

1: SparkNotes: Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

The confrontation with Covey is one of the most famous parts of the book, and we're building toward that climax. From the moment Covey shows up, it's as if there were ominous music playing in the background, Darth Vader style.

But before narrating any of the peculiar circumstances, I deem it proper to make known my intention not to state all the facts connected with the transaction. My reasons for pursuing this course may be understood from the following: First, were I to give a minute statement of all the facts, it is not only possible, but quite probable, that others would thereby be involved in the most embarrassing difficulties. Secondly, such a statement would most undoubtedly induce greater vigilance on the part of slaveholders than has existed heretofore among them; which would, of course, be the means of guarding a door whereby some dear brother bondman might escape his galling chains. I deeply regret the necessity that impels me to suppress any thing of importance connected with my experience in slavery. It would afford me great pleasure indeed, as well as materially add to the interest of my narrative, were I at liberty to gratify a curiosity, which I know exists in the minds of many, by an accurate statement of all the facts pertaining to my most fortunate escape. But I must deprive myself of this pleasure, and the curious of the gratification which such a statement would afford. I would allow myself to suffer under the greatest imputations which evil-minded men might suggest, rather than exculpate myself, and thereby run the hazard of closing the slightest avenue by which a brother slave might clear himself of the chains and fetters of slavery. I, however, can see very little good resulting from such a course, either to themselves or the slaves escaping; while, upon the other hand, I see and feel assured that those open declarations are a positive evil to the slaves remaining, who are seeking to escape. They do nothing towards enlightening the slave, whilst they do much towards enlightening the master. They stimulate him to greater watchfulness, and enhance his power to capture his slave. We owe something to the slave south of the line as well as to those north of it; and in aiding the latter on their way to freedom, we should be careful to do nothing which would be likely to hinder the former from escaping from slavery. I would keep the merciless slaveholder profoundly ignorant of the means of flight adopted by the slave. I would leave him to imagine himself surrounded by myriads of invisible tormentors, ever ready to snatch from his infernal grasp his trembling prey. Let him be left to feel his way in the dark; let darkness commensurate with his crime hover over him; and let him feel that at every step he takes, in pursuit of the flying bondman, he is running the frightful risk of having his hot brains dashed out by an invisible agency. Let us render the tyrant no aid; let us not hold the light by which he can trace the footprints of our flying brother. But enough of this. I will now proceed to the statement of those facts, connected with my escape, for which I am alone responsible, and for which no one can be made to suffer but myself. In the early part of the year, I became quite restless. I could see no reason why I should, at the end of each week, pour the reward of my toil into the purse of my master. When I carried to him my weekly wages, he would, after counting the money, look me in the face with a robber-like fierceness, and ask, "Is this all?" He would, however, when I made him six dollars, sometimes give me six cents, to encourage me. It had the opposite effect. I regarded it as a sort of admission of my right to the whole. The fact that he gave me any part of my wages was proof, to my mind, that he believed me entitled to the whole of them. I always felt worse for having received any thing; for I feared that the giving me a few cents would ease his conscience, and make him feel himself to be a pretty honorable sort of robber. My discontent grew upon me. I was ever on the look-out for means of escape; and, finding no direct means, I determined to try to hire my time, with a view of getting money with which to make my escape. In the spring of, when Master Thomas came to Baltimore to purchase his spring goods, I got an opportunity, and applied to him to allow me to hire my time. He unhesitatingly refused my request, and told me this was another stratagem by which to escape. He told me I could go nowhere but that he could get me; and that, in the event of my running away, he should spare no pains in his efforts to catch me. He exhorted me to content myself, and be obedient. He told me, if I would be happy, I must lay out no plans for the future. He said, if I behaved myself properly, he would take care of me. Indeed, he advised me to complete thoughtlessness of the future, and taught me to depend solely upon him for happiness. He seemed to see fully the pressing necessity of

