is self-deceptive and manipulative on the masters' and slaveholders' parts, for the affirmative responses that the slaves are bound to give are dishonest.*
2. *Sophia Auld, in essence, was being hypocritical when she changed her outward manner and became insensitive toward Douglass. She was being false to her own nature and disposition, which he found to be kind, compassionate, and nonjudgmental.*
3. *Master Thomas was an imitator. Even his mean manner toward the slaves was rooted in insecurity; he projected a false sense of dictatorship.*
4. *Master Thomas's religious conversion made him crueler and more unjust. A true religious conversion would have made him kind, compassionate, and just.*
5. *The preachers were greedy, inhumane, and lacking in compassion. These traits are incongruous with what a Christian preacher professes to believe.*
6. *Mr. West and Mr. Fairbanks profess to be followers of Christ and his ways and to believe in the value of leading others to God, and yet they violently opposed slaves learning about God and the Bible.*
7. *Edward Covey took pride in his reputation to "break men in body, soul, and spirit," and at the same time believed he was an honorable and upright Christian.*
8. *Edward Covey deceived society by not having Douglass publicly whipped, for to do so would have cost him his reputation as a successful slavebreaker.*
9. *The masters allow slaves holidays supposedly out of goodness and generosity, but, in essence, the holidays serve to keep the slaves from rebelling during the rest of the year. The holidays are more of a necessary misfortune for the masters than an act of generosity and sensitivity coming from a sense of benevolence.*
10. *Reverend Daniel Weeden, who as minister in the Reformed Methodist Church supposedly modeled Christ's ways and strived to lead others to God through his example, held the maxim, "Behave well or behave ill, it is the duty of a master occasionally to whip a slave, to remind him of his master's authority. Such was his theory, and such was his practice," which was extremely unchristian.*
11. *Reverend Rigby Hopkins, who was also a minister in the Reformed Methodist Church and who made higher professions of religion, was more active in revivals, and prayed louder and longer than anyone in the neighborhood, whipped his slaves regularly and for practically no reason "to alarm their fears and strike terror into those who escaped."*
12. *Douglass compares slavery to piracy because Master Hugh, in effect, steals all of Douglass's honestly earned money. Pirates are hypocrites, for though they may have much treasure, it is through dishonest means.*
13. *Master Hugh took Douglass's earnings as though they were his by right. Douglass states that Master Hugh's giving him any part of his wages as pay was proof that he believed Douglass was entitled to all of them. Master Hugh deceived himself into acting civilly toward Douglass while, in effect, stealing from him.*

14. *If the North were truly a free land, then Douglass would have found help and security there. He would not have been in constant danger of being kidnapped.*
 15. *Douglass's surprise at finding wealth in the North in the absence of the institution of slavery is because of a falsely propagated idea by slaveholders that slavery is necessary for wealth.*
3. Distribute **Handout 14**. Have students work in pairs to discuss and respond to the quotations and questions. Have pairs share their responses with the class.

Suggested Responses:

Part A.

1. *The need and desire for intimate relationships with others superseded the slaves' desire for physical comfort.*
2. *First, his separation would be forever, whereas people today generally have the means to reunite. Secondly, his friendships were his sole means of intimacy and joy in life. Thirdly, his having suffered and endured with them probably bound him extremely closely to them, as such experiences tend to do.*
3. *He had to contend with the thoughts of what would happen to him if he were unsuccessful in escaping. He would be severely punished and probably placed where he would never have an opportunity to escape again. He also had to contend with the uncertainty of what he would encounter in the North and how he would survive.*

Part B.

1. *Douglass means that he was self-determining and self-reliant. He relied upon no one else to make his decisions and determine or dictate his actions. He was entirely responsible for his own decisions and actions.*
2. *Douglass is accustomed to hard work and furthermore does not mind it in itself. It was the fact of being a slave that he detested in Maryland, not necessarily the work itself. Hard work that*

is one's choice to do, done voluntarily or willingly, is fulfilling as it creates a sense of accomplishment and affirmation in the worker.

4. Discuss the appendix with students. Ask them why Douglass wrote the appendix. Students may respond to this question first in writing so that each will have the opportunity to think about it. Ask one or more students to share their answers. Ensure that students understand Douglass's distinction between Christianity proper and the fraudulent and hypocritical Christianity of the slaveholding South and slave-supporting North that he condemns and detests. Draw students' attention to his enumeration of the hypocritical actions of such persons. Examine the comparison he makes between the biblical scribes and Pharisees and such professed Christians, which basically compares the insincere words and inconsistent actions of both groups with what they profess to believe.
5. Ask students to explain the hypocrisy that Douglass is pointing out when he writes, "They are they who are represented as professing to love God whom they have not seen, whilst they hate their brother whom they have seen. They love the heathen on the other side of the globe. They can pray for him, pay money to have the Bible put into his hand, and missionaries to instruct him; while they despise and totally neglect the heathen at their own doors."

Suggested Response:

Such people are living a fantasy, practicing their professed religious and moral views unrealistically. The realities of their "brother whom they have seen" and "the heathen at their own doors" are unromantic and do not correspond to the images of whom they envision themselves loving and helping. This is hypocritical, for their images are false fantasies. They choose to ignore the reality of whom their brothers are and whom the needy people in the world really are.

6. Read aloud or have a student volunteer read aloud “A Parody.” Ask students the following questions:

- What is the tone of the refrain, “. . . heavenly union”? (*The tone is sarcastic and cynical.*)
- Note any ironic lines. (“*How pious priests whip Jack and Nell*”; “*Kidnapper’s heavenly union*”; “*To handcuffed heavenly union*”; “*And teach the right and do the wrong*”)
- What image is suggested in the lines, “Two others oped their iron jaws,/And waved their children-stealing paws”? (*The slaveholders are being compared to monsters.*)
- Why does Douglass include (and end his narrative with) this poem? (*It is a realistic portrayal of the hypocrisy of the Christian slaveholders. It is also validation for his details and opinion as it is written by a Northern preacher who was appalled by what he witnessed in the South.*)

The Theme of Hypocrisy

Directions: Explain how each of the following persons or situations represents the theme of hypocrisy in the narrative.

1. (Chapter 3) Masters ask their slaves if they are happy, treated well, and not worked too hard.
2. (Chapter 7) Sophia Auld
3. (Chapter 9) Master Thomas's "airs, words, and actions were the airs, words, and actions of born slaveholders."
4. (Chapter 9) Master Thomas became a religious convert.
5. (Chapter 9) The preachers of St. Michaels—Mr. Storks, Mr. Ewery, Mr. Humphry, and Mr. Hickey
6. (Chapter 9) Mr. West and Mr. Fairbanks broke up the Sabbath school.
7. (Chapter 10) Edward Covey was a professed religious man.
8. (Chapter 10) Edward Covey did not have Douglass publicly whipped after Douglass fought him.

