

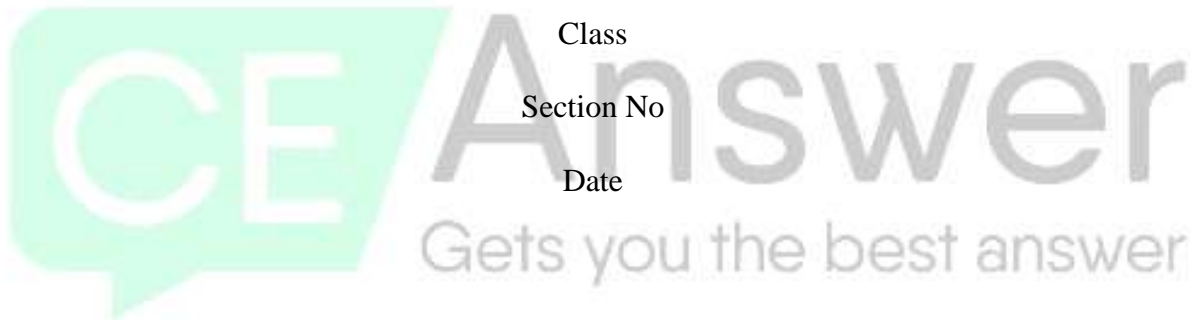
## Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: Questions &amp; Answers

Your Name

Class

Section No

Date



Frederick Douglass Paper**1. A. Where was Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey born?**

Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born near Easton in Talbot County, Maryland.

**B. WHY was he legally a slave?**

As per the intention of the slaveholders and according to the established law, the children of slave women had to live in all cases following the condition of their mothers. As Frederick's mother was a slave, he had to follow the same conditions as his mother.

**2. Prove that Frederick Bailey was a mulatto by identifying his parents?**

Bailey's mother was Harriet Bailey who was the daughter of both colored parents. Though Frederick Bailey doesn't say the name of his father in his narrative, he indicates that he heard the name of his master Captain Antony a white man, connected with his parentage. White men sexually using their female slaves was a common custom in those days. Hence it can be understood that Frederick Bailey was a mulatto.

**3. A. Why was Frederick separated from his mother?**

Frederick was separated from his mother because his mother was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve miles from his place. In the part of Maryland, it was a custom among the slave holders to separate mothers from children. This custom was intended to break the natural bond of affection between a mother and her child.

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**B. Who raised Frederick for his first 5½ years?**

Frederick was raised by his grandmother for the first 5½ years.

**C. What contact did Frederick have with his mother until her death, when he was 7 years old?**

Frederick saw his mother only four or five times in his life, mostly at nights and only for a short duration. He couldn't see his mother at daylight. Douglass says in his narrative that "She was with me in the night. She would lie down with me, and get me to sleep, but long before I waked she was gone". (Douglass, F). She died when Douglass was about seven years old. Until her death, he had very little communication with her and so he was hardly moved by her death.

**4. Why were children fathered by their owner "a constant offense to their mistress?"**

Mistresses hated the children fathered by the owners of those slave children. They used to find faults with whatever the children did. Many such wives would suspect if their husbands showed any favors to their mulatto children compared to other black children.

**5. A.1. What does Frederick Bailey say was the (1) monthly allowance of food for slaves on Colonel Lloyd's plantation?**

The monthly allowance of food for the men and women slaves on Colonel Lloyd's plantation was eight pounds of pork, or its equivalent in fish, and one bushel of corn meal.

**A.2. What was the yearly clothing allotment for adult slaves on his plantation?**

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The yearly clothing allotment for adult slaves on Colonel Lloyd's plantation consisted of two coarse linen shirts, one pair of linen trousers, like the shirts, one jacket, one pair of trousers for winter, made of coarse negro cloth, one pair of stockings, and one pair of shoes.

### **B. What clothing did Colonel Lloyd provide for slave children who were not old enough to work in the fields?**

The children did not have shoes, stockings, jackets, or trousers. Their clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts per year.

### **6. A. When Mr. Gore was questioned about killing the slave, Demby, what maxim for overseers did he use to explain his actions? QUOTE REQUIRED.**

The maxim for overseers that Mr. Gore used to explain his actions was "It is better that a dozen slaves should suffer under the lash, than that the overseer should be convicted, in the presence of the slaves, of having been at fault." (Douglass, F).

### **B. How did Gore justify this destruction of Colonel Lloyd's property?**

Mr. Gore justified his action of destructing Colonel Lloyd's property by saying that Demby, the victim slave had become unmanageable. He was setting a dangerous example to the other slaves and if he was left unnoticed, it would have ultimately led to the total rebellion of all rule and order upon the plantation. He argued that if one slave refused to be corrected, and escaped with his life, the other slaves would soon follow the example. Ultimately, the slaves would get freed and the whites would be enslaved.