setting aside my intellectual nature, in order to contentment in slavery. But in spite of him, and even in spite of myself, I continued to think, and to think about the injustice of my enslavement, and the means of escape. About two months after this, I applied to Master Hugh for the privilege of hiring my time. He was not acquainted with the fact that I had applied to Master Thomas, and had been refused. He too, at first, seemed disposed to refuse; but, after some reflection, he granted me the privilege, and proposed the following terms: I was to be allowed all my time, make all contracts with those for whom I worked, and find my own employment; and, in return for this liberty, I was to pay him three dollars at the end of each week; find myself in calking tools, and in board and clothing. My board was two dollars and a half per week. This, with the wear and tear of clothing and calking tools, made my regular expenses about six dollars per week. This amount I was compelled to make up, or relinquish the privilege of hiring my time. Rain or shine, work or no work, at the end of each week the money must be forthcoming, or I must give up my privilege. It relieved him of all need of looking after me. His money was sure. He received all the benefits of slaveholding without its evils; while I endured all the evils of a slave, and suffered all the care and anxiety of a freeman. I found it a hard bargain. But, hard as it was, I thought it better than the old mode of getting along. It was a step towards freedom to be allowed to bear the responsibilities of a freeman, and I was determined to hold on upon it. I bent myself to the work of making money. I was ready to work at night as well as day, and by the most untiring perseverance and industry, I made enough to meet my expenses, and lay up a little money every week. I went on thus from May till August. Master Hugh then refused to allow me to hire my time longer. This failure was occasioned by my attending a camp meeting about ten miles from Baltimore. I knew that Master Hugh was in no special need of the money that night. I therefore decided to go to camp meeting, and upon my return pay him the three dollars. I staid at the camp meeting one day longer than I intended when I left. But as soon as I returned, I called upon him to pay him what he considered his due. I found him very angry; he could scarce restrain his wrath. He said he had a great mind to give me a severe whipping. He wished to know how I dared go out of the city without asking his permission. I told him I hired my time and while I paid him the price which he asked for it, I did not know that I was bound to ask him when and where I should go. This reply troubled him; and, after reflecting a few moments, he turned to me, and said I should hire my time no longer; that the next thing he should know of, I would be running away. Upon the same plea, he told me to bring my tools and clothing home forthwith. I did so; but instead of seeking work, as I had been accustomed to do previously to hiring my time, I spent the whole week without the performance of a single stroke of work. I did this in retaliation. I told him I had no wages; I had done no work that week. Here we were upon the point of coming to blows. He raved, and swore his determination to get hold of me. I did not allow myself a single word; but was resolved, if he laid the weight of his hand upon me, it should be blow for blow. He did not strike me, but told me that he would find me in constant employment in future. I thought the matter over during the next day, Sunday, and finally resolved upon the third day of September, as the day upon which I would make a second attempt to secure my freedom. I now had three weeks during which to prepare for my journey. Early on Monday morning, before Master Hugh had time to make any engagement for me, I went out and got employment of Mr. Butler, at his ship-yard near the drawbridge, upon what is called the City Block, thus making it unnecessary for him to seek employment for me. At the end of the week, I brought him between eight and nine dollars. He seemed very well pleased, and asked why I did not do the same the week before. He little knew what my plans were. My object in working steadily was to remove any suspicion he might entertain of my intent to run away; and in this I succeeded admirably. I suppose he thought I was never better satisfied with my condition than at the very time during which I was planning my escape. The second week passed, and again I carried him my full wages; and so well pleased was he, that he gave me twenty-five cents, quite a large sum for a slaveholder to give a slave, and bade me to make a good use of it. I told him I would. Things went on without very smoothly indeed, but within there was trouble. It is impossible for me to describe my feelings as the time of my contemplated start drew near. 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. The love of them was my tender point, and shook my decision more than all things else. Besides the pain of separation, the dread and apprehension of a failure exceeded what I had experienced at my first attempt. The appalling defeat I then sustained returned to torment me. I felt assured that, if I failed in this attempt, my case would be a hopeless one—it would seal my fate as a slave forever. I could not hope to get off with any thing less than the severest punishment, and being placed beyond the means of escape. It required no very vivid imagination to depict the most frightful scenes through which I should have to pass, in case I failed. The wretchedness of slavery, and the blessedness of freedom, were perpetually before me. It was life and death with me. But I remained firm, and, according to my resolution, on the third day of September, , I left my chains, and succeeded in reaching New York without the slightest interruption of any kind. How I did so, what means I adopted, what direction I travelled, and by what mode of conveyance, I must leave unexplained, for the reasons before mentioned.

2: SparkNotes: Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: Chapter X (continued)

A summary of Chapter X (continued) in Frederick Douglass's Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. Learn exactly what happened in this chapter, scene, or section of Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass and what it means.

See Important Quotations Explained The fight with Covey causes Douglass to regain his spirit and defiance, as well as his resolve to be free. He never receives a whipping from anyone during his remaining four years as a slave. Slaveholders typically encourage slaves to spend the holiday drinking, rather than resting or working industriously for themselves. Douglass explains that this strategy helps keep blacks enslaved. By giving slaves a brief span of time each year to release their rebellious spirit, slaveholders keep them manageable for the rest of the year. By encouraging them to spend the holiday riotously drunk, slaveholders ensure that freedom comes to seem unappealing. On January 1, 1845, Douglass is sent to live with Mr. Freeland. Douglass is grateful that Mr. Freeland is not a hypocritically religious man. Many men in the community profess to be religious, but merely use their religion as justification for their cruelty to their slaves. Freeland works his slaves hard, but treats them fairly. Douglass soon succeeds in getting some of his fellow slaves interested in learning how to read. Word soon spreads, and Douglass surreptitiously begins to hold a Sabbath school in the cabin of a free black. This is a dangerous undertaking, as educating slaves is forbidden; the community violently shuts down a similar school run by a white man. Douglass remembers Freeland as the best master he ever had. Douglass also attributes the comfort of the year to his solidarity with the other slaves. Douglass recalls that he loved them and that they operated together as a single community. Though Douglass remains with Freeland for another year in 1846, by this time he desires his freedom more strongly than ever. Douglass recalls how daunting the odds were for them. He describes their position as facing the bloody figure of slavery and glimpsing the doubtful, beckoning figure of freedom in the distance, with the intervening path full of hardship and death. As slaves, Douglass and his companions had to choose doubtful liberty over nearly certain death.

3: english11 / Literary Devices - Chapter 10

Home Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass E-Text: Chapter 10 E-Text Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass Chapter I had left Master Thomas's house, and went to live with Mr. Covey, on the 1st of January,

Summary Analysis Douglass introduces this chapter as a description of his successful escape. However, he says that he is unable to give a complete account of his flight, because disclosing all the facts of the escape would compromise those who helped him and make it more difficult for other slaves to escape. This is one of the only sections of the novel where Douglass does not attempt to fully recount the truth, and he only withholds this information because the truth would threaten people he cares about. In explicitly acknowledging that he is not giving the whole truth, he both frees himself from others charging him of not telling the full truth and also shows how slavery makes it impossible for slaves to be truthful about everything because to be truthful can lead to death. Active Themes Douglass also expresses his frustration with the very public way in which the underground railroad—a network of people who aid escaping slaves—operates. While he appreciates the bravery of those who run the underground railroad, he thinks their indiscretion makes it much more difficult for slaves to escape bondage. Douglass recommends keeping the slaveholder ignorant of the means by which slaves escape, so that the oppressors will torment themselves with all sorts of imaginary threats. Active Themes In , Douglass grew dissatisfied with forfeiting all of his earnings to Master Hugh. Sometimes, Hugh would let Douglass keep a tiny fraction of his pay, which only affirmed to Douglass that he had a right to keep all of it. Active Themes Master Thomas comes to Baltimore, and Douglass requests that he be allowed to work for pay. Thomas refuses this request, and tells Douglass to be complacent and obedient, and not to overthink his role. Douglass is not deterred, and soon asks Master Hugh for the privilege of finding his own freelance work and keeping some of his earnings. Hugh grants Douglass this ability, but demands that Douglass pay him three dollars per week off the top of his earnings. This arrangement is very good for Hugh: Douglass has to pay for his own room and board, while still paying money to his Master. However, Douglass accepts his new responsibilities as a step towards freedom. Getting to keep most of his earnings is a dramatic step towards freedom for Douglass. Active Themes Get the entire Narrative of Frederick LitChart as a printable PDF. After a few months of this arrangement, Douglass neglects to pay Hugh his weekly tribute on time because he has gone to spend time with friends outside Baltimore. Hugh thinks Douglass is planning an escape and retracts the permission he gave Douglass to work on his own, and in retaliation, Douglass does no work for an entire week. When his next payment to Hugh is due, his master is furious, and the two men almost come to blows. Active Themes After this confrontation, Douglass decides to attempt an escape on the third of September. Douglass keeps Hugh ignorant of his plans by acting as if he has no such plans. That Douglass can now keep his master ignorant shows that he now sees himself as the equal of his "master. His past failure also discourages him. However, he sticks to his resolution and successfully escapes. That the simple, elemental desire to be free should force Douglass to give up his friendships is yet another indictment of slavery. However, this relief soon turns to further anxiety when he realizes that he still can be recaptured. He also experiences a crushing loneliness in the foreign city because he is unable to trust anyone. Far from home and unable to trust anyone, Douglass can no longer enjoy the fellowship of his friends, and this deprivation takes a toll on his mental health. Active Themes Fortunately, Douglass is aided by a free black abolitionist and journalist, Mr. David Ruggles, who takes the fugitive slave into his boarding house and instructs him to go work as a caulker in New Bedford. Finally, Douglass is treated like a human being. His marriage to Anna leaves him able to enjoy human fellowship at a level greater than he ever could while enslaved. Despite having no money to pay for transportation to New Bedford, they board a stagecoach and arrive at the house of Mr. Nathan Johnson, who treats them well and pays for their coach fare. Active Themes Douglass begins to feel safe with Johnson. Taking on a new name is like a kind of baptism, a gaining of a new free self, untainted by slavery. Douglass is amazed that New Bedford lacks the destitution that some experience in the south, and is especially impressed that many free blacks in the north live more comfortably than some slaveholders in the south. In fact, he comes to see the utter pointlessness of slavery—not only is it

cruel and anti-Christian, but it produces a society that is less well off than the non-slaveholding north.? He is unable to make use of his artisanal skills, because blacks are forbidden from doing caulking work in New Bedford, but he is nonetheless pleased to be working. The racist laws that inhibit Douglass show that the free north is by no means perfect; however, Douglass is as optimistic and industrious as ever. Douglass becomes dedicated to the abolitionist cause, and ends up speaking at an anti-slavery convention in August of He speaks little, because he is nervous of addressing white people, but he realizes that he has articulated himself well. With this small speech, Douglass began his role as an anti-slavery speaker and advocate, and dedicated himself to that cause. Since his energies are no longer consumed by devising an escape, Douglass devotes his extraordinary passion to the abolitionist cause in the belief that the truthful exposition of his horrible experiences can help bring about the abolition of slavery. Retrieved November 14,

4: Notes on Chapter 10 from The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass Chp 10 (part 1) PharaohMO. chp 10 (part 1) Category 12 Chapter 10 Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass Frederick Douglass - Duration.