9. (Chapter 10) The holidays
10. (Chapter 10) Reverend Daniel Weeden
11. (Chapter 10) Reverend Rigby Hopkins
12. (Chapter 10) Douglass compares slavery to piracy: "The right of the grim-visaged pirate upon the high seas is exactly the same."
13. (Chapter 11) Master Hugh takes all of Douglass's earnings.
14. (Chapter 11) Douglass experiences hunger, homelessness, fear, insecurity, and distrust in the "free land."
15. (Chapter 11) Douglass was surprised by the existence of wealth in the North: "I had somehow imbibed the opinion that, in the absence of slaves, there could be no wealth, and very little refinement."

Psychological Facets of Freedom

Part A.

Directions: The following quotation is Frederick Douglass's opinion about why more slaves did not attempt to escape. He clearly understands and empathizes with their feelings and decisions. Discuss the quotation and the questions with a partner. Record your responses to the questions in the space provided.

I had a number of warm-hearted friends in Baltimore,—friends that I loved almost as I did my life,—and the thought of being separated from them forever was painful beyond expression. It is my opinion that thousands would escape from slavery, who now remain, but for the strong cords of affection that bind them to their friends. The thought of leaving my friends was decidedly the most painful thought with which I had to contend.

1. Given the miserable conditions in which the slaves lived, what does this suggest about their psychological needs?
2. People today commonly experience separations and do so without the acute pain “beyond expression” that Douglass felt in contemplating separating from his friends. Why did he feel this way?
3. With what other “painful thoughts” did Douglass have to contend?
4. Think about your own relationships with friends and family. Would you be willing to endure a miserable situation with them if escaping it meant that you had to leave them forever?

Part B.

Directions: In the following quotation, Douglass reflects on his feelings about being his own master. Discuss the quotation and the questions with a partner. Record your responses to the questions in the space provided.

It was new, dirty, and hard work for me; but I went at it with a glad heart and a willing hand. I was now my own master. It was a happy moment, the rapture of which can be understood only by those who have been slaves. It was the first work, the reward of which was to be entirely my own. There was no Master Hugh standing ready, the moment I earned the money, to rob me of it. I worked that day with a pleasure I had never before experienced.

1. What does Douglass mean when he states, “I was now my own master”?
2. Douglass states that the work he did was dirty and hard, and yet, he worked with “a pleasure [he] had never before experienced.” What does this say about Douglass’s attitude toward work?
3. Think of a time when you have been forced to work when you otherwise would not. What were your feelings upon completion of the task? Then think of a time when you have worked hard but willingly, having chosen to and knowing that the results will be yours to experience or keep. What were your feelings upon completion of the task? How were these two experiences different?

Lesson 8

A Poet's Perspective of Douglass: “Douglass” by Paul Laurence Dunbar

Objectives

- To identify poetic form and techniques
- To analyze the effect of figurative language
- To examine tone and themes
- To explain the relationships among tone, theme, and poetic devices

Notes to the Teacher

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906), the son of former slaves, writes poetically about the relentless racial struggles that black people continued to experience after the abolition of slavery. He infuses his poem with their feelings of agitation, frustration, desperation, and despair. He addresses Frederick Douglass, employing the technique of apostrophe, as a salvific leader whose reassuring presence, powerful influence, and sound guidance are desperately needed. The poem includes several metaphors comparing the social turmoil and the people's personal sense of angst to violent waters: awful tides, tempests, and threatening waves.

The form of the poem is the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet (named after the fourteenth-century Italian poet Francesco Petrarch). It is a lyric poem, expressing strong feeling. It consists of an octave (eight lines) followed by a sestet (six lines). Italian sonnets usually have the rhyme scheme *abbaabba, cdecde, or abbaabba, cdcdcd*. The rhyme scheme of “Douglass” is *abbaabba, cdcdcd*. In some Italian sonnets, a question is raised in the octave, and the answer is presented in the sestet. In other Italian sonnets, a single idea is presented in the octave and either developed or contradicted in the sestet. In “Douglass,” Dunbar addresses the deceased Frederick Douglass. In the octave, he expresses reverence for him and compares the continued struggle for true freedom and social justice to Douglass's experience of struggle and evil during his lifetime. He expresses his people's despair and their need for Douglass's guidance and comfort in the sestet. In effect, in the sestet, the poet yearns for Douglass's aid

as a step toward the resolution of the struggles referred to in the octave. The themes of tumultuous and unalleviated racial struggles and Douglass as a powerful leader and profound source of comfort are voiced in the two stanzas, respectively. As Douglass is deceased and the resolution his presence and guidance might help bring about is impossible, there is an ominous tone of despair, helplessness, yearning, and hopelessness in the poem.

In this lesson, students identify the elements comprising the poem and its effect. **Handout 16** guides students to identify and analyze the form, techniques, figurative language, tone, and themes. Students then analyze the effects of the poetic devices in relationship to the poem's tone and themes. The handout aids students in composing a written explication of the poem.

Procedure

1. Ask students what characteristics in Frederick Douglass a poet might be most likely to write about. Have students name qualities that seem most remarkable and defining in Douglass, not only as a slave but also after his escape. Discuss responses; encourage students to support their responses. Tell students that a few poets have written about Douglass; one of them is Paul Laurence Dunbar, who lived during and after Douglass's lifetime.
2. Distribute **Handout 15**. Have students read the poem silently a few times. Then ask for volunteers to read it aloud a few times. Encourage the readers to read with expression, noting the content and attempting to convey the tone in their voices.
3. Ask students to note the number of lines in the poem (*fourteen*). Teach them about the two forms of sonnets—the English or Shakespearean sonnet and the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet. Explain that a sonnet is a fourteen-line lyric poem, usually written in iambic pentameter. A sonnet usually expresses a single complete idea or theme. English sonnets are composed

of three quatrains (four-line stanzas) followed by a couplet (two rhyming lines), with the rhyme scheme abab, cdcd, efef, gg. In most English sonnets, the main idea is presented and developed in the three quatrains, and the couplet offers a conclusion. Italian sonnets consist of an octave followed by a sestet, usually rhyming abbaabba, cdecde, or abbaabba, cdcdcd. In some Italian sonnets, a question is raised in the octave, and the answer is presented in the sestet. In other Italian sonnets, a single idea is presented in the octave and either developed or contradicted in the sestet. Ask students which kind of sonnet “Douglass” is (*Italian*). Ask them to note the rhyme scheme (*abbaabba, cdcdcd*). Then ask them to analyze how the ideas are developed. (*A problem is presented in the octave, and a possible solution in the form of a plea or wish is presented in the sestet.*)

4. Guide students to identify the two themes of the poem. First, direct them to the title, “Douglass.” Ask them to state what the poem says about Douglass. (*He was an amazing leader and profound man who guided the fight for justice and offered solace to those who might despair in the struggle.*) Then ask them to state in what context the poem places him (*the struggle for social justice, human rights, and solidarity*). The answers to these questions are statements of the themes. Ask students to identify the themes in the two stanzas. (*The first theme is found primarily in the sestet, and the second theme is found in both.*)
5. Distribute **Handout 16**. Review students’ responses. Guide students to note that the figurative language serves to depict the theme of social struggle. Help them to see that the tone of reverence and yearning for Douglass balances the somber and ominous tone of despair, making the poem both a tribute to Douglass and a lament about the times.

Suggested Responses:

1. *Italian sonnet; abbaabba, cdcdcd*

2.
 - a. line 1—“Ah, Douglass . . . ”
 - b. line 3—“When thee, the eyes of that harsh long ago”
 - c. line 4—“Saw, salient . . . ”
 - d. line 10—“And Honor, the strong pilot, lieth stark”
3. line 6—“. . . [T]he passionate ebb and flow” refers to the struggle for social justice.
 line 7—“The awful tide that battled to and fro” refers to racist, social troubles.
 line 8—“We ride amid a tempest of dispraise” refers to violent times.
 line 9—“Now, when the waves of swift dissension swarm” refers to the struggle for social justice.
 line 12—“. . . [T]o guide the shivering bark” refers to the emotions of the people as well as the wavering cause.
 line 14—“. . . [T]hrough the lonely dark” refers to the people’s sense of hopelessness and social alienation.
4. line 1—lamenting
 line 2—emphatic
 lines 3–5—reverent
 lines 6–8—somber, ominous
 lines 9–10—anxious, helpless
 lines 11–14—yearning, supplicating
5. *Social injustice and racial strife cause turmoil and despair among the people. Douglass was a powerful leader and profound source of comfort whose guidance and reassurance are needed.*
6. Assign students to write a composition in which they discuss the poetic devices (apostrophe, synecdoche, personification, metaphor), the tone(s), and the themes. Instruct students to explain how the devices create the tone and develop the themes.

“Douglass” by Paul Laurence Dunbar

Directions: Read the following poem in preparation for analyzing it.

Douglass

Ah, Douglass, we have fall'n on evil days,
Such days as thou, not even thou didst know,
When thee, the eyes of that harsh long ago
Saw, salient, at the cross of devious ways,
And all the country heard thee with amaze. 5
Not ended then, the passionate ebb and flow,
The awful tide that battled to and fro;
We ride amid a tempest of dispraise.

Now, when the waves of swift dissension swarm,
And Honor, the strong pilot, lieth stark, 10
Oh, for thy voice high-sounding o'er the storm,
For thy strong arm to guide the shivering bark,
The blast-defying power of thy form,
To give us comfort through the lonely dark.

“Douglass”: A Poetic Perspective

Directions: Respond to the following items, which pertain to the poem “Douglass.”

1. Identify the form and rhyme of the poem.
2. Give an example of each of the following devices. (Indicate the line number in which each is found.)
 - a. Apostrophe (direct address of an absent source)
 - b. Synecdoche (referring to a part for the whole)
 - c. Alliteration (the repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of two or more words near each other)
 - d. Personification (a metaphor in which an inanimate object is given human qualities)
3. Find six examples of metaphor (a comparison between two unlike things), and explain each one. (Provide line numbers.)
4. Identify the tone in each of the following lines of the poem.

Line 1	Lines 6–8
Line 2	Lines 9–10
Lines 3–5	Lines 11–14
5. Identify two themes present in the poem, and write a sentence that explains each theme.

Lesson 9

“Slavery in Massachusetts” by Henry David Thoreau: An Abolitionist’s View

Objectives

- To summarize Thoreau’s attacks of various people, groups, and systems
- To analyze Thoreau’s ideas about the nation’s state and its fate
- To relate Thoreau’s ideas about the nation to current events
- To recognize transcendentalist ideas in Thoreau’s writing

Notes to the Teacher

Thoreau always questioned rules and systems presented to him. A transcendentalist, he was an optimist who believed strongly in human potential, the inherent dignity of humanity, and the spiritual relationship between humanity and nature. He found injustice, dishonesty, and hypocrisy intolerable and inexcusable. He was critical, in particular, of governments that infringed upon, manipulated, or hindered human rights and basic freedoms. An abolitionist, Thoreau regarded slavery as entirely unjust and evil. In “Slavery in Massachusetts,” he criticizes the governor, the state government, the people supporting the institution of slavery by returning fugitive slaves to their owners. He attacks each of these for being devoid of morality, justice, courage, positive leadership, and real thought. He even compares the journalists and judges who favorably write about and rule for slavery to slaves who do not write, speak, and act with mental freedom. In so doing, he challenges those he addresses (the essay is an address delivered at an antislavery celebration on July 4, 1854) and the reader to be moral, courageous, reflective persons with integrity.

Thoreau’s tone varies throughout the essay. Most of the essay is devoted to criticizing the supporters of slavery, and his tone is scornful and incredulous. He intersperses urgent and fervent calls for the reader to practice the honesty, integrity, and community that is lacking in those he criticizes. Toward the end of the essay, he expresses intense disappointment and even despondence as he reflects incredulously on his perception of a hopelessly corrupt

society. However, an optimist at last, he ends the essay with numerous reflections that are clearly rooted in his transcendentalist beliefs. These are expressions of hope and optimism.

In this lesson, **Handout 17** guides students to understand both the structure and the content of the essay by summarizing the attacks he makes on the various persons and systems in Massachusetts who support slavery. These attacks comprise most of the essay. **Handout 18** asks students to explain and comment upon four significant statements Thoreau makes concerning integrity, justice, morality, and honesty. Finally, **Handout 19** guides students to recognize various statements as representative of transcendentalist philosophy.

Assign students to read the essay carefully prior to the lesson. This essay can be found in an anthology of Thoreau’s essays such as *Civil Disobedience and Other Essays* by Dover Thrift Editions or online. One possible online source is *The Thoreau Reader* (<http://thoreau.eserver.org>).

Procedure

1. Ask students about the meaning of the essay’s title, “Slavery in Massachusetts.” (*Students should respond that it refers to those with power and authority in Massachusetts who supported slavery in the South by sending fugitive slaves back into slavery.*) Note to students that the title has two meanings, since Thoreau compares two important groups to slaves—journalists and judges. He suggests that there was another kind of slavery in Massachusetts at the time—mental slavery. Discuss this with students.
2. Distribute **Handout 17**. Students may find working with a partner helpful. Point out that the “attacks” appear in the text in the order in which they appear on the handout. However, there are relevant ideas to note for Thoreau’s criticism of the Massachusetts state government interspersed throughout the essay. Upon students’ completion of the handout, discuss their responses. Consider the following alternative

to a general class discussion. Upon their individual completion of the handout, divide the class into five groups. Assign a different person or system from the handout to each group. Have the groups discuss and combine their notes and then present their summary to the rest of the class. If this method is used, have students point out quotes and passages that pertain to the person or system and elaborate on their explanation of Thoreau's statements.