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**7. When Frederick was sent to a new family in Baltimore, he described his new mistress, Sophia Auld, as “...a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings.” According to Bailey what did slavery do to her heart and disposition? QUOTE REQUIRED**

The kind heart of Mistress Sophia Auld underwent tremendous changes as she began to own a slave. In Frederick’s own words, “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”. (Douglass, F).

**8. A. How long Frederick was held slavery**

Frederick was held as a slave until he escaped himself to New York in 1838. He was held under slavery for about 20 years.

**B. Even though it was illegal, in detail tell 2 ways Frederick Bailey learned to read and 2 ways he later learned to write.**

As he reached Baltimore, his mistress Mrs. Auld taught him A, B, C and as he learned the alphabets, she helped him to learn and spell three or four letter words. Later as she stopped teaching him, he depended on poor white boys in his neighborhood. He approached them at different times and at different places to learn new lessons mostly in return of bread which he used to take with him. Thus he learned to read.

Frederick learned to write the letters L, S, A and F by watching the ship carpenters during their work. He used tell the white boys that he learned to write letters and showed them the letters known to him. Taking his challenge to beat him, the white boys wrote some other letters. He

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learned the letters thus learned by writing them on the board fence, brick wall, and pavement. He then began to copying the Italics in Webster's Spelling Book. Later he used Master Thomas's copy book to write and learn. Thus he succeeded in both writing and reading.

### **9. A. USE A QUOTE to tell what Frederick Bailey believed was his pathway to freedom?**

After overhearing his master's words about the harm of education for both the slave and his master, he understood that education was the way to freedom. In his own words, "I now understood what had been to me a most perplexing difficulty—to wit, the Whiteman's power to enslave the black man. It was a grand achievement, and I prized it highly. From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom". (Douglass, F).

### **B. According to Hugh Auld, how would "learning" ... (1) change a slave in the eyes of the owner? ... (2) Change the way a slave sees himself/herself?**

According to Hugh Auld if a nigger is taught how to read and write, whites can't keep him as a slave anymore as he would be unfit for being a slave. Learning will turn them to be unmanageable and of no value for the master. For the slave himself, learning would do no good and is harmful to him as he would become unhappy and hateful.

### **C. USE A QUOTE from Frederick Bailey to tell why he thought reading was also a curse.**

Frederick said regarding his feelings, "As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. As I writhed under it, I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of

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my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out". (Douglass, F). These words express his feeling of despair and hopelessness to continue as a slave and how he felt learning to read as a curse.

**10. According to Frederick Bailey, in what 3 ways were city slaves better treated than slaves in the country?**

According to Frederick, a city slave is almost a freeman, compared to a country slave. The city slaves enjoy much better food and clothing. Also they are not beaten as bad as the country slaves.

**11. A. When Frederick Bailey became a field hand in 1833, who succeeded in breaking him?**

When Frederick Bailey became a field hand in 1833, Mr. Edward Covey succeeded in breaking him.

**B.1. After 6 months, Frederick got into a fight with this man. In the opinion of each man, WHY did he think he won the fight? (One answer for each man)**

Frederick believed that he won the fight with Mr. Covey as he being a slave defended his master and managed to beat him. The battle and the triumph rekindled his aspiration to freedom, revived sense of his own manhood and recovered his self-confidence. Mr. Covey could have felt as he won the fight because he could manage not to lose his reputation of an excellent overseer and negro-breaker.

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**B.2. How was this fight the turning point in Frederick Bailey's career as a slave?**

The incident of the fight with Mr. Covey made Frederick, self-confident and he was rejuvenated with a new spirit of freedom. He felt as if his cowardice was departed and felt like ready to face any consequences of resistance.

**12. A. Who joined Frederick Bailey in his failed attempt to escape slavery?**

Henry Harris, John Harris, Henry Bailey and Charles Roberts joined Frederick in his failed attempt to escape.

**B. Though it failed, what had been their plan to escape?**

The plan was to get a large canoe belonging to Mr. Hamilton, and upon the Saturday night previous to Easter holidays, paddle directly up the Chesapeake Bay. They planned to turn their canoe adrift, and follow the guidance of the North Star until they pass the limits of Maryland.

**C. How did they obtain passes for this planned escape?**

One week before their planned escape, Frederick wrote several protections for each one of them by his own hand on behalf of their master.

**3. At least 50 white ship-carpenters saw who attacked Frederick while he worked in Gardner's ship-yard. Use a QUOTE from Douglass to tell why these white men refused to testify on Frederick's behalf?**

"Of course, it was impossible to get any white man to volunteer his testimony in my behalf, and against the white young men. Even those who may have sympathized with me were not prepared



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to do this. It required a degree of courage unknown to them to do so; for just at that time, the slightest manifestation of humanity toward a colored person was denounced as abolitionism, and that name subjected its bearer to frightful liabilities". (Douglass, F).

### **14. A. What trade did Bailey learn in Price's Shipyard?**

In Price's Shipyard, Bailey learned calking.