In the first few days, Covey sends Douglass with a team of oxen into the forest to retrieve some wood. Douglass does not know how to manage the oxen, and they startle and upset the cart. Douglass narrowly escapes injury. He is stranded in the middle of the woods with a damaged cart and a team of oxen tangled in their own reins. Douglass manages to re-yoke the oxen and sets off again, but they quickly become frightened for a second time, and nearly run Douglass into a gate. After Douglass reports his troubles to Covey, Covey whips him savagely. Covey works his slaves from before dawn till after dusk, and while he gives them enough food to eat, he does not give them enough time to eat it. To ensure productivity, Covey labors alongside his slaves, and Covey will often sneak up on his slaves in order to make sure they work even when unsupervised. Covey often uses elaborate ruses to trick the slaves into thinking he has disappeared, only to watch his slaves from a hidden vantage point. This forces the slaves to work constantly, from fear of constant surveillance. Not only does he make extraordinary physical demands of his slaves, he also uses trickery and deceit to erode their mental strength. He prays frequently, but only in ways that do not give the slaves a break from fieldwork. Covey often sings hymns with his family, but is not a strong reader, and Douglass is usually required to read the hymns. However, Douglass often refuses, which unsettles Covey, and forces him to read haltingly to show his independence from the slave. Covey is the worst sort of religious hypocrite—he feigns intense Christian faith, but only when it is advantageous for him to do so. Active Themes Get the entire Narrative of Frederick LitChart as a printable PDF. Douglass is broken by his six months with Covey. He is forced to work in every weather condition, no matter how hot or cold. He spends Sundays—his only leisure time—in a dream-like stupor, unable to think clearly. He entertains the idea of killing himself or Mr. Covey, but cannot follow through out of a combination of hope and fear. Under Covey, Douglass reaches his lowest point. His enslavement is so total that he can no longer use the one thing he retains full control of: Slave owners treat slaves this way on purpose—only with such inhumane treatment can they beat their slaves down enough to keep slaves down. The sight of the ships inspires him to attempt to run away and seek freedom. Active Themes While fanning wheat for Covey in August of , Douglass collapses from heat exhaustion and is unable to continue working. Covey hits Douglass and demands he continue working. Active Themes Douglass spends the night in St. He sees Covey running out to whip him and successfully hides in the cornfields. Douglass spends the day in the woods, and meets a slave named Sandy Jenkins, who is on his way to the house where his free wife lives. Jenkins takes Douglass home with him. There, he tells Douglass to return to Covey, but to always carry with him a special root on his right side. This root, Jenkins says, will prevent a master from hitting any slave that carries it. Sandy in several ways represents a commonly held negative stereotype of the slave. He is superstitious—he believes in the powers of a mystical root—and he is very deferential to his master, which shows in his recommendation to Douglass that he return to Covey. On his way back, he passes Covey, who is headed to church. The next morning, Douglass is given an early chore, and as he works, Covey catches Douglass off guard and ties his legs up. Douglass falls down, but resolves to fight Covey, and seizes his master by the throat. Another farmhand, Hughes, comes to help Covey, but Douglass incapacitates him with a kick to the ribs. The two fight for two more hours, and Covey finally gives up without having whipped Douglass. Though Douglass remains a slave for four years after the fight, he is never again whipped. He has to keep them from revealing his failure, and can only do that by giving in to them. Covey ends on Christmas Day of Slaves are given the days between Christmas and New Years off as holidays. Some spend this time preparing industriously for the coming season, but most simply revel. Slaveholders encourage the slaves to drink heavily and sicken themselves, so that the slaves will believe they cannot live independently. Part of the inhumane fraud of slavery, Douglass says, is to disgust the slave with his freedom. By keeping slaves ignorant of what true freedom is like, the slaveholders convince them that they do not deserve the privilege. The malicious trickery of the holiday season is a strong example of the way slave owners perpetuate slavery

through ignorance and deception. Freeland is a more honorable man than Covey, and does not deceive his slaves. Douglass is also relieved that Freeland does not try to use religion to justify owning slaves, because Douglass has found religious slaveholders to be the most cowardly and cruel. Hopkins, two ministers who live near Mr. Freeland, regularly whip their slaves for no reason other than to assert their own authority. Freeland is, to Douglass, a less objectionable slaveholder because he does not use religion to engineer a moral justification for his ownership. Ironically, his de-emphasis of religion makes him a more humane master. Freeland treats Douglass more fairly than Covey did, giving his slaves both enough to eat and enough time to eat. Freeland himself owns only two slaves, Henry and John Harris. Douglass is a hired hand, along with Sandy Jenkins and Handy Caldwell. Douglass instills in his fellow slaves the desire to learn to read, and he spends his Sundays teaching them. The school expands—Douglass remembers teaching over 40 people at one point. Douglass is touched by the risks the slaves take in order to educate themselves, and looks back on his teaching days with great pleasure and pride. It also shows how a slave who can read is a threat to slavery, because that slave can pass both knowledge and the skill onto other slaves, who can then pass on their knowledge and the skill, etc. He attributes some of his comfort to the love that he shares with his fellow slaves. In , at the end of his first year, Douglass is taken again for a second year with Freeland. However, Douglass is not content with his relative comfort, and will finally make good on his promises to attempt an escape. Active Themes It is important to Douglass to convince his fellow slaves to escape with him. They meet frequently to plan their flight, and are intimidated by the dismal odds they face. Sandy Jenkins was initially going to come, but backed out. To give their escape some plausibility, Douglass forges written travel passes from a master. Because their intelligence is constantly underestimated, nobody will guess that they could have forged their own passes. Active Themes On the day the slaves had planned to flee, Douglass goes to work as usual. However, he is overcome with an inexplicable feeling of betrayal. Then, without warning, Douglass and his co-conspirators are tied up and brought to jail in Easton. Douglass manages to destroy the pass he had written, and he and his co-conspirators agree to deny their plot. Active Themes In jail, slave traders appraise and demean the imprisoned slaves. After some time in jail, all the slaves except Douglass are taken home; this separation pains Douglass dearly. Douglass believes that he will be the only one sold, because he was the ringleader of the escape plan. Notably, what hurts Douglass most about his time in jail is his separation from his fellow slaves. Active Themes While languishing in jail, Douglass abandons hope. His master, Thomas Auld, announces plans to send him to Alabama. Active Themes When Douglass arrives in Baltimore, he is apprenticed to a ship-builder named William Gardner, who will teach him how to caulk ships. However, because the shipyard is scrambling to meet a tight deadline, Douglass is overwhelmed with simple errands and cannot learn any new skills. After eight months working in the shipyard, Douglass is assaulted by a group of four white apprentices. The white carpenters have become disgruntled working with blacks, because they fear that the blacks will take their jobs. Douglass tries to fight back, but is badly beaten. When he is assaulted by the white carpenters, Douglass is targeted simply because he is an unwilling part of an unfair system. Nevertheless, racist insecurities prevail over logic, and the blameless Douglass is beat up. Hugh is outraged at the violence done to Douglass, and speaks to a lawyer. No blacks can testify, and no whites—“even those who sympathize with Douglass—”will testify for Douglass and against a fellow white man. He is beat in front of numerous witnesses, but individual and institutional racism prevents his case from being handled fairly by the law. Active Themes With no chance for redress, Hugh nurses Douglass back to health in his home, and then apprentices the slave to another caulker, Mr. Douglass learns the trade, and is soon able to earn wages of six or seven dollars per week. Douglass now routinely earns money, but is compelled to turn it all over to Master Hugh at the end of each week. Douglass is beginning to develop more and more of the characteristics that freemen have. He has learned a trade and cultivated his intellect. This worldliness only makes Douglass more aware of the unfairness of his situation—he has the same skills as others who can make a living for themselves. The better equipped he is to recognize the hypocrisy of slavery, the more acutely Douglass recognizes it. Retrieved November 14,

