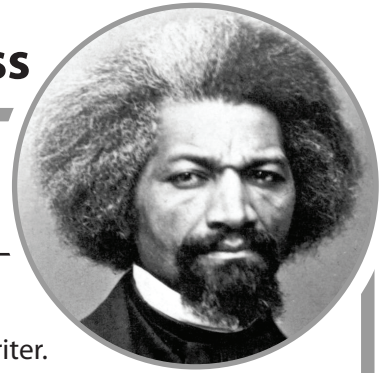


Reading Comprehension: Frederick Douglass



Directions: Read the passage three times to practice fluency. Then, complete the “Show What You Know!” comprehension tasks and the response question.

One of the most famous people in the anti-slavery movement was Frederick Douglass. In his lifetime, he was enslaved, then became a civil rights activist and a writer.

Frederick Douglass was born on a plantation in Maryland. His mother was enslaved, so he was born into slavery. He grew up away from his mother. He moved around to different slave owners. He had a hard childhood.

Children born into slavery were not allowed to go to school. They were not allowed to learn to read and write. One of Frederick’s slave owners had a wife who started to teach him how to read. The slave owner found out, and he made her stop teaching him. He said that Frederick should not know how to read.

Frederick Douglass loved to learn. He wanted to learn more, so he worked on ways to learn to read and write. He spent a lot of time studying and practicing. Soon, he knew how to read and write, and he taught others, too.

As Frederick Douglass got older, he focused more and more on gaining *freedom*. Freedom is the power to do what you want to do. People who were enslaved had a very difficult life. They did not have rights. This meant the owners could treat them in terrible ways. He thought of ways to escape from slavery. Finally, he did it! He pretended to be a sailor and carried papers that showed that he was a free black person. He escaped to New York City. This was very risky.

When Frederick Douglass lived in New York, his life was still not easy. He worked with other people to end slavery. He told stories about when he was enslaved. He wrote stories about his experience. This made other people want to end slavery, too.

Frederick Douglass believed in equal rights. He believed that everyone should be free and treated fairly. He worked hard to help make things better for people.

Show What You know!

- Use a yellow crayon or colored pencil to highlight the reason that Frederick Douglass learned to read and write.
- Use a blue crayon or colored pencil to show the sentence that defines the word *freedom*.
- Use a green crayon or colored pencil to highlight how Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery.

Respond: How did Frederick Douglass help other people? Write one way on the lines.
