

Frederick douglass: the life of a fighter for the justice of his people

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



“ I prayed for freedom for twenty years, but received no answer, until I prayed with my legs”. The portrayal of intellectual word plays, and language assisted many writers in the past in having a connection between the writer and reader for the creation of emotions when the book was being read. Many writers including Frederick Douglass used word play and rhetorical devices in order to affect the audience creating a specific type of bond and empathy towards the vile act of slavery that took place at the time he was born.

In addition, Douglass used many ways to better affect the audience including lots of imagery. As stated, “ 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 bloodclotted cowskin”. Readers immediately felt strong emotions towards the insane slaveholder who treated his slaves in such bad manners. This quote painted a picture in people’s heads because of the language Douglass used. The empathy felt due to the horrible things that the slaves went through was really shown throughout the changes of slavery. Imagery was truly captivating and indispensable in the writing of this autobiography.

Furthermore, irony was also used towards the readers to get a glimpse of comedy for the simple purpose of showing how most slaves still saw the light in the dark. It was mentioned, “ I look upon my departure from Colonel Lloyd’s plantation as one of the most interesting events of my life”. This quote implied how Douglass never felt freedom within his years of slavery yet he truly preferred certain slaveholders in comparison to others because of the difference in violence and constant diatribes towards the slaves. Now,

the usage of this irony not only lightened up the mood, it also made the readers feel a tiny bit better because Douglass brought appropriate humor in a certain way that it affected the readers to feel a little relieved in this situation. Irony was a big strategy to make the readers feel better after reading all the monstrosities that have happened in Douglass's and his fellow slave's lives.

In addition to this, tone was the key to the autobiography because the tone showed the attitude of Douglass towards the slaveholders and people he met throughout the autobiography. It was also stated, " I loathed them as being the meanest as well as the most wicked of men". The tone in this quote is very serious and pessimistic but even though Douglass hated these men, he still described them very carefully without using cuss words towards them. The tone affected the readers by realizing how differently Douglass felt in different situations; without Douglass's tone the autobiography would have been neutral and with no emotion involved and or felt.

Equally, another important rhetorical device that was used to better affect the audience was repetition. As mentioned, " Where the slave-whip ceaseless swings, Where the noisome* insect stings, Where the fever-demon strews". Repetition was a very effective and useful tool in this part of the poem because it makes the words being said immediately more important. All the scenes mentioned in the previous quote are gloomy and unpleasant to have read but the rhetorical device used triggered something in the audience's mind since it was diverse compared to the rest of the literature and part of the poem quoted previously. This quote really created an

excellent choice of word play that described where all the terrible horrors occurred.

To continue, Douglass used multiple choices of language and word play to describe how it felt to successfully escape and how it truly felt to finally feel freedom for the first time in his life. Douglass was born into a slave life so escaping the slaveholder in his possession and the area where he was being held was the only choice for him to take in order to restart his life the way he always dreamed of. For example, " I had escaped a worse than lion's jaws". This metaphor described how traumatic and painful it was for Douglass when he was a slave. Escaping from this nightmare was the best feeling he had, finally being a free citizen. The use of this device showed the readers how bad slavery was in comparison to a lion's jaw in his own mind. The effect of this affected people's perspective in slavery which later became super important and people began to speak out on this world problem leading to change in the modern world.

Finally, the use of rhetorical devices and word play truly affected the audience in many ways in all the different situations. The choice to use these tools by Douglass was for the purpose of seeking true emotions from the readers so that they could see the reality of the life a slave hoping for people to realize that the world needed to make a change and continues to do so. This autobiography has come a very far way and continues to impact people's lives in ways that mostly everyone cannot relate to but encourages us to be better people towards everyone, no matter how different you are from others.