

Mesquite ISD
AP English Language and Composition
DC English III
Summer Reading 2019 - 2020

Assignment One: *The Narrative in the Life of Frederick Douglass – An American Slave* by Frederick Douglass

Your summer reading requires that you read Frederick Douglass's autobiography *The Narrative in the Life of Frederick Douglass*. This book is available at bookstores, the local library, or digitally (here is one possible link): http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Douglass/Narrative/Douglass_Narrative.pdf

Part One: Complete the graphic organizer (attached). As you complete the organizer, do the following:

1. Identify at least **THREE** major claims/arguments made by Douglass. A "claim" is similar to the main idea; it is the author's point-of-view, belief, or opinion about the topic. **Example: Civil disobedience leads to social progress. Only by disobeying unjust laws can society grow and develop into a more humane and equal community.**
2. Include (3) pieces of supporting evidence from the autobiography for each claim. Be sure to include page numbers.
3. For the evidence analysis column, briefly explain the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the evidence. Does it support his/her claim? Why or why not?
4. For the personal position, write your opinion about the topic.
5. List two – three experiences, observations, historical examples that support **your opinion**.

Complex Sentences

In order to develop your skill for both expressing a position and articulating your reason for having that position, practice stating your idea in a complex sentence. What makes a sentence complex is the presence of both an independent clause (a full statement that can stand on its own as a complete sentence) and a subordinate clause (a modifying component which is connected to the idea in the independent clause but is not a complete thought and cannot stand on its own). For the purpose of this exercise, you will be crafting sentences in response to the quotations you have chosen. Follow this format:

Subordinate clause (reason/support/concession) + , + your position.

Begin your subordinate clause with a subordinating conjunction – (e.g. **although, while, because, since**).

In your independent clause, avoid saying "I think that" or "I agree/disagree" or "The author is right/wrong" when stating your position. Simply *speaking your mind*. "~~I agree that~~ smooth peanut butter is better than chunky."

Examples:

- (1) Although there are many excellent high schools across the state of Texas, Mesquite is by far the very best.
- (2) Because Mesquite High School students are driven by an innate desire to succeed, they seldom require external motivation to do their homework.
- (3) While some would argue that MHS is a pressure cooker that promotes detrimental levels of peer-to-peer competition, the opposite is actually true; MHS students are well-adjusted and happy and sleep a minimum of 8 hours a night.
- (4) Since learning is the priority at Mesquite, it is a wise decision for parents to send their children to school here.

Graphic Organizer

Compose a complete and thoughtful sentence expressing the main argument made by the author.	Supporting Textual Evidence – Quote or paraphrase – include page number	Evidence Analysis – describe or explain the quality of the evidence	Write a complex sentence stating your original position . See example complex sentences.	List two to three experiences that support your argument. These can be personal, current event, observations, historical, etc. Include who, what, when, & where.
	1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.			1. 2. 3.

Part Two: Select **FIVE** questions to answer. You must select one question from each category. For your answers to the questions, you will provide textual evidence – direct citation or paraphrase including page numbers. For each response, you should have a minimum of **EIGHT** well-developed sentences, with blended, embedded text and thoughtful, insightful analysis. See example below the questions.

Questions about writing style and language of author. Locate a powerful passage and answer one of the questions:

1. What is the writer's tone? Optimistic? Pessimistic? Cautionary? Look at tone words.
2. Was the language appropriate to the book? Was it more poetic or vernacular? Formal or informal? Did it stand in the way of your appreciation of the story, or enhance your enjoyment of the book? Was there a rhythm to the author's style, or anything else that might be considered unique about it?
3. Was the author fairly descriptive? Was he or she better at describing the concrete or the abstract?
4. Was the author clear about what he or she was trying to say, or were you confused by some of what you read? How did this affect your reading of the book?
5. Can you point to specific passages that struck you personally—as interesting, profound, silly or shallow, incomprehensible, illuminating?
6. What kind of language does the author use? Is it objective and dispassionate? Or passionate and earnest? Is it polemical, sarcastic? Does the language help or undercut the author's premise?

Questions about author's credibility:

7. Are there any cultural, political, or religious references? Do these affect the credibility of the writer?
8. In what ways do the events in the books reveal evidence of the author's worldview? Again, do these affect the credibility of the writer?
9. Have you read much about this topic before? If so, does the author bring something unique to the subject? If not, did this book pique your interest in the subject?
10. Did the author include background and research as part of the book and, if so, did it help your understanding of the subject?
11. Does the author present information in a way that is interesting and insightful, and if so, how does he or she achieve this? If the author is writing on a debatable issue, does he or she give proper consideration to all sides the debate? Does he or she seem to have a bias? How has the book increased your interest in the subject matter?
12. What do you think about the author's research? Was it easy to see where the author got his or her information? Were the sources credible?
13. What evidence does the author give to support the book's ideas? Does he/she use personal observations? Facts? Statistics? Opinions? Historical documents? Scientific research? Quotations from authorities? Is the evidence convincing? Is it relevant? Does it come from authoritative sources? Is the evidence speculative...how speculative?
14. Some authors make assertions, only to walk away from them—without offering explanations. Does the author use such unsupported claims?

Questions about themes, main ideas, social issues:

15. What were some of the major themes of the book? Are they relevant in your life? Did the author effectively develop these themes? If so, how? If not, why not?
16. Was there redemption in the book? For any of the people? Is this important to you when reading a book? Did you think the story was funny, sad, touching, disturbing, moving? Why or why not?
17. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns.
18. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?
19. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
20. What specific themes does the author emphasize throughout the novel? What do you think he or she is trying to get across to the reader?

Questions about effect on reader

21. Has this book changed you—broaden your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

22. *Finally, what else struck you about the book as good or bad? What did you like or dislike about it that we haven't discussed already? Were you glad you read this book? Would you recommend it to a friend? Did this book make you want to read more work by this author?*
23. *Did certain parts of the book make you uncomfortable? If so, why did you feel that way? Did this lead to a new understanding or awareness of some aspect of life that you might not have thought about before?*
24. *How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored...?*
25. *Did you like it more or less than other books you've read? What do you think will be your lasting impression of the book? What will be your most vivid memories of it a year from now? Or will it just leave a vague impression, and what will that be? Or will you not think of it at all in a year's time?*
26. *Did you connect with the subject matter? