

# The life and times of frederick douglas by frederick douglas

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The scenes are powerful and inspirational as we are told of injustices such as his punishment for teaching himself to read. Every page can stand on its own as an engaging message to entertain and inspire the reader.

The prose of Douglas's book is at times dark and brooding. It depicts the reality of the enslaved life of a young black American whose only hope was an escape filled with hardship. After a violent encounter with his master, he escapes and seeks the aid of a former, and friendlier, a slave owner. Though he was bloodied from head to foot, Douglas was to gain no sympathy. As Douglas illustrates the cold-hearted fraternity of all slave owners he states, "The charge of laziness against the slaves was ever on their lips, and was the standing apology for every species of cruelty and brutality" (105). Douglas would eventually overcome the insurmountable obstacles, buy his freedom, and become a great spokesman for justice and the force of righteousness. The author is a significant figure in 19th-century history. His orations were a driving force behind the abolitionist movement and emancipation. Though its historical accuracy has sometimes been called into question, there can be no doubt about its emotional realism. The book pulls you into the time and gives you an intimate relationship with the author as well as a race, a country, and the human condition.

I still open my worn copy of Douglas's book when I have the time. I read it for the eloquent language and the heart-lifting message. It has given me the history, entertainment, and a renewed belief in the future of mankind.

Students who find an English course difficult would do themselves a favor by reading this book. The day to day trivialities and obstacles we face seem to fade into embarrassment when we are brought face to face with the author's

experiences. The Life and Times of Frederick Douglas is one of the most valuable pieces of American literature that an English student could spend their scarce time reading.