

The dialectical journal  
of the life of frederick  
douglass: an  
american slave  
essa...



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

| # | Quotes   | Chapter | Explanations   |
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| 1 | 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. | 1       | The slaves were completely clueless about their birthdays and ages; and the ignorance level can be compared to a dumb animal that never cared about its existence. This is the way the masters would have wanted the slaves to remain unimportant. |
| 2 | A want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood.   | 1       | Douglass was generally discontented about remaining ignorant because he can't get the privilege of learning.   |
| 3 | 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.                        | 1       | The rumor that he was the product of a white man's sexual abuse to a black slave was true and since he's only a slave, he never had the privilege of knowing who his real dad was.   |
| 4 | Death soon ended what little we could have while she lived, and with it her  | 1       | When he was just a 12 month old baby, he was taken away from his mother in order to break bondage.   |

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|   | hardships and suffering.   |         | His mother was only able to visit him a few times, and she died eventually still aching for her son's presence.  |
| 5 | For by this cunning arrangement, the slaveholder, in cases not a few, sustains to his slaves the double relation of master and father.   | 1       | The slaveholder had children with the slaves, and the children were still treated as slaves. The children's masters were their own fathers too.  |
| 6 | 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... | 1       | The master/father also has a "white" family to begin with. The white wife got jealous when the master treated his slave children with favor. As a result, the master was forced to sell his slave children to other abusive masters. This was indeed horrific. |
| 7 | I wish I could commit to paper the feelings with which I beheld it.  | 1       | Douglass' overflowing emotions on the horrific accounts of slavery cannot be put into words. Simple  |

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|    |   |         | emotions yet complicated to explain.  |
| 8  | I expected it would be my turn next. It was all new to me. I had never seen anything like it before.  | 1       | He witnessed the terrible punishment that befell his aunt from her master; blood everywhere made him felt the terror could happen to him. He got shocked to witness a first bloody and inhuman incident like that.      |
| 9  | This yearly clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts, one pair of linen trousers, like the shirts, one jacket, one pair of trousers for winter, made of coarse negro cloth, one pair of stockings... | 2       | Take note that as being slaves, they wore " coarse" clothes. It was even branded as " negro" cloth; equaling slaves with the cheapest and lowest class of cloth. Slaves can only wear coarse clothes and nothing finer. |
| 10 | He seemed to take pleasure in manifesting his fiendish barbarity.   | 2       | The masters are sadists in nature. They treat slaves as objects they own and not as humans, so  |

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|    |   |         | treatments were always cruel.  |
| 11 | Scarce a sentence escaped him but that was commenced or concluded by some horrid oath.  | 2       | The master was described to curse so much that when he spoke, all words ended up with profanity, nothing tamer than that.                                  |
| 12 | His death was regarded by the slaves as the result of a merciful providence.  | 2       | When the master eventually died due to health problems, slaves thought he was justly served due for his cruelty.   |
| 13 | Fewer privileges were esteemed higher, by the slaves of the out-farms, than that of being selected to do errands at the Great House Farm. | 2       | It was a great honor and privilege if a slave was chosen to work in the Great House Farm due to the more dignified labor they could do there.              |
| 14 | They would compose and sing as they went along, consulting neither time nor tune.   | 2       | The slaves who worked in the Great House Farm sung in order to relieve stress and depression, and they sung freely to express their thoughts and feelings. |
| 15 | I have sometimes thought  | 2       | Douglass thought that songs  |

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|    | that the mere hearing of those songs would do more to impress some minds with the horrible character of slavery, than the reading of whole volumes of philosophy on the subject could do. |         | express better and reveal the philosophical messages better than the hundreds of books written by great philosophers. The raw emotions could easily be depicted from a singing slave than an orating philosopher. |
| 16 | I was myself within the circle; so that I neither saw nor heard as those without might see and hear.  | 2       | Since Douglass was part of the singing circle of slaves, he doesn't know how the audience out of the circle would've perceived the songs sung.  |
| 17 | The mere recurrence to those songs, even now, afflicts me; and while I am writing these lines, an expression of feeling has already found its way down my cheek.                          | 2       | The songs of the slaves were so powerful and overflowing with feelings that Douglass always finds himself jerking tears whenever he remembers the songs.  |
| 18 | There is no flesh in his obdurate heart.  | 2       | Whoever heard the songs of the slaves and are unmoved by it, are  |

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|    |   |         | considered insensitive and stone cold.  |
| 19 | The singing of a man cast away upon a desolate island might be as appropriately considered as evidence of contentment and happiness...  | 2       | The expression of the slaves through songs made them feel lighter and happier because they were able to unclog their spirits from depression.               |
| 20 | This garden was not the least source of trouble on the plantation. Its excellent fruit was quite a temptation to the hungry swarms of boys, as well as the older slaves, belonging to the colonel, few of whom had the virtue or the vice to resist it. | 3       | The garden was said to be potent enough to bring out the best fruits and produce; that the masters had to keep the slaves from stealing the products of it. |
| 21 | This plan worked well; the slaves became as fearful of tar as of the lash.  | 3       | The masters found that putting tar on the perimeters of the garden was most effective in keeping the  |

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| 22 | The still tongue makes a wise head.   | 3       | <p>slaves from stealing the produce.</p> <p>The tar easily sticks to the body and the guilty slave will easily be detected.</p> <p>The slave who answered honestly to every question asked was punished heavily. The slave should always answer questions in favor of the master's overall good image. Telling otherwise will have severe consequences.</p> |
| 23 | My home was charmless; it was not home to me; on parting from it, I could feel that I was leaving anything which I could have enjoyed by staying. | 5       | Douglass grew up with his family scattered because they were all slaves and have to serve different masters. Thus, when he had to leave his place, he had no real attachment because he had no solid family to begin with.  |
| 24 | Being hanged in England is preferable to dying a natural death in Ireland.  | 5       | Douglass preferred to move to another location to serve another master... the Aulds. He would rather die exploring the possibilities  |



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| 25 | If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell. | 6       | <p>of opportunities rather than stay as a slave where he grew up at.</p> <p>This was a very discriminating remark, but was positively described by the Aulds couple to encourage Douglass to take advantage of the opportunities that passed by. The couple gave him an inch of opportunity and he was able to fully take advantage of it and later he was known to have married a white woman and had the freedom to learn beyond his wildest dreams.</p> |

(Douglass, F. 2005.)

## References

Douglass, F. 2005. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave*. ICON Group International, Inc. San Diego: California.