Suggested Responses:

1. *Thoreau criticizes the governor for being a position or name, not a real presence or true authority. He says that the governor is absent and unable to be found when "freedom is most endangered." In fact, he incredulously notes that at times of national crisis, the governor is not even sought, presumably because he is not regarded and respected as an authority figure. Thoreau contemptuously states that the governor does not do his job because he does not enforce the state laws. Finally, he notes that the influence and authority that the governor does wield are on the side of the slaveholder and injustice.*
2. *Thoreau criticizes the state government of Massachusetts for condoning injustice. He warns that there is always a price to pay for a state being unjust, namely that the rest of the world will note it as foolish. He feels that the government is a disgrace for being hypocritical. He notes that in his opinion, a "true Congress" would consist of ordinary thinking people, and he feels that such people are most often encountered in the country (versus the city). He also scornfully questions the purpose of the state military, noting that the military's primary use has been "to rob Mexico and carry back fugitive slaves to their masters." He ends his criticism of the state by noting the hypocrisy and irony in people celebrating "liberty" on the Fourth of July while they simultaneously condone or do not protest the state's support of slavery in the South.*
3. *Thoreau criticizes the justice system as being false in name, not rendering true justice but rather being dictated by the opinions of the powerful "majority" in society. He compares judges to slaves in this respect, stating, "Certainly, they are not to be the more respected, because their master enslaves their understandings and consciences, instead of their bodies." He asserts that as such judges do not think for themselves and follow their consciences and a sense of morality, they do not truly judge but rather wield the "tools" that have been designated to be used. He explains that humans must make laws that are just, not trusting that because a law exists it is inherently just and right. He disdainfully accuses judges who do not think as "being the servants of the worst of men, and not the servants of humanity."*
4. *Thoreau attacks the press as being corrupt. He compares the newspaper to a Bible, for it is read "religiously," believed as true, and quoted as truth. At the same time, he criticizes the populace who buy, read, and believe the newspapers. As he does with the judges, he accuses the journalists of being "slaves" to what appeals to the worst of humanity, advocating injustice, printing dishonesty, and breeding corrupt ideas. He advocates boycotting newspapers as a way to protest their "tyrannical" influence on society.*
5. *Thoreau criticizes the "majority" of men as not being men of principle. He scornfully notes that they seem more concerned about their selfish and insignificant needs such as their property than the human rights issues facing the state and the nation. He warns that such small-mindedness and selfishness leads to one's downfall if the law does "not keep you and humanity together."*
3. Distribute **Handout 18**. Review students' responses upon completion. Consider having students share their responses in small groups prior to a class discussion of the handout. Encourage students to brainstorm current examples of each idea in a class discussion.

Suggested Responses:

1. We must make just laws and change laws that are unjust. If the law is irrelevant or outdated, or if it was made without justice in mind, it can be destructive, immoral, and even inhumane. Following a law simply because it is a law is thoughtless and foolish or ridiculous. To do so is to be a slave to a law, not a true arbiter. There are many laws of the past that are irrelevant today due to changes in society. To follow them would be ridiculous and possibly harmful and unjust.
2. One should follow one's conscience, thinking of oneself as a human being in the world before identifying oneself with a national label or identity. Such labels lead to prejudices and narrow thinking. One should not rely on the label "American" for security but rather be secure in oneself. This necessarily leads one to living with integrity. Examples of this idea are in two camps: those who do not feel the need to support everything "American" if it conflicts with their values and morality; and those who flaunt a superior attitude because of their "American" identity, regardless of the ideas propagated and actions taken by the American government.
3. The nation is comprised of numerous individuals, ordinary citizens, whose attitudes, values, words, and actions both individually and collectively impact the whole nation. One good person voted into Congress will generally not shape or change the fate of the nation as much as the collective citizenry will with its individual parts acting with good will. This is evident in microcosms of society, such as in schools. The principal sets the tone, but the teachers and students comprise the school body, and their attitudes and actions influence and ultimately determine the character of the school.
4. A good government serves the people, addressing their needs, both their basic human needs and the needs specific to the people it governs, where and under what circumstances they live. It provides support and concern for people's health care, social security, education, food, shelter, property, employment, and, most importantly, freedom. A bad government does not know, care about, or address the people's and the nation's true and actual needs. It may attempt or pretend to do so, but, in effect, it wastes financial, human, and natural resources, misleads the people, and leaves them to fend for themselves. There are numerous governments in history and presently that exemplify such mismanagement and ineffectiveness. A government that is more concerned with its international prestige than with its own people's welfare may be said to be more harmful than helpful.
4. Ask students to define the term *transcendent* (beyond what is tangible or evident). Ask if any of them know about transcendentalism. Have students share their knowledge with the class. Explain that transcendentalism was an intellectual movement that asserted that knowledge of fundamental reality was beyond the reach of a person's limited senses and was derived through intuition rather than sensory experience. Transcendentalists focused on the human spirit, the spiritual relationship between humanity and nature, and an optimistic belief in human potential. Central to their philosophy was the idea that all forms of being are spiritually united through a shared universal soul, the Over-Soul.
5. Distribute **Handout 19**. Review the three transcendentalist ideas listed, assuring that students understand all terms within the ideas and the ideas themselves. Review the handout upon students' completion of it.

Suggested Responses:

1. a. "What confirmation of our hopes is in the fragrance of this flower! . . . It suggests what kind of laws have prevailed longest and widest, and still prevail . . . " The laws of nature are most just, moral, and enduring.

- b. *"If Nature can compound this fragrance still annually, I shall believe her still young and full of vigor, her integrity and genius unimpaired, and that there is virtue even in man, too, who is fitted to perceive and love it." Despite the ugliness and corruption that exists in society, there is still perceptible uncorrupted beauty in life. One who can perceive this must be able to identify with it because it is in him or her; that is, such natural "virtue" must exist in humans still despite their involvement in the corrupt ways of society.*
2. a. *"We walk to lakes to see our serenity reflected in them; when we are not serene, we go not to them." Nature possesses an integrity and purity that is reflected in human beings. When we are living with integrity, we identify with this quality in nature.*
- b. *"What confirmation of our hopes is in the fragrance of this flower! . . . It suggests what kind of laws have prevailed longest and widest, and still prevail, and that the time may come when man's deeds will smell as sweet." Because the laws of nature are most just, moral, and enduring and the human spirit is reflected in nature, there is the potential for human laws to be truly just and moral.*
3. a. *"It reminds me that Nature has been partner to no Missouri Compromise. I scent no compromise in the fragrance of the water-lily. . . . So behave that the odor of your actions may enhance the general sweetness of the atmosphere, that when we behold or scent a flower, we may not be reminded how inconsistent your deeds are with it. . . ." Our actions affect the "atmosphere" in which we live. If we act unjustly, we create a corrupt and immoral atmosphere that is inconsistent with the nature of life and our nature.*
- b. *"Slavery and servility have produced no sweet-scented flower annually. . . . We do not complain that they live, but that they do not get buried. Let the living bury them: even they are good for manure." Though slavery is a corrupt abomination, it may, once ended, serve a constructive purpose in the form, for example, of educating us to the immorality of it so that we guard against its repetition in the same or other forms.*

Thoreau's Attacks

Directions: Summarize Henry David Thoreau's criticism of each of the following persons, groups, or systems. Incorporate quotations (or partial quotations) into your summary where they are helpful. Be sure to explain any quotations in your summary.

