

# Analysis of frederick douglass and their poetry

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Frederick Douglass once said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning" (Think Exist). Frederick Douglass, a man born into slavery overcame numerous obstacles to eventually become a chief abolitionist as well as a diplomat. Frederick Douglass got his hands on a book entitled "The Columbian Orator" and introduced himself to the word abolitionist.

This sparked his interest and set off a fiery passion for freedom. Douglass realized that slaveholders used ignorance as a tool to enslave their subjects; slaveholders did not want slaves to have the capacities of reading and writing. If slaves could write, then the world could be exposed to the true nature and brutality of slavery. If slaves could read about freedom and a better life, it would give them the desire to escape, and the slave would become restless and despondent with his situation.

In the autobiography *The Narrative of the Life Frederick Douglass*, Douglass used education and free will to gain his freedom. Frederick Douglass through learning how to read, how to write and how to speak had the ability to inform the outside world about the barbarity of slavery and also set himself free from the abyss and chains of slavery. When Frederick Douglass moved to Baltimore, Sophia Auld taught him his, A B C s. Frederick stated "Very soon after I went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Auld, she very kindly commenced to teach me the A, B, C. (Douglass 33). Douglass had started to learn words that contained three or four letters. Just as this started to happen Mr. Auld found out that his wife had been teaching a slave to read. He no longer allowed Mrs. Auld to teach him how to read, in his own words he said, "If you

give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell. A nigger should know nothing but to obey his master--to do as he is told to do. Learning would spoil the best nigger in the world". These words sank deep with Douglass and he would never forget them.

When he heard this it made him realize that he could do better and it stirred his imagination. Douglass wanted to learn more, and to accomplish this he says, (speaking of bread) " I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge (Douglass 38). In Douglass' twelfth year of life he stated " the thought of being a slave for life began to bear heavily upon my heart. Just about this time, I got hold of a book entitled " The Columbian Orator. Every opportunity I got, I used to read this book. " This book exposed Frederick Douglass to the word abolition. With this word he became restless. Douglass realized that earlier in his life Mr. Auld had revealed the strategy by which whites slaveholders suppressed blacks as slaves and ways in which blacks might free themselves. " The week before our intended start, I wrote several protections, one for each of us" on Frederick Douglass' first attempt to escape the grips of slavery he wrote a protection for him and his fellow slaves (Douglass 72).

Having the ability to write, as a slave at this time remained unheard of. Persons would not be suspicious about the note because no slaves should have had the ability to write. With this ability to write Frederick also wrote the autobiography entitled The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, which sold nationally and had record-breaking sales. In Wendell Phillips letter to Frederick Douglass he explains that if people actually knew the slaves side

of the story then it would not be such a problem for people to help free slaves.

People saw slaves as incompetent and only having the ability to work for the white man. In the years following his freedom Douglass began speaking around the country about to perils and cruelties of slavery. Douglass' speaking and writing, helped lead to the ratification of the thirteen fourteenth and fifteenth amendments. He also went around the country telling his story and had a very successful career as an abolitionist. Most persons did not believe Mr. Douglass had been a slave since he spoke so well. Back in his time, people regarded Frederick as the voice of the slaves.

A chess piece in the civil rights movement Frederick Douglass, set off a chain reaction that changed the world. Frederick Douglass used education to prosper. Without education, African American people would not have the positions and statuses they have today. Had it not been for Frederick Douglass who overcame slavery and made a way out of no way. Frederick Douglass used his knowledge of reading, writing and his speaking skills to become the first African American person in a long line of people to try and break the wall of racism, and have equality for all.