5: SparkNotes: Complete Text of Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: Chapter 11

Chapter Summary for Frederick Douglass's Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, chapter 10 summary. Find a summary of this and each chapter of Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass! Your Voice Matters: Vote on Tuesday, November 6!

Are you sure you want to delete this answer? Yes Sorry, something has gone wrong. Born into captivity, Douglass "like most slaves" can only guess where or when he was born or who his father was. Chapters 10-11 While under the control of Mr. Covey, Douglass is a field hand and has an especially hard time at the tasks required of him. He is harshly whipped almost on a weekly basis, apparently due to his awkwardness. He is worked and beaten to exhaustion, which finally causes him to collapse one day while working in the fields. Because of this, he is brutally beaten once more by Covey, and eventually complains to Thomas Auld, who ultimately sends him back to Covey. One day, Covey attempts to tie up Douglass, but he fights back. After a long, two hour physical battle, Douglass ultimately conquers. After this fight, he is never beaten again. He is sent to live on another plantation where he befriends other slaves and teaches them how to read. He and the others make a plan to escape, but before doing so, they are caught and Douglass is put in jail. After he is released, he is sent to Baltimore once more, but this time to learn a trade. He becomes an apprentice in a shipyard Shipyard Shipyards and dockyards are places which repair and build ships. These can be yachts, military vessels, cruise liners or other cargo or passenger ships. Dockyards are sometimes more associated with maintenance and basing activities than shipyards, which are sometimes associated more with initial Master Hugh is kind regarding this situation and refuses to let Douglass return to the shipyard. At this point, Douglass is employed to be a caulker and receives wages, but is forced to give every cent to Master Auld. Douglass eventually finds his own job and plans the date in which he will escape to the North. He succeeds, but Douglass does not give many details of how he did so, in order to protect those who helped him and to ensure the possibility of other slaves escaping in this same manner. He ultimately attends an antislavery convention and battles the issue from that time on.

6: Frederick Douglass Rhetorical Analysis by Katie Victor on Prezi

Covey can't be bothered to teach Douglass to handle the oxen, and Douglass assumes a task at great physical riskâ€”but nevertheless, Covey blames Douglass when things go wrong, and whips him for the accident.

I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. I do not remember to have ever met a slave who could tell of his birthday. They seldom come nearer to it than planting-time, harvest-time, cherry-time, spring-time, or fall-time. A want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood. The white children could tell their ages. I could not tell why I ought to be deprived of the same privilege. I was not allowed to make any inquiries of my master concerning it. He deemed all such inquiries on the part of a slave improper and impertinent, and evidence of a restless spirit. The nearest estimate I can give makes me now between twenty-seven and twenty-eight years of age. I come to this, from hearing my master say, some time during , I was about seventeen years old. My mother was named Harriet Bailey. She was the daughter of Isaac and Betsey Bailey, both colored, and quite dark. My mother was of a darker complexion than either my grandmother or grandfather. My father was a white man. He was admitted to be such by all I ever heard speak of my parentage. The opinion was also whispered that my master was my father; but of the correctness of this opinion, I know nothing; the means of knowing was withheld from me. My mother and I were separated when I was but an infantâ€”before I knew her as my mother. It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age. Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off, and the child is placed under the care of an old woman, too old for field labor. This is the inevitable result. I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life; and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve miles from my home. She was a field hand, and a whipping is the penalty of not being in the field at sunrise, unless a slave has special permission from his or her master to the contraryâ€”a permission which they seldom get, and one that gives to him that gives it the proud name of being a kind master. I do not recollect of ever seeing my mother by the light of day. She was with me in the night. She would lie down with me, and get me to sleep, but long before I waked she was gone. Very little communication ever took place between us. Death soon ended what little we could have while she lived, and with it her hardships and suffering. I was not allowed to be present during her illness, at her death, or burial. She was gone long before I knew any thing about it. 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. Called thus suddenly away, she left me without the slightest intimation of who my father was. The whisper that my master was my father, may or may not be true; and, true or false, it is of but little consequence to my purpose whilst the fact remains, in all its glaring odiousness, that slaveholders have ordained, and by law established, that the children of slave women shall in all cases follow the condition of their mothers; 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, in cases not a few, sustains to his slaves the double relation of master and father. I know of such cases; and it is worthy of remark that such slaves invariably suffer greater hardships, and have more to contend with, than others. They are, in the first place, a constant offence to their mistress. She is ever disposed to find fault with them; they can seldom do any thing to please her; she is never better pleased than when she sees them under the lash, especially when she suspects her husband of showing to his mulatto children favors which he withholds from his black slaves. The master is frequently compelled to sell this class of his slaves, out of deference to the feelings of his white wife; and, cruel as the deed may strike any one to be, for a man to sell his own children to human flesh-mongers, it is often the dictate of humanity for him to do so; for, unless he does this, he must not only whip them himself, but must stand by and see one white son

