

Life of a slave essay

Nutrition



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Working, from sunrise to sunset, with little nutrition, while being whipped and beaten all throughout the day, this was the everyday life of a slave. Slaves lived in usually harsh environments and were treated poorly by their masters and the plantation owners, causing a slave's life span to be shorter than of the white people. Frederick Douglass was born around 1818 and this book is his narrative of his life as a slave and a portion of his life after he was declared a free man. Primary sources provide a great insight to the happenings of historical events. It gives us a firsthand view from someone who had lived and experienced everything that occurred in a certain time period. From the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass to The Diary of Anne Frank, we learn a great deal about how it was to be a slave in America to being a Jew during the holocaust. With primary sources, more is known about not just slavery and the holocaust, but various battles, wars, and other significant events that have occurred all throughout history, in all parts of the world. Historians read and combine primary sources to get a better view and understanding on what happened.

When they compile all the information into one source, it becomes a secondary source. A secondary source is still a historically correct document, but it was not someone who experienced, say slavery, personally. Rather, it is someone reflecting on the historical event after reading one or a few primary sources. Both sources are extremely insightful to the events, but the primary source gives us a personal, more emotional look on the event. The narrator can walk us through his or her personal experiences, and can help us feel and understand his or her motions a little easier than through a secondary source. With Frederick Douglass narrative, we can see his journey

as a slave, and then as a freeman. Included in his narrative is a preface written by William Lloyd Garrison and a letter from Wendell Phillips. These two documents are secondary sources concerning Frederick Douglass.

William Garrison met Frederick Douglass at a convention and listened to him give a speech at an anti-slavery convention in Nantucket, and Wendell Phillips was good friends with Frederick Douglass. Both sources reflect slavery and the attitudes toward it in this time period. Primary sources give us a firsthand view on history.

They are able to give insight to what it was really like to live back in time. In the Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass, one can almost feel his emotions and feel his anger or sadness as he writes about his slave life. In the era of slavery, there were many different types of slave owners, masters and plantations. There were rich and poor masters, owners and plantations. Some masters were kind and gentle to the slaves, but that often did not last for long.

Even the most angelic of women became corrupt with power. Douglass reflects on his new mistress, she is “ a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings. ” 1 He continues on about her goodness and kindness, for a paragraph, and ends with a final remark: But, alas! This kind heart had but a short time to remain such. The fatal poison of irresponsible power was already in her hands, and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon.

Members of some slave-owning families taught some of the slaves how to read or write, but this was a very small number. Knowledge is power, and the masters did not want the slaves to have any power. Although slaves had no power, they were a symbol of power in the South: the more slaves one had, the wealthier one was. This was due to the fact that slaves were thought of as property, not people. Slaves had no rights and no freedom; they were replaceable to their owners.

“ 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”. The author, Frederick Douglass, was concerned about slavery, he was a slave. He tells the reader his personal experiences and concerns. He wanted freedom, and he feared for his kin.

They had no power whatsoever and were considered animals. When it came time to buy animals and slaves they were categorized as “ horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children” and they all held “ the same rank in the scale of being”. 4 Primary sources give the reader a more personal experience and connection to the author and the time period.

Frederick Douglass experienced slavery firsthand and is passing that information along to future generations. Douglass published the narrative in 1845, and it is currently 2012; more than a century and a half later, teens are reading his story in high school. History books, a type of secondary source, are read in all schools. Secondary sources depict the entire time something took place, in this case, slavery. In the history book, *Give Me Liberty!*, it shows the beginning of slavery, and the end of it.

In Frederick Douglass book, he can only cover his life time, and nothing before that. By the time Frederick Douglass was born, “slavery was already an old institution in America. Two centuries had passed” since the first slaves had been brought to America. Slaves were bought and sold like produce, and they were a major part of the southern part of the nation’s economy. Many rebellions and resistances occurred from the 1700s through the 1800s, and the last, most significant one was Turner’s Rebellion.

6 Secondary sources are insightful for overview of an entire event, while primary sources help focus on one individual and their personal experiences throughout the course of the event. Secondary sources give one of an overview, or summary, about a certain event, rather than go in to details and specifics. The retelling of history through secondary sources does not give the reader the personal connection that primary sources give. The history book summarizes Frederick Douglass life into six paragraphs, focusing on hitting the major points of his life. In Douglass narrative, he goes into detail about everything he can recall. From his mother visiting him when she could, trekking ; level miles on just her feet just to spend a few moments with her soon, to when he finally succeeded in escaping the holds of his owners. With primary resources, the reader is taken on an emotional journey with the author, but with secondary sources the journey can be dull, boring and UN-descriptive.

In the textbook, it tells how Frederick Douglass was very active in political and anti-slavery movements, while in his narrative, he discontinues his story once he is a free man-9 This matters because it shows how Frederick Douglass had such an impact on the anti-slavery movement. Primary and <https://assignbuster.com/life-of-a-slave-essay/>

secondary sources help students really understand what happened in history by having detailed and personal sources, and unmarred condensed sources. Both primary sources and secondary sources are useful and helpful when studying story, but neither is better than the other. Combined, they are a super tool for learning and understanding, not only the Nation's past, but events around the world.

Secondary resources can help one gather a basic understanding on an event, the main who, what, when, where and why. Primary resources then give the reader a more in-depth understanding and knowledge of an event. With primary sources one gets an up close and personal view Of what is Occurring.