1. Attack on the governor
2. Attack on the Massachusetts state government
3. Attack on the justice system
4. Attack on the press
5. Attack on the “majority of men”

Universal Ideas

Directions: Explain the following quotations from “Slavery in Massachusetts.” Then comment on them; first note their relevance to our world today, and then state your thoughts, feelings, and questions about the statements.

1. "The law will never make men free; it is men who have got to make the law free."
2. "I would remind my countrymen that they are to be men first, and Americans only at a late and convenient hour."
3. "The fate of the country does not depend on how you vote at the polls . . . , but on what kind of man you drop from your chamber into the street every morning."
4. "The effect of a good government is to make life more valuable—of a bad one, to make it less valuable."

Transcendentalist Ideas

Directions: Examine the last three paragraphs of “Slavery in Massachusetts.” Identify two quotations that reflect each of the following transcendentalist ideas. Record the quotations, and paraphrase or explain them.

1. There is a human spirit that is able to intuit the fundamental truths of the universe.

a.

b.

2. The human spirit is reflected in nature.

a.

b.

3. All forms of being are spiritually united.

a.

b.

Lesson 10

“A Plea for Captain John Brown” by Henry David Thoreau: An Abolitionist’s View

Objectives

- To summarize Thoreau’s perception of John Brown
- To analyze Thoreau’s diction and tone
- To identify and explain various statements that are relevant today

Notes to the Teacher

John Brown came from a family of abolitionists. His family was associated with the Underground Railroad. (Perhaps Thoreau could not note this in his essay because it would be dangerous for them were he to do so.) As Thoreau notes, he fought for Kansas to be a free state and continued to dedicate his time and energy to the abolitionist cause. His work and his life ended with his attempt to commandeer the arsenal at Harper’s Ferry in West Virginia in 1859. He attempted this feat with an army of only twelve men, six of whom were his own sons and another who was his son-in-law. He was stopped by an army of slaveholders (whose arsenal it was) and the government and sentenced to be hanged.

An abolitionist in spirit himself, Thoreau regards John Brown as possessing integrity, courage, philanthropy, and dignity beyond the scope of most persons. In “A Plea for Captain John Brown,” he reverently describes John Brown, culminating his description with several references to Christ as a comparison. In contrast to his opinion of Brown, he disdainfully criticizes society—common unthinking people, self-righteous Christians, the newspapers, and the government and justice system. He argues that many people in society are unreflective, morally shallow, and spiritually hollow for not regarding the issue of slavery as an evil and a crisis to be addressed. He states that by living superficially, such people do not truly live, for they do not reflect upon, know, and live according to deeper values such as honesty, integrity, justice, and philanthropy. He refers to people who called Brown insane or suggested he was

foolish, criticizing their failure to note the clarity, soundness, and saneness in his quoted words at Harper’s Ferry. He also retorts that Brown lived truly according to his values and an inner calling that compelled him to fight slavery, in contrast to those who live selfishly or unreflectively, or who do not act according to what they profess to believe in. He criticizes the press for catering to the superficial interests of the masses and not regarding a grave and pivotal event such as John Brown’s noble failure at Harper’s Ferry and his subsequent death as more than a petty criminal’s act and punishment. He criticizes the Northern governments for supporting slavery, even tacitly, and he criticizes the justice system for being hypocritical. In essence, the justice system deemed a fighter for justice worthy of killing in order to uphold the injustice he was fighting. Thoreau ends his essay with a series of accusations and rhetorical questions regarding the senselessness and absurdity of an unjust system and John Brown’s fate, given his purpose and nature. He concludes with an explanation of the essay’s title and purpose: “I plead not for his life, but for his character,—his immortal life . . .”

The purpose of this lesson is to expose students to the character of an abolitionist in the person of John Brown, as described by Thoreau. It is, of course, a biased account of Brown, but it is valuable as a transcendentalist and fervently abolitionist point of view. Though he delves into criticisms and comparisons of society and its systems, Thoreau does not deviate from his primary purpose, to plea for the value of John Brown’s character. He describes Brown’s character throughout the essay, contrasting it with others’, only to return to his description of Brown more emphatically. His tone is serious and formal, alternating between reverence for Brown and caustic scorn for those who regard Brown with anything less than respect.

This lesson guides students to understand the structure of the essay and explicate its content by summarizing Thoreau’s main ideas

about John Brown's character. Identifying Thoreau's tone through examples of his diction helps students clarify his opinions of all the persons he describes. Finally, by journaling about the relevance of some of his statements and ideas, students enhance their appreciation of his ideas and sentiment.

Prior to this lesson, students need to read "A Plea for Captain John Brown." This essay can be found in an anthology of Thoreau's essays such as *Civil Disobedience and Other Essays* by Dover Thrift Editions or online at sites such as *The Avalon Project at Yale Law School: Documents, in Law, History, and Diplomacy* (http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/thoreau_001.asp).

Procedure

1. Discuss with students the reference to the incident at Harper's Ferry and who Captain John Brown was. Students may find it helpful to research background information about him and the incident preceding his death. This information may be interesting to compare and contrast with Thoreau's views of John Brown. Explain to students the purpose of the lesson, to understand Thoreau's main ideas and point of view as an abolitionist and transcendentalist writing about an abolitionist, regardless of what other sources may state about Brown and the incident at Harper's Ferry.
2. Distribute **Handout 20**. The characteristics are listed in the order in which they appear in the text. Remind students to use the skill of scanning the text for applicable quotations. Review students' findings.

Suggested Responses:

1. "He then resolved that he would never have any thing to do with any war, unless it were a war for liberty."
2. "I should say that he was an old-fashioned man in his respect for the Constitution, and his faith in the permanence of this Union." "No man in America has ever stood up so persistently and effectively for the dignity of human nature, knowing himself for a man, and the equal of any and all governments. In that sense, he was the most American of us all."

3. "He was by descent and birth a New England farmer, a man of great common sense, deliberate and practical as that class is, and tenfold more so."
4. "Give me men of good principles,—God-fearing men,—men who respect themselves, and with a dozen of them I will oppose any hundred such men as these Buford ruffians."
5. "He was a man of Spartan habits, and at sixty was scrupulous about his diet at your table, excusing himself by saying that he must eat sparingly and fare hard, as became a soldier, or one who was fitting himself for difficult enterprises, a life of exposure."
6. "As for his tact and prudence . . . When, for instance, he saw a knot of the ruffians on the prairie . . . he would, perhaps, take his compass and one of his sons, and proceed to run an imaginary line right through the very spot on which that conclave had assembled, and when he came up to them, he would naturally pause and have some talk with them, learning their news, and, at last, all their plans perfectly; and having thus completed his real survey he would resume his imaginary one, and run on his line till he was out of sight."
7. "He said, truly, that the reason why such greatly superior numbers quailed before him was, as one of his prisoners confessed, because they lacked a cause—a kind of armor which he and his party never lacked."
8. "They are themselves mistaken who take him to be a madman. . . . He is cool, collected, and indomitable, and it is but just to him to say, that he was humane to his prisoners. . . . but firm, truthful, and intelligent."
9. "His company was small indeed, because few could be found worthy to pass muster. Each one who there laid down his life for the poor and oppressed was a picked man, culled out of many thousands, if not millions; apparently a man of principle, or rare courage and devoted humanity; ready to sacrifice his life at any moment for the benefit of his fellow-man."