tie up his brother, of but few shades darker complexion than himself, and ply the gory lash to his naked back; and if he lip one word of disapproval, it is set down to his parental partiality, and only makes a bad matter worse, both for himself and the slave whom he would protect and defend. Every year brings with it multitudes of this class of slaves. It was doubtless in consequence of a knowledge of this fact, that one great statesman of the south predicted the downfall of slavery by the inevitable laws of population. Whether this prophecy is ever fulfilled or not, it is nevertheless plain that a very different-looking class of people are springing up at the south, and are now held in slavery, from those originally brought to this country from Africa; and if their increase do no other good, it will do away the force of the argument, that God cursed Ham, and therefore American slavery is right. If the lineal descendants of Ham are alone to be scripturally enslaved, it is certain that slavery at the south must soon become unscriptural; for thousands are ushered into the world, annually, who, like myself, owe their existence to white fathers, and those fathers most frequently their own masters. I have had two masters. I do not remember his first name. He was generally called Captain Anthony—a title which, I presume, he acquired by sailing a craft on the Chesapeake Bay. He was not considered a rich slaveholder. He owned two or three farms, and about thirty slaves. His farms and slaves were under the care of an overseer. Plummer was a miserable drunkard, a profane swearer, and a savage monster. He always went armed with a cowskin and a heavy cudgel. Master, however, was not a humane slaveholder. It required extraordinary barbarity on the part of an overseer to affect him. He was a cruel man, hardened by a long life of slaveholding. He would at times seem to take great pleasure in whipping a slave. I have often been awakened at the dawn of day by the most heart-rending shrieks of an own aunt of mine, whom he used to tie up to a joist, and whip upon her naked back till she was literally covered with blood. No words, no tears, no prayers, from his gory victim, seemed to move his iron heart from its bloody purpose. The louder she screamed, the harder he whipped; and where the blood ran fastest, there he whipped longest. He would whip her to make her scream, and whip her to make her hush; and not until overcome by fatigue, would he cease to swing the blood-clotted cowskin. I remember the first time I ever witnessed this horrible exhibition. I was quite a child, but I well remember it. I never shall forget it whilst I remember any thing. It was the first of a long series of such outrages, of which I was doomed to be a witness and a participant. 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. This occurrence took place very soon after I went to live with my old master, and under the following circumstances. Aunt Hester went out one night, where or for what I do not know, and happened to be absent when my master desired her presence. He had ordered her not to go out evenings, and warned her that she must never let him catch her in company with a young man, who was paying attention to her belonging to Colonel Lloyd. Why master was so careful of her, may be safely left to conjecture. She was a woman of noble form, and of graceful proportions, having very few equals, and fewer superiors, in personal appearance, among the colored or white women of our neighborhood. Had he been a man of pure morals himself, he might have been thought interested in protecting the innocence of my aunt; but those who knew him will not suspect him of any such virtue. Before he commenced whipping Aunt Hester, he took her into the kitchen, and stripped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulders, and back, entirely naked. He then told her to cross her hands, calling her at the same time a *dâ€™*â€™d *bâ€™*â€™-h. After crossing her hands, he tied them with a strong rope, and led her to a stool under a large hook in the joist, put in for the purpose. He made her get upon the stool, and tied her hands to the hook. She now stood fair for his infernal purpose. Her arms were stretched up at their full length, so that she stood upon the ends of her toes. 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. It was all new to me. I had never seen any thing like it before. I had always lived with my grandmother on the outskirts of the plantation, where she was put to raise the children of the younger women. I had therefore been, until now, out of the way of the bloody scenes that often occurred on the plantation.

7: Quotes from The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Douglass begins this chapter by letting us know that the part of the story we've been waiting for has finally come: escape from slavery! But even though he knows we've been waiting for this, he can't give us all the details.

