

from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*

Directions: For multiple choice questions, circle the letter of the answer. Some questions are one part multiple choice and one part short answer and have been split into “A” and “B” to show they are two parts of the same question. For those that are only short answer (numbers 3, 6-9), please write “A” and “B” in front of the two parts of your answer.

1. Write down five words that you do not know that are in the text. Provide a definition for each word.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

2A. How does Douglass view his mistress?

- a. He thinks she is not very educated
- b. He cares for her greatly
- c. He respects her, even when her personality changes
- d. He can't stand her because of how she treats him

2B. What sentence(s) in paragraph 2 best support that? Write the actual sentence(s).

3. In paragraph 2, Douglass states that his mistress's “lamblike disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness.” Explain what made her personality change so drastically.

4A. What is the main significance of the white boys and their willingness to teach Douglass?

- a. It shows that children don't see social differences in skin color unless they are taught to
- b. It shows how important it was for him to always carry bread with him
- c. It shows how kind children can be
- d. It shows how educated the kids are at a young age

4B. Which sentence in paragraph 4 best illustrates that? Write the actual sentence.

5A. According to the information in paragraph 5, why was discovering *The Columbian Orator* important to Douglass?

- a. Douglass enjoyed reading and could read this book often
- b. Douglass wanted to be free, and reading helped him feel free
- c. Douglass felt that he would always be enslaved, but this text gave him hope
- d. Douglass felt this text presented a similar fate for another enslaved person

5B. Which sentence from paragraph 6 that best supports the idea that *The Columbian Orator* was a key event in Douglass's life.

- a. "These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest."
- b. "What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights."
- c. "In the same book, I met with one of Sheridan's mighty speeches on and in behalf of Catholic emancipation."
- d. "They gave a tongue to interesting thoughts of my own soul, which had frequently flashed through my mind, and died away for want of utterance."

6. Using paragraph 7, write a sentence that seems especially believable/true/trustworthy. What is it about his telling of this section that makes it so believable?

7. Using paragraph 7 again, find the metaphor. Write it down and explain what it means.

8. What are your thoughts and reactions to his writing -- not his experiences, but the way he writes about them? Give clear reasons for your reaction.

9. Define irony. What is ironic about how miserable Douglass says he feels about learning to read?