10. *"No man has appeared in America, as yet, who loved his fellow-man so well, and treated him so tenderly. He lived for him. He took up his life and he laid it down for him." "Some eighteen hundred years ago Christ was crucified; this morning, perchance, Captain Brown was hung. These are the two ends of a chain which is not without its links."*
3. Assign students to write a summary of Thoreau's description of John Brown. Instruct them to use the ideas in the quotations they have identified.

Suggested Response:

John Brown was a man of integrity. He believed in the dignity of all men, and he dedicated his life to fighting for liberty. This was his cause. A true American, he respected the essence of the Constitution and had faith in the union of the United States; this compelled him to fight for justice. His practicality, common sense, tact, prudence, and discipline made him fit to face all kinds of difficulties. His small army of men who fought with him were carefully chosen for their principles, courage, and willingness to sacrifice for the benefit of others. Brown himself "loved his fellow [humans] so well" that he lived and sacrificed his life for them.

4. Ask students to define Thoreau's tone in the essay. Point out that it varies with respect to the topic he is addressing. Ask them to identify his tone when he describes Brown (*praising, reverent*). Ask them to identify his tone when he describes common people, the government, and the press (*caustic, scornful*). Ask them to identify his tone when he describes the press again, Brown's sentence, and slavery itself (*sarcastic*). Assign students to cite words, phrases, and sentences that exemplify each of these tones. This activity may be done in small groups. To save time for sharing examples as a class, divide the class into six groups. Assign two groups the first tone, two groups the second, and the last two groups the third tone. Then convene the class for shared examples and discussion of how Thoreau's diction creates the given tone.

Suggested Responses:

1. Praising and reverent—"No man in America has ever stood up so persistently and effectively for the dignity of human nature, knowing himself for a man, and the equal of any and all governments. . . . [H]e was the most American of us all." ". . . [H]e had the courage to face his country herself, when she was in the wrong." "A man of rare common sense and directness of speech, as of action; a transcendentalist above all, a man of ideas and principles,—that was what distinguished him."
2. Caustic and scornful—"Do yourselves the honor to recognize him. He needs none of your respect." "Others, craven-hearted, said disparagingly, that 'he threw his life away,' because he resisted the government. Which way have they thrown their lives, pray?" "We are mere figure-heads upon a hulk, with livers in the place of hearts." "A church that can never have done with excommunicating Christ while it exists!" "When a government puts forth its strength on the side of injustice . . . it reveals itself a merely brute force, or worse, a demoniacal force." "A government that pretends to be Christian and crucifies a million Christs every day!"
3. Sarcastic—"It suggests what a sane set of editors we are blessed with, not 'mistaken men'; who know very well on which side their bread is buttered, at least." "So we defend ourselves and our hen-roosts, and maintain slavery." "You who pretend to care for Christ crucified, consider what you are about to do to him who offered himself to be the savior of four millions of men." "Is it the intention of law-makers the good men shall be hung ever?"
5. Point out that because of the nature of the content of Thoreau's essay, addressing issues of human rights, justice, governments, and morality, some of his statements are universal. That is, they have relevance to people and the world today.
6. Distribute **Handout 21**. Review students' responses. Students may find it interesting to share their comments in small groups first.

Thoreau's Plea for John Brown's Character

Directions: Identify statements in the essay which exemplify the following characteristics of John Brown. Write the statements on separate paper.

1. Integrity

2. Sense of true American loyalty

3. Common sense and practicality

4. True courage and strength

5. Disciplined in all aspects of life

6. Prudent and artful

7. Had a cause or purpose

8. Calm, firm, intelligent

9. High standards

10. Sacrificing, Christlike

Applying Thoreau to Today

Directions: Comment on the relevance of the following quotations to people and the world today. You may comment on each quotation's relevance to your own life and experiences, to others you know, or to current events in the nation and world.

1. "Such do not know that like the seed is the fruit, and that, in the moral world, when good seed is planted, good fruit is inevitable, and does not depend on our watering and cultivating; that when you plant, or bury, a hero in his field, a crop of heroes is sure to spring up. This is a seed of such force and vitality, that it does not ask our leave to germinate."
2. "There is hardly a house but is divided against itself, for our foe is the all but universal woodenness of both head and heart, the want of vitality in man, which is the effect of our vice; and hence are begotten fear, superstition, bigotry, persecution, and slavery of all kinds."
3. "We dream of foreign countries, of other times and races of men, placing them at a distance in history or space; but let some significant event like the present occur in our midst, and we discover, often, this distance and this strangeness between us and our nearest neighbors. *They* are our Austrias, and Chinas, and South Sea Islands. . . . It is the difference of constitution, of intelligence, and faith, and not streams and mountains, that make the true and impassable boundaries between individuals and between states."

Vocabulary

Directions: Use the following definitions to help you understand the reading assignments.

Preface

1. *abettor*—(n.) encouragement and assistance in wrongdoing
2. *anomaly*—(n.) someone or something incongruous or inconsistent
anomalous—(adj.) incongruous; inconsistent; deviating from the norm
3. *apostrophize*—(v.) to address someone not present
4. *ascertain*—(v.) to make certain; to find out with assurance
5. *auspices*—(n.) approving support
6. *calumny*—(n.) a false and malicious statement meant to injure someone
7. *chattel*—(n.)—(archaic) a slave
8. *destitute*—(adj.) deprived or lacking
9. *diffidence*—(n.) a lack of confidence in oneself
10. *eloquence*—(n.) speech that is fluent and forceful, even profound
11. *execrable*—(adj.) utterly detestable
execrate—(v.) to detest utterly; to denounce harshly
12. *felicitous*—(adj.) well-suited for the occasion; appropriate
13. *fetter*—(n.) a chain or shackle placed on the foot
14. *fugitive*—(adj.) having taken flight or run away
15. *impetus*—(n.) a motivating force
16. *impunity*—(n.) exemption from punishment
17. *incredulous*—(adj.) unwilling to believe or trust; expressing disbelief
18. *indispensable*—(adj.) absolutely necessary or essential
19. *libel*—(n.) anything that is defamatory or maliciously misrepresentative
20. *pernicious*—(adj.) causing insidious harm or ruin; deadly; fatal
21. *peruse*—(v.) to read or examine carefully
22. *prodigy*—(n.) a person with extraordinary talent; something marvelous
23. *proselyte*—(n.) a person who has changed to a different doctrine
24. *salutary*—(adj.) conducive to some beneficial purpose
25. *sanguine*—(adj.) hopeful and cheerful
26. *soliloquize*—(v.) to utter or speak while or as if alone
27. *stultify*—(v.) to make futile or ineffectual; to make ridiculous
28. *sublime*—(adj.) elevated in thought; inspiring awe or great respect
29. *succor*—(v.) to render aid to one in distress
30. *veracity*—(n.) habitual truthfulness; conformity to truth or fact

