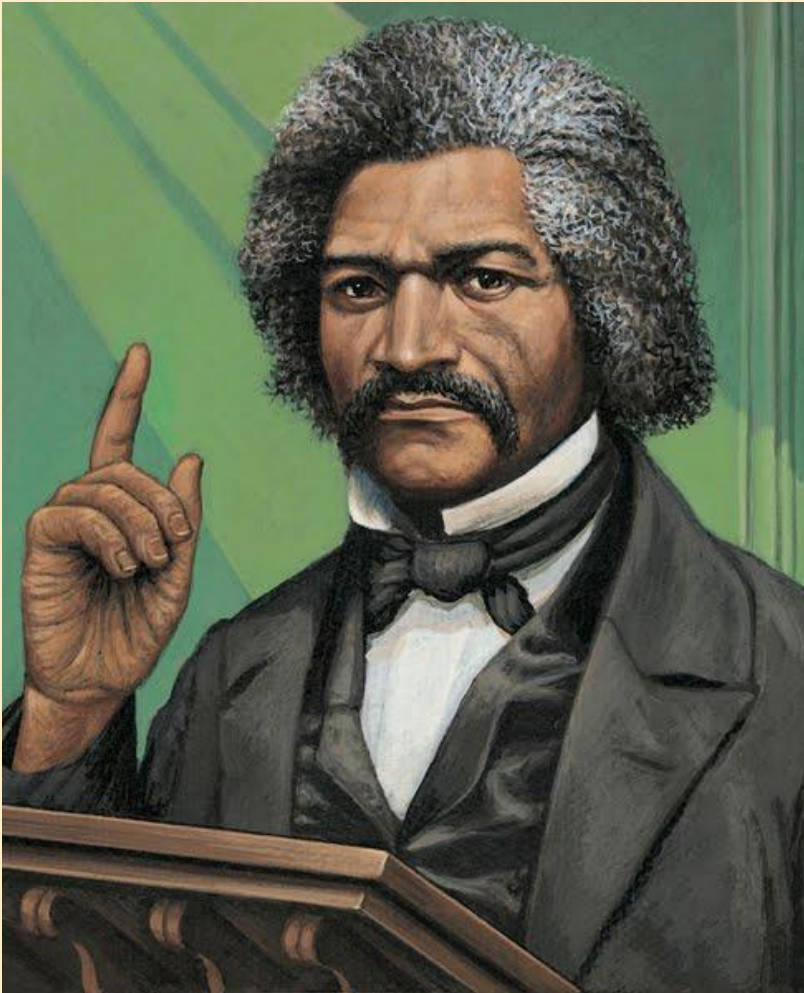




Lecture 1: Background of Fredrick Douglass

NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDRICK DOUGLASS

BACKGROUND



- ✘ Frederick Douglass was born in a slave cabin, in February, 1818, near the town of Easton, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.
- ✘ When he was about eight he was sent to Baltimore to live as a houseboy with Hugh and Sophia Auld, relatives of his master. It was shortly after his arrival that his new mistress taught him the alphabet.
- ✘ When her husband forbade her to continue her instruction, because it was unlawful to teach slaves how to read, Frederick took it upon himself to learn.

BACKGROUND

- ✖ Returning to the Eastern Shore, at approximately the age of fifteen, Douglass became a field hand, and experienced most of the horrifying conditions that plagued slaves during the 270 years of legalized slavery in America.
- ✖ 1838, at the age of twenty, Douglass succeeded in escaping from slavery by impersonating a sailor.



BACKGROUND

- ✘ Douglass became a lecturer for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society.
- ✘ He published his own newspaper, The North Star.
- ✘ Douglass participated in the first women's rights convention at Seneca Falls, in 1848.
- ✘ He became a trusted advisor to President Abraham Lincoln.
- ✘ Douglass was a firm believer in the equality of all people, whether black, female, Native American, or recent immigrant, famously quoted as saying, "I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong."

ASSIGNMENT 1: CHAPTERS 1 & 2

Chapter 1

1. What is Frederick's last name at birth?
2. Why would slaveholders want to keep a slave ignorant of such a simple thing as the date of his birth? (Education)
3. Who were Frederick's mother and father?
4. Why does Frederick make the point that a slaveholder who has fathered a child is likely to be tougher on that child?
5. Why does Frederick only rarely see his mother?
6. Is Frederick's relationship with his mother typical of other slave children?
7. What is the role of the overseer on the plantation?
8. What is the relationship of the slaveholder to the overseer to the slave on the plantation? (History)
9. What do we learn about Plummer, the overseer?
10. Who is Frederick's first master?
11. Why does Frederick tell the story of Lloyd's Ned?

ASSIGNMENT 1: CHAPTERS 1 & 2

Chapter 2

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 slaves? Explain.
4. Why would a slave whose life on a plantation was very bad fear being sold to a slave-trader?
5. Why was Severe an appropriate name for the overseer? (English)
6. Why is it difficult to find copies of slave songs?
7. Why does Frederick suggest that slaves sing out of sorrow rather than out of joy?