Having spent considerable time in the city, Douglass was not familiar with farm instruments and techniques. Because of this unfamiliarity, he made mistakes and was continually punished. Covey pushed his slaves to the limit, making them work long hours, and he constantly spied on them to make sure they did the work. Despite his professed religious piety, Covey saw profit in breeding slaves, so he bought a female slave and hired a married man to have sex with her for a year. Douglass confesses that witnessing this inhuman tyranny may have been the lowest point in his life for he contemplated killing Covey and ending his own life. The sight of their billowing white sails continually renewed his hope for an eventual escape. One hot day in August, Douglass collapsed from fatigue, an event which led to matters that changed his life. Covey came by, kicked him, and gave him a beating. Although Douglass was bleeding profusely, he managed to escape and walked seven miles to St. Eventually, Douglass encountered Sandy Jenkins, a fellow slave who believed in the supernatural powers of certain plants. Sandy advised him to carry a certain root on his right side, an act which would make it impossible for any white man to harm him. Sandy believed that his own root had always saved him. To humor Sandy rather than argue with him, Douglass followed his instructions. A few days later, however, Covey pounced on him. This time, Douglass decided to physically resist. In the ensuing fight, Douglass gained the upper hand, and, after nearly two hours of wrestling and struggling, Covey finally gave up. The truth was, that he had not whipped me at all. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It rekindled the few expiring embers of freedom, and revived within me a sense of my own manhood. It recalled the departed self-confidence, and inspired me again with a determination to be free. If it were not for these days of rest, Douglass reasons, that there would be a multitude of slave insurrections. Holidays, he says, are opportunities for slave owners to encourage slaves to get drunk, and keeping slaves drunk is one way of keeping them servile. Douglass calls Freeland "the best master I ever had, till I became my own master. Douglass tells the reader that religious slave owners are all unparalleled hypocrites, vicious and perverse. Douglass soon grew attached to other slaves with whom he worked, and together they celebrated the Sabbath. Douglass became the Sabbath school instructor to his fellow slaves, a task he enjoyed greatly. In , Douglass began to think seriously about escaping. Together with several other slaves, he planned to steal a canoe and row up Chesapeake Bay. He even forged notes stating that they had permission from their owners to travel to Baltimore. This escape attempt failed, however, before it began because another slave betrayed them. Douglass, however, was considered the ringleader, so there was a general dislike of him in the community. Auld eventually sent him to live with his brother Hugh because he feared that someone might kill him. In turn, Hugh loaned Douglass to William Gardner, a ship builder. For several months, Douglass was at "the beck and call of about seventy-five men," continually running errands for them. He might have stayed longer had it not been for a fight he had with his fellow white workers. The white carpenters were worried that free black men and slaves might become so proficient that they might eventually take their jobs away. Because Douglass had promised himself after the Covey incident that he would fight back if physically mistreated, he struck back, and the ensuing fight nearly turned into a mob scene. Douglass was badly beaten and feared being lynched. In the end, however, he managed to escape. Returning to Hugh Auld, he found his master and mistress surprisingly very kind to him. After taking care of his wounds, Auld took him down to Gardner to lodge a complaint. None of the white workers would testify on his behalf, though, and the words of black workers meant nothing. Douglass took up the task of caulking waterproofing boats and soon became a skilled worker. In time, he started earning wages equal to the most skilled caulkers. All of his salary went to Hugh Auld, though, and this injustice made him more determined than ever to escape. Initially, Douglass returns to familiar themes, declaring again his contempt for histrionically religious slave owners. One such man was Covey, who bred slaves for profit. He was, however, one master who worked with his hands and thus knew what kind of work each slave could endure. His sneakiness and ability to deceive were his strengths to the

degree that Douglass thinks Covey may have fooled himself into believing that he was a religious person. At the lowest points in his life, he speaks silently to God – for example, while watching the ships on Chesapeake Bay, sailing toward the Northern states. Some critics argue that it was at this point that Douglass became free, for once the mind is freed, the body will follow. Other critics, however, point to the fight that Douglass has with Covey as the real turning point, the moment when Douglass becomes psychologically free. Douglass himself believes that the Covey episode was significant. Throughout his Narrative, Douglass repeatedly illustrates that Southern whites almost always close ranks when one of them is accused of a misdeed. We saw this behavior in Chapter IV, when the murder of blacks was condoned by the community. The incident with Jenkins is puzzling. Douglass never lets us know whether he truly believed in the magical power of the root. Apparently, he was never "fairly whipped" again after the episode with Covey. Whether this superstition harks back to an early African tradition is also unclear. Douglass is fervent in his depiction of the reasons why slave-holders allow a certain number of holidays for their slaves. Keeping them working all the time would invite insurrections. Furthermore, holidays are occasions for slave owners to encourage drunkenness among the slaves. Douglass feels that slaves are so discouraged by their morning drunken stupors that they are "rather glad to go, from what our master had deceived us into a belief was freedom [that is, drunkenness], back to the arms of slavery. Unlike Southern whites who close ranks to protect their privilege, slaves are discouraged from establishing ties with each other. Douglass again makes an implicit criticism of his fellow slaves who do, or will not, unite for their gain. A united black population would definitely pose a threat to whites. Later, Douglass again experienced the wrath of a united majority against the minority. After being beaten up in the shipyard and almost lynched, none of his fellow white workers would testify on his behalf that Douglass had been viciously mistreated. The white workers were also united against working with free blacks and slaves; they were afraid that black workers in the job market would eventually take jobs away from them. Glossary natural elasticity the ability to absorb tension; a resilience to harshness.

8: Frederick Douglass Chapter by Zain Kazi on Prezi

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass Chapter 10 On January 1, , Douglass goes to live with Mr. Covey. Within a week, Douglass gets a severe whipping because he is unaccustomed to being a field hand.

