

# Essay about literacy

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“ I didn’t know I was a slave until I found out I couldn’t do the things I wanted.

“-Frederick Douglass. Literacy was a double-edged sword within the times of slavery in America, and in Cambodia in the time of the Khmer Rouge, from 1975 to 1979. Anyone deemed intellectual was immediately murdered to protect the regime. Anyone wearing glasses was deemed intellectual, yet people still tried to read to keep the old ways alive. Similar to the time of the Khmer Rouge, reading was illegal for slaves and if a slave knew how to read, he would be punished severely. To a slave, literacy was locked far away from them, hidden deep underground in a dungeon, and the only way to free it was with an education and freedom.

“ We read to know that we are not alone” -William Nicholson Literacy is a blessing because learning to read similar to doing something like learning to ride a bike; You might get hurt one or two times along the way, but in the end, you have a bigger reward in store. In the end, all of your hard work pays off with whatever you were trying to accomplish, whether it be riding a bike or learning to read for the first time. In the time of the Khmer Rouge, people who were literate were regarded as the elite, and they had to be eliminated before they could teach those who couldn’t read in order to bring literacy to the next generation, as the Khmer Rouge prevented people from reading.”  
The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read.” -Mark Twain  
On the other hand, literacy can be a curse.

This is because in some times of slavery and depression, people learning to read can cause a revolution against the slavemasters/dictators in the area,

thus defeating the dictatorship/slavery instituted in their place of living, and turning the country/city/state into a new, better place for living. To prevent the fall of the dictatorship, rulers wouldn't allow people to read and get their hands on books.