Chapter 1

1. *conjecture*—(n.) the formation of an opinion without proof
2. *deference*—(n.) respectful regard
3. *impertinent*—(adj.) inappropriately intrusive or rude
4. *odiousness*—(n.) the quality of being abominable, hateful, or repugnant

Chapter 2

1. *ineffable*—(adj.) incapable of being expressed or described
2. *obdurate*—(adj.) hardhearted and without remorse; stubborn

Chapter 3

1. *defiled*—(adj.) made dirty or unclean; desecrated or disrespected
2. *imbibe*—(v.) to take or receive into the mind, such as an idea
3. *sundered*—(adj.) broken apart violently

Chapter 4

1. *artful*—(adj.) crafty and tricky; skillful and ingenious
2. *expedient*—(n.) a means to an end
3. *immutable*—(adj.) unchangeable
4. *impudence*—(n.) boldness; impertinence
5. *servile*—(adj.) slavishly obedient
6. *subversion*—(n.) the overthrow of something established in an underhanded way; corruption

Chapter 5

1. *incur*—(v.) to bring upon oneself

Chapter 6

1. *blighting*—(adj.) destructive or ruinous
2. *odium*—(n.) hatred; disgrace attached to something repugnant

Chapter 7

1. *depravity*—(n.) immorality; evil
2. *divest*—(v.) to deprive of something, such as property, rights, or clothing
3. *precepts*—(n.) command or direction given as a rule of conduct
4. *unabated*—(adj.) not decreased in amount; constant; consistent

Chapter 8

1. *dissipation*—(n.) indulgence in intemperance and immoral pleasure
2. *profligate*—(adj.) utterly and shamelessly immoral; reckless

Chapter 9

1. *sagacity*—(n.) keen mental discernment and sound judgment
sagacious—(adj.) having sagacity
2. *want*—(v.) to lack

Chapter 10

1. *ardent*—(adj.) having intense feeling, especially of desire or devotion
2. *digress*—(v.) to wander away from the main topic
3. *imbue*—(v.) to inspire with feelings or opinions
4. *impropriety*—(n.) the quality or state of being improper; an improper act, expression, or usage
5. *imprudent*—(adj.) not judicious or wisely cautious in practical affairs
6. *insurrection*—(n.) the act of engaging in organized breakout against an established government or authority
7. *perdition*—(n.) a state of final spiritual ruin
8. *quail*—(v.) to lose heart or courage, as in danger; to recoil
9. *turbid*—(adj.) unclear or murky because of stirred-up sediment

Chapter 11

1. *commensurate*—(adj.) corresponding in amount or degree; of equal measure
2. *exculpate*—(v.) to clear from a charge of guilt or fault
3. *gall*—(v.) to vex or irritate; to make sore by rubbing
4. *habiliments*—(n.) clothes or clothing
5. *imputation*—(n.) a discreditable attribute
6. *palpable*—(adj.) readily or plainly perceived; obvious or evident
7. *scathing*—(adj.) bitterly severe, as a remark

Appendix

1. *infidel*—(n.) a person who does not accept a particular religious faith
2. *iniquity*—(n.) extreme injustice; a wicked act
3. *misnomer*—(n.) a misapplied name or designation

Vocabulary Quiz: Preface

Directions: Match the following words with their definitions.

ascertain	calumny	salutary	fugitive
impetus	sublime	prodigy	proselytize
sanguine	impunity	succor	abettor
execrate	insidious	auspices	incredulous
libel	eloquence	peruse	indispensable
veracity	diffidence	soliloquy	fetter
felicitous	stultify	pernicious	
anomaly	destitution	chattel	

- _____ 1. unwilling to trust or believe
- _____ 2. to read or examine carefully
- _____ 3. speech that is fluent and forceful
- _____ 4. hopeful and cheerful
- _____ 5. conducive to some beneficial purpose
- _____ 6. deprivation
- _____ 7. approving support
- _____ 8. causing harm inconspicuously; deadly
- _____ 9. elevated in thought
- _____ 10. to convert or attempt to convert
- _____ 11. a lack of self-confidence
- _____ 12. to render aid to one in distress
- _____ 13. anything defamatory or maliciously misrepresentative
- _____ 14. a speech uttered while or as if one is alone
- _____ 15. to find out with assurance

- _____ 16. a slave
- _____ 17. to make futile or ineffectual
- _____ 18. exemption from punishment
- _____ 19. conformity to truth or fact
- _____ 20. absolutely necessary or essential
- _____ 21. a person with extraordinary talent
- _____ 22. someone or something incongruous or inconsistent
- _____ 23. proceeding inconspicuously but with grave effect
- _____ 24. well-suited for the occasion
- _____ 25. a false and malicious statement intended to hurt
- _____ 26. a motivating force
- _____ 27. to denounce harshly
- _____ 28. assistance in wrongdoing
- _____ 29. having taken flight or run away
- _____ 30. a shackle placed on the feet

Vocabulary Quiz: Chapters 1–4

Directions: Match the following words with their definitions.

subversion
imbibe
obdurate
conjecture
impertinent

ineffable
defiled
artful
servile
expedient

sundered
deference
immutable
odiousness
impudence

- _____ 1. incapable of being expressed or described
- _____ 2. desecrated or disrespected
- _____ 3. crafty and tricky
- _____ 4. inappropriately intrusive or rude
- _____ 5. corruption
- _____ 6. to take or receive into the mind
- _____ 7. hardhearted and without remorse
- _____ 8. the formation of an opinion without proof
- _____ 9. a means to an end
- _____ 10. broken apart violently
- _____ 11. respectful remorse
- _____ 12. slavishly obedient
- _____ 13. the quality of being abominable, hateful, repugnant
- _____ 14. boldness; impertinence
- _____ 15. unchangeable

Vocabulary Quiz: Chapters 5–9

Directions: Match the following words with their definitions.

sagacity
dissipation
unabated
odium

incur
blighting
depravity
profligate

want
precepts
divest

- _____ 1. immorality; evil
- _____ 2. utterly and shamelessly immoral
- _____ 3. to lack
- _____ 4. to bring upon oneself
- _____ 5. keen mental discernment and sound judgment
- _____ 6. destructive or ruinous
- _____ 7. to deprive of something
- _____ 8. indulgence in intemperance or immoral pleasure
- _____ 9. command or direction given as a rule of conduct
- _____ 10. disgrace attached to something repugnant
- _____ 11. not decreased in amount; constant; consistent

Vocabulary Quiz: Chapters 10–11 and Appendix

Directions: Match the following words with their definitions.

