

# Narrative of the life of frederick douglass essay

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The book “ Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass”. Is one of the most celebrated and finest slave narratives of the nineteenth century. It is an autobiography of a well-known Afro-American during his life as a slave. The whole book exploits the author’s early life, a life that ended soon after his escape from slavery. At the time of his escape from slavery, it is said that Douglass was approximately twenty years old. The book is a formative of some of the experiences that he faced in his lifetime during his demonstration for the cruelty of the slavery as well as his capability to withstand and come out of such conditions victoriously. The book follows the formula of most slaves’ narratives of his generation. He manages to give his story a linear structure that begins with the little he knew about his origin while gradually progressing to his escape to North.

In this book, Douglass’ recurring theme is the whole brutality thing that faced the slaves. In addition, his emphasis has been aimed at unfolding the whole evil that the slaves were subjected to. Moreover, the book also exploits other themes; hypocrisy in Christianity; education and literacy contribution towards the slaves’ liberation among others. All these issues have made the “ Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass” be classified as melodramatic, although occasionally it could be classified as didactic. In spite of the conventional traits, Douglass’ narration has transcended as a formulaic writing, where he analyses the psychology of the whole slavery. In the book, some of these memorable analyses of slavery include the young Fredrick struggling to read write, his fight with Covey, the slave breaker. In addition, the author portrays his freedom whereby he narrates the ordeal of himself ‘ walking to freedom’ when he starts the sailboats at Chesapeake

Bay. The instances where he interprets the slave songs as songs for creating a sorrow-filled mood.

Douglass wrote this autobiography in 1845. During this time, Douglass had already earned a credit as one of the best and eloquent speakers for the anti-slavery society he was in (Massachusetts Antislavery Society). After its publishing, the book penetrated many countries, some of these nations being two American and European editions. He later revised and expanded the autobiography. The latter versions that followed the first editions were “The Life & Times of Fredrick Douglass” and “My Bondage and Freedom.” However, the latter versions are just but furnishing of the former. As we are speaking, the “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass” has been recognized as one of the narratives on slave’s life. It is an eloquent piece that has made for itself a name in the American market. Fredrick’s life in his narration has been regarded as a finely refined literature. The uniqueness of the literature has made it be qualified as either a literary piece of slavery or an autobiography.

Although over six thousand slaves have ever written stories of their lives as slaves, Fredrick’s story remains the most read slave narratives since he succeeded in using the best language, mood, tone and setting for his piece. The fact that Douglass wrote his autobiography when he was not yet 30 years would also be attributed to its natural zeal that went beyond the boundaries of education (Douglass 33). The “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass” became the most celebrated and compelling book in the history of slave narratives. It is for this piece that Fredrick was named as the best American statesman and orator of his generation. Since its writing the

book has been used severally in schools and colleges for teaching of other fields. The autobiography can be regarded as a seminal source of understanding the history of the United States.

Douglass' narration was given a humble beginning when he takes the chance to describe how young he was as a slave in the Talbot County. He didn't know his dad nor his age. These were some of the tactics that were used by the slave brokers to tame these young boys. Douglass' mum was; Harriet Bailey separated from him when he was still an infant. Therefore, Fredrick Douglass' story is a representation of forced independence and passions filled with sorrows even as early as at infant. As much as Douglass attributes that in his life he saw his mum in . five occasions, this could have affected his social and psychological make-ups. Until the age for his escape, Fredrick Douglass did all he could to maintain and tolerate his condition that saw him through a lot of things. The notable trait of Douglass we note at this point is the act of patience and perseverance. All the heavy work he was subjected never to lose focus on organizing for his escape (Douglass 57).

In conclusion, " Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass" is a book that bears a lot of inspiration. How could a man with no formal education write and organize such a celebrated book? Maybe this is the question that is filling our minds as per now, but the underlying facts carry innumerable questions with them. While writing his autobiography, Douglass' determination was so strong, and the book is the aftermath of his unending efforts. By him rising against, above all, his barriers, Fredrick Douglass' narration is a strong proof that there is always hope that comes in handy

with self-reliance. In the pursuit of the achievement of human liberty, there is no heroic example to surpass Fredrick Douglass.

### **Work cited**

Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Internet resource.