### **B. How much could he earn in this trade?**

Bailey brought his master from six to seven dollars per week and sometimes nine dollars per week. His wages was a dollar and a half a day.

### **C. WHY did Bailey give his earnings to his master at the end of each week?**

Bailey was forced to give his earning to his master by the end of each week because it was the practice of a slaveholder to do so.

### **15. A. IN DETAIL, how did Frederick Bailey escape from Maryland and reach New York City?**

Douglass determined to escape second time when he was hired by Master Thomas. He could get the privilege of hiring his time from Mr. Hughs after Mr. Thomas refused to allow hiring his time. Thus he earned enough money to plan his escape. In his own words, "But I remained firm, and, according to my resolution, on the third day of September, 1838, I left my chains, and succeeded in reaching New York without the slightest interruption of any kind". (Douglass, F).

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**B. IN DETAIL, in both instances, tell where Douglass was and who could have foiled his escape. Tell how he avoids capture each time.**

First time, he secured passes to show if somebody stop them thinking as runaways. First time, he and his friends came to know that there was somebody who acted as an informant for their master. Second time he was cautious in all his steps to avoid capture.

**C. How long was Frederick Douglass a fugitive slave?**

Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery and went to New York City in 1838. He was a fugitive slave until he was freed in 1847.

**D. When and how did Frederick Douglass gain his freedom?**

Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery and went to New York City in 1838. He sailed to England in fear of capture. With the help of his abolitionists friends in England, Douglass was freed from Mr. Thomas Auld by paying \$711.16. In 1847, he returned to America as a free man.

**16. USE A QUOTE from Douglass to explain why, once he had run away successfully, he adopted the motto “Trust no man.”**

Douglass says “The motto which I adopted when I started from slavery was this—”Trust no man!” I saw in every white man an enemy and in almost every colored man cause for distrust”. (Douglass, F). He couldn’t trust any new face because of his previous experiences and he feared capture in the new place.

**17. What was the origin of the name Frederick Bailey adopted after he escaped successfully?**

The name given to Frederick Bailey by his mother was Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey. He later became known as 'Frederick Bailey', 'Stanley' and 'Frederick Johnson' at various stages of his life. As he reached Bedford, he again had to change his name as there were so many Johnsons around there. He gave Mr. Johnson the privilege of choosing him a name. As he was reading the "Lady of the Lake," and at once suggested his name to be "Douglass." thus he began to known as "Frederick Douglass".

**18. A. Southerners defended slavery by saying that it gave heathen African slaves the Opportunity to become Christians. USE A QUOTE from Frederick Douglass to tell what Bailey/Douglass thought of white, southern Christians.**

"I assert most unhesitatingly, that the religion of the south is a mere covering for the most horrid crimes,—a justifier of the most appalling barbarity,—a sanctifier of the most hateful frauds, — and a dark shelter under, which the darkest, foulest, grossest, and most infernal deeds of slaveholders find the strongest protection". (Douglass, F).

**B. People assumed that singing by slaves meant that they were happy. USE A QUOTE by Frederick Douglass that contradicts this idea.**

"Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy. The songs of the slave represent the sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears. At least, such is my experience. I have often sung to drown my sorrow, but seldom to express my

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happiness. Crying for joy, and singing for joy, were alike uncommon to me while in the jaws of slavery”. (Douglass, F).

**19. A. What were 2 different erroneous ideas held by Frederick Bailey about the character and condition of people in the North before he escaped to the North?**

Firstly, Frederick Bailey thought that the northerners were deprived of comforts or luxuries as the non-slave holders in the south. He thought that the northerners lived in poverty that they could not own slaves. He thought that the North was a less developed place with poor people living there. He understood his beliefs were erroneous when he saw the strongest proofs of wealth in the Northern cities. He could also understand that the people were more hardworking and the cities and streets were clean and calm.

**B. Once he reached the North, what did Douglass find the living conditions and the actions of African Americans to be?**

Frederick Douglass could see that the colored people or the African Americans who had escaped from the chains of slavery were leading decent lives there. They lived a comfortable life in their finer houses enjoying the comforts of life even better than the average slaveholders in the South.

**20. When asked in New York City why slaves “don’t rise and throw off the Yoke,” Frederick Douglass said the northerners were “as bad as slaveholders”. Use a QUOTE from Douglass in which he explains why were the 26 states as bad as the South.**

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“The Christianity of America is Christianity, of whose votaries it may be as truly said, as it was of the ancient scribes and Pharisees, “They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. All their works they do for to be seen of men.—They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues” (Douglass, F). This is a quote in which Frederick Douglass reveals the hypocrisy of Americans in practicing their religion. Here he doesn’t show any difference between the attitudes of Southerners and Northerners.

### **21. USE A QUOTE that states, in detail, what did Frederick Douglass say the Fourth of July meant to American slaves?**

When asked about the meaning of 4<sup>th</sup> of July to the slave, Frederick Douglass said “...a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour”. (Douglass, F)

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