infidel
palpable
imbue
digress
iniquity
exculpate

perdition
quail
misnomer
imputation
imprudent

turbid
scathing
gall
ardent
insurrection

habiliments
commensurate
impropriety

- _____ 1. to lose heart or courage, as in danger
- _____ 2. to wander away from the main topic
- _____ 3. a discreditable attribute
- _____ 4. of equal measure
- _____ 5. gross injustice
- _____ 6. having intense feeling, especially of desire or devotion
- _____ 7. clothing
- _____ 8. a person who does not accept a particular religious faith
- _____ 9. a state of final spiritual ruin
- _____ 10. unclear or murky because of stirred-up sediment
- _____ 11. a misapplied name or designation
- _____ 12. bitterly severe, as a remark
- _____ 13. to vex or irritate
- _____ 14. not judicious or wisely cautious in practical affairs
- _____ 15. readily or plainly perceived
- _____ 16. to inspire with feelings or opinions
- _____ 17. to clear from a charge of guilt or fault
- _____ 18. the quality or state of being improper
- _____ 19. the act of engaging in an organized breakout against an established authority

Vocabulary Quiz Answer Key

Preface

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. incredulous | 11. diffidence | 21. prodigy |
| 2. peruse | 12. succor | 22. anomaly |
| 3. eloquence | 13. libel | 23. insidious |
| 4. sanguine | 14. soliloquy | 24. felicitous |
| 5. salutary | 15. ascertain | 25. calumny |
| 6. destitution | 16. chattel | 26. impetus |
| 7. auspices | 17. stultify | 27. execrate |
| 8. pernicious | 18. impunity | 28. abettor |
| 9. sublime | 19. veracity | 29. fugitive |
| 10. proselytize | 20. indispensable | 30. fetter |

Chapters 1–4

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. ineffable | 6. imbibe | 11. deference |
| 2. defiled | 7. obdurate | 12. servile |
| 3. artful | 8. conjecture | 13. odiousness |
| 4. impertinent | 9. expedient | 14. impudence |
| 5. subversion | 10. sundered | 15. immutable |

Chapters 5–9

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. depravity | 5. sagacity | 9. precepts |
| 2. profligate | 6. blighting | 10. odium |
| 3. want | 7. divest | 11. unabated |
| 4. incur | 8. dissipation | |

Chapters 10–11 and Appendix

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. quail | 8. infidel | 15. palpable |
| 2. digress | 9. perdition | 16. imbue |
| 3. imputation | 10. turbid | 17. exculpate |
| 4. commensurate | 11. misnomer | 18. impropriety |
| 5. iniquity | 12. scathing | 19. insurrection |
| 6. ardent | 13. gall | |
| 7. habiliments | 14. imprudent | |

Test: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Part A.

Directions: Answer the following questions in a few sentences.

1. Name three different ways that William Lloyd Garrison describes Frederick Douglass in the preface. Then support each of these descriptions with evidence from the narrative.
2. In Wendell Phillips's letter to Frederick Douglass, he states that the most abominable aspect of slavery is the "blighting death which gathers over [the slave's] soul." Paraphrase these words, and provide two examples of this from the text.
3. Wendell Phillips states that Frederick Douglass is a truthful, candid, sincere writer who, when there was something positive to note about a slaveholder, noted it. Provide an example of his doing this in the narrative.
4. Paraphrase what Douglass notes and explains about slaves' songs and their singing in chapter 2.
5. What do the three examples of killed slaves which Douglass describes in chapter four show about the people who killed them and the community's attitude about killing slaves?
6. Why was literacy for slaves considered dangerous?
7. How is Douglass affected by being literate?
8. What climactic event in Douglass's life as a slave occurs in chapter 10? What metaphor does he use to describe it?
9. What does Douglass speculate is the reason for more slaves not attempting to escape?
10. Why was work in the North so fulfilling to Douglass?

Part B.

Directions: Respond to the following essay prompts.

1. Explain the irony, both inherent and actualized, in the religious slaveholders.
2. Explain the relevance of Henry David Thoreau's essays "Slavery in Massachusetts" and "A Plea for Captain John Brown" to Douglass's narrative. Compare their criticisms, beliefs, and values.

Test Answer Key

Part A.

1. Douglass endured suffering. (At Mr. Covey's, he endured hunger and whippings.) Douglass was humble. (He regarded his selection to go to Baltimore as remarkable.) Douglass had wit. (He notes the ironic and pathetic way in which slaves regarded going to the Great House Farm, comparing it to fawning politicians.) Douglass had courage. (He escaped.) Douglass was loyal to his fellow slaves. (He felt ambivalence and grief about leaving his friends forever. He did not disclose how he escaped so that others might do so as well.)
2. The worst effect of slavery is its power to deprive humans of self-respect, identity, self-determination, and free will. For example, slaves' songs reveal the emotion of lost souls, ones "cast away on a desolate island." Also, at Mr. Covey's, Douglass lost his resilience, intellectual spark, and even his desire to live.
3. Mr. Freeland was a fair, honest man with integrity. Sophia Auld was initially very compassionate and did show this again when Douglass was injured by the workers at Mr. Gardner's shipyard.
4. Slaves' songs are a cathartic expression of deep, passionate sorrow and grief.
5. The people who killed the slaves were devoid of human compassion and were able to get away with their crimes easily. The community felt that killing slaves was of trivial importance and sometimes was even good.
6. Literacy was considered dangerous because it fostered thoughts and instilled ideas.
7. As Douglass reads arguments against slavery and about freedom, he is tormented by frustration and anguish. Only the hope of freedom for himself keeps him from committing suicide.
8. Douglass fights and resists Covey. In so doing, he becomes again a man, regaining his self-respect and self-confidence. He describes this event as a "glorious resurrection from the tomb of slavery to the heaven of freedom."
9. Douglass speculates that more slaves would have tried to escape if their affectionate relationships with each other did not bind them. The thought of permanent separation was worse than the misery they endured together in slavery.
10. Douglass's work was for him alone; the reward was all his own. He was his own master.

Part B.

1. Important points include the following:
 - Inherently, slavery and religion (Christianity) are antithetical systems.
 - In actuality, the slaveholders used a distorted interpretation of religion to justify their actions and attitudes.
 - In actuality, the slaveholders who claimed to be religious were crueller and more merciless than those who did not claim to be religious.
2. Important points include the following:
 - They both criticize hypocrisy and a lack of integrity, Douglass focusing on Christian slaveholders and supporters of slavery, Thoreau focusing on governments and citizens who support slavery.
 - They both believe that slavery is evil and grossly unjust.
 - They both value integrity, intellectual and moral freedom (as well as physical freedom), and the human spirit.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

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Entire Unit

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| RL.9-10.1 | Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. |
| RL.9-10.2 | Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| RL.9-10.3 | Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. |
| RL.9-10.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone). |
| RL.9-10.7 | Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus). |
| RL.11-12.1 | Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. |
| RL.11-12.2 | Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| RL.11-12.3 | Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed). |
| RL.11-12.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.) |

RL.11-12.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
RL.11-12.9	Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
RI.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RI.9-10.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
RI.9-10.3	Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
RI.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).
RI.9-10.5	Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).
RI.9-10.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.
RI.9-10.7	Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.
RI.9-10.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.
RI.9-10.9	Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.
RI.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RI.11-12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

- RI.11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
- RI.11-12.5 Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
- RI.11-12.9 Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.
- SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.9-10.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.11-12.1a Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- L.9-10.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.9-10.1a Use parallel structure.*
- L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.11-12.1a Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

Source

Common Core State Standards (Washington, D.C.: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010)



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