

DISCLAIMER: Some language in this text reflects the language used during the time period. It is at times inappropriate and not suitable in today's society or at BHS. Some scenes in this text also depict violent and discriminatory behaviors, as well as descriptions of the American slave system. The purpose of reading this text is to learn from our ancestors who were willing to historically and accurately depict the horrors and truths associated with human slavery in the hope that these events are not repeated in the future.

Chapter I

1. Why is Frederick not sure when he was born?
2. What is Frederick's last name at his birth?
3. Why would slaveholders want to keep a slave ignorant of such a simple things as the date of his birth?
4. Who were Frederick's mother and father?
5. Why does Frederick make the point that a slaveholder who has fathered a child is likely to be tougher on that child?
6. Why does Frederick only rarely see his mother?
7. Is Frederick's relationship with his mother typical of other slave children?
8. What is the role of the overseer on the plantation?
9. What is the relationship of the slaveholder to the overseer to the slave on the plantation?
10. What do we learn about Plummer, the overseer?
11. Why does Frederick tell the story of Lloyd's Ned?

Chapter II

1. Who were the family members of Frederick's master, colonel Edward Lloyd?
2. What is the relationship of Colonel Lloyd to Frederick's master?
3. Was there a pecking order among the slaves? Explain.
4. Why was Severe an appropriate name for the overseer?
5. Why does Frederick suggest that slaves sing out of sorrow rather than out of joy?

Chapter III

1. How did Colonel Lloyd keep the slave boys from taking his fruit?
2. Why was it particularly difficult to be the slaves in charge of Colonel Lloyd's horses?
3. What is ironic about Colonel Lloyd's treatment of his horses compared to the treatment of his slaves?
4. What happened to the slave who told Colonel Lloyd the truth about his master?
5. What is a maxim?

Chapter IV

1. Why is Mr. Austin Gore a "first-rate overseer"? What is the irony of this description of him? What is ironic about his name?

2. What reason does Mr. Gore give for killing Demby, the slave?
3. What other examples does Frederick give on his statement "that killing a slave, or any colored person...is not treated as a crime, either by the courts or the community"?

Chapter V

1. What was life like for Frederick on the plantation?
2. Why was Frederick so happy to be leaving the plantation?
3. Why did he want to go to Baltimore?
4. What relationship did his new master have to his old master?
5. Why did Frederick, who was seven or eight, not know the month or year of his sailing?
6. What were Frederick's initial impressions of his new mistress, Mrs. Sophia Auld?

Chapter VI

1. To what does Frederick attribute the kindness of Mrs. Auld?
2. What, according to Frederick, changes her?
3. Why is Mr. Auld angry when he finds that Mrs. Auld is teaching Frederick his letters?
4. Why does the inability to read keep men enslaved according to Frederick and to Mr. Auld?
5. What does Frederick hope to gain by learning how to read?
6. Who teaches Frederick why black men are not taught to read?
7. Why is this lesson so important to him?
8. Why is the life of a city slave so much better than the life of a plantation slave?
9. Why does Frederick relate the story of the slaves, Henrietta and Mary?

Chapter VII

1. How did Mrs. Auld change and why did she change?
2. What plan did Frederick adopt to learn how to read now that Mrs. Hugh was no longer teaching him?
3. What is ironic about this plan?
4. What did Frederick learn from the book, *The Columbian Orator*?
5. How does Master Auld's prediction about Frederick and learning come true?
6. How does Frederick learn the meanings of the words abolition and abolitionist?
7. What do the two Irishmen encourage him to do? Why does he not trust them?
8. How does Frederick learn to write?
9. How does he trick the white boys into teaching him new letters?

Chapter VIII

1. Why was Frederick forced to return to the plantation after the death of his master?
2. How was the value of the master's property determined? How were the slaves valued?

3. Why was the division of property between Mistress Lucretia and Master Andrew so horrifying to the slaves?
4. What happened to Frederick's grandmother after the deaths of Lucretia and Andrew? How does this anecdote help explain the value of the slaves?
5. Who owns Frederick by the end of chapter eight?
6. Why is Frederick forced to leave Baltimore?

Chapter IX

1. Why does Frederick now know the date?
2. Who is Frederick's newest Master?
3. What rule of slaveholding does Master Thomas Auld violate?
4. How did the slaves get food?
5. What, according to Frederick, happens to Master Thomas Auld after his conversion to Christianity? Why?
6. Why does Frederick find irony in the fact that the slaves' Sabbath school is discontinued?
7. Why does Frederick let Master Thomas' horse run away?
8. How does Master Thomas propose to 'break' Frederick?
9. Why is the use of the verb 'to break' ironic?
10. Why was Mr. Covey's reputation for breaking slaves of great value to him?
11. Why does Frederick suggest that Mr. Covey's "pious soul" adds to "his reputation as a 'nigger-breaker'"?

Chapter X

1. Why does Mr. Covey whip Frederick?
2. Why are the slaves so fearful of Mr. Covey? Why does their work go on in his absence?
3. Why is it "never safe to stop a single minute"?
4. What does Frederick mean by "Mr. Covey's forte consisted in his power to deceive"?
5. Why does Mr. Covey buy a slave to use as a breeder?
6. Why does he hire Mr. Samuel Harrison, a married man? What irony does Frederick find in this?
7. How does Mr. Covey succeed in breaking Frederick?
8. How does Frederick succeed in again becoming a man?
9. Why does Frederick go to Master Thomas Auld?
10. Why does he return to Covey? Who convinces him to do so? What does Sandy Jenkins suggest that Frederick do?
11. How does Frederick win the fight with Mr. Covey?
12. Why does Frederick contend that Mr. Covey does not turn him in?

13. What would have happened to Frederick had Mr. Covey turned him in?
14. Why is Frederick's battle with Mr. Covey the climax of the story?
15. How are the holidays used to "disgust the slave with freedom"?
16. Where does Frederick go after leaving Mr. Covey's on January 1, 1834?
17. Who is his new master and how does he treat Frederick?
18. Why does Frederick include the anecdotes about the two religious slave holders, Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Weedon?
19. What is ironic about what the slaveholders want the slaves to do on the Sabbath?
20. What is dangerous about Frederick's confiding of his plans to the Sabbath school slaves?
21. Why did so few slaves escape? Find a quote that provides good explanation of this fact.
22. What is the plan, and what is the purpose of the "protections"?
23. What happened to each of the slaves who attempted to run away?
24. What happens to Frederick when he decides to fight against attackers? What happens to him?
25. What happens to Frederick's first wages?

Chapter XI

1. What are two reasons why Frederick cannot relate his means of escape?
2. What is his opinion of the underground railway? Why?
3. What does Frederick say of Master Thomas? What is he told?
4. Why does Frederick agree to an arrangement with Master Hugh which benefits the Master?
5. How is the agreement dissolved?
6. When and to where does Frederick run away? What is his attitude about it now?
7. How was it possible for Frederick and Anna to marry? Why is there marriage such an important event?
8. Why doesn't Frederick stay in New York?
9. Why did Frederick change his name so much? Who chooses Douglass? Why?
10. What had Douglass believed about the life in the North? Was he correct? Explain.
11. What does Douglass discover about prejudice against color in New Bedford?
12. What work does he find?
13. Why is Douglass at first reluctant to speak out against slavery?