Within a week, Douglass gets a severe whipping because he is unaccustomed to being a field hand. On one errand, Douglass undergoes two near-death experiences while driving oxen. Upon finishing his task, Douglass is punished for his incompetence. Covey takes Douglass out to the woods and beats him with switches. For the first six months of the year, Douglass is beaten regularly. Covey works his slaves to the point of exhaustion. A hard-working man himself, he gets the slaves to work hard at all times by sneaking up on them. Thus the slaves refer to him as "the snake. Douglass believes that Mr. Covey deceives himself into believing that he is a sincere worshipper of God. But his actions speak differently. In one instance, Mr. Covey purchases a slave named Caroline , an able-bodied woman, as a breeder. He hires a married slave to shack up with her for the purpose of getting her pregnant. She gives birth to twins and he regards them a welcome addition to his wealth. As for Douglass, he experiences his darkest days of slavery in the first six months working for Mr. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a brute! Dehumanization 7 Douglass is broken to the point of wanting to take his life and that of Mr. But a flicker of hope keeps him going. Douglass looks longingly at the vessels on the Chesapeake Bay , with their white sails and their swift mobility. He contrasts his condition of bondage to the freedom of the noble ships. It produces in him an overwhelming desire to escape from slavery or die trying. He convinces himself to endure because a better day is coming. Freedom 7 After six months of dreadful treatment, Douglass tells of an incident with Mr. Covey that turns him from a slave into a man. One hot day in August , Douglass and three other slaves are put to work on fanning wheat. Douglass, seized by a sudden failure of strength, falls down from exhaustion. On hearing the fan stop, Mr. Covey comes over and gives him a swift kick in the side. After trying unsuccessfully to get up, Douglass lies on the ground expecting the worst. Covey strikes him on the head with a hickory slat and it causes blood to run down freely. Douglass takes a great risk and takes to the road, hoping to get protection from Master Thomas Auld at St. Douglass tells him what happened, but Master Thomas commands him to go back or else. The next morning, Douglass makes his way back, disappointed and without hope. On coming back, Mr. Covey wastes no time in trying to beat him again. Douglass manages to hide in the cornfields. That night, Douglass runs into a slave named Sandy Jenkins. Although hesitant at first, Douglass agrees to give it a try. To his surprise, Mr. Covey speaks to him kindly as he goes to church. The next morning, however, while Douglass is working in the stable, Mr. Covey comes in to beat him. As he is being tied up, Douglass fights back. After nearly two hours of struggle, Mr. Douglass feels that Mr. Covey has gotten the worst of the fight. Covey does not raise a hand against Douglass. I did not hesitate to let it be known of me, that the white man who expected to succeed in whipping, must also succeed in killing me. Covey does not have him publicly punished for the crime of raising his hand against a white man is to keep his reputation as a first-rate overseer and "nigger-breaker. Covey ends on Christmas day, It is not due to the kindness of the slaveholders. They use clever tactics such as encouraging the slaves to get drunk. In experiencing the negative excesses of freedom, the slave is then more tolerating of slavery. This principle of disgusting the slaves with the very things they desire is a common practice among the slaveholders. Freedom 8 Douglass goes to work for Mr. William Freeland , a fair and respectable slaveholder who is devoid of religious pretensions. Of all the slaveholders he has known, the worst are the religious ones. He describes the conduct of one reverend, Mr. Rigby Hopkins , whom he considers the greatest religious hypocrite. He relishes beating his slaves and even considers the whippings his religious duty. Freeland owns two slaves: Henry Harris and John Harris. Within a short period of time, Douglass rounds up a few slaves who want to learn how to read. They call it the Sabbath school because the meetings are on Sundays. Soon, over forty slaves, some from the surrounding farms, attend for the sheer joy of learning. Douglass regards teaching the slaves the most rewarding time of his life as a slave. He is overcome with emotion when he thinks about the slaves shut off from learning. In addition to the

Sabbath school, Douglass teaches the slaves at home. The year passes without Douglass having received one blow. He gives credit to Mr. Freeland, whom he considers the best master he has had before becoming his own master. Douglass is hired for another year, but he resolves to not let the year pass without attempting an escape. Douglass expresses his sentiments with wordplay: After much planning, they finally decide upon a plan to take a boat up the Chesapeake Bay during the Easter holidays. Douglass has to devote much of his energy into reassuring and encouraging the other slaves. The day of their intended escape, Douglass is overcome with a feeling that they are betrayed. It proves to be correct as Douglass and the others are rounded up. Henry refuses to be tied up and there is a scuffle before he is eventually subdued. During the scuffle, Douglass is able to get rid of the pass that he has written for their escape. Before they are taken away, Mr. She rebukes Douglass for corrupting their minds to run away. On the way, Douglass tells Henry to eat his pass and he spreads the word to own nothing. They are taken to the Easton jail where they spend a couple of days. Slave traders come by like vultures to see if the slaves will be put up for sale. Freeland come and take the others home, leaving Douglass in jail all alone. After a week, Captain Auld comes to take Douglass home, intending to send him to Alabama. But instead, Douglass is sent to Baltimore once again to the home of Mr. After being away for more than three years, Douglass returns to Baltimore. He is immediately hired to learn how to calk. But first, Douglass is put to work in assisting the shipbuilders. This requires Douglass to heed the orders of about seventy-five people; he is always at the beckoning call of someone needing help. For eight months Douglass endures the work until he gets into a fight with some white men who are against working with colored people. Douglass fights back, but is eventually badly beaten. He goes to a lawyer, but the law states that without the testimony of a white man, nothing could be done about the incident. Master Hugh sends Douglass to another shipyard and he finally learns to calk. Within one year, Douglass earns the wages of the most experienced calkers, at times bringing in nine dollars per week. During his leisure time, Douglass once again thinks about a possible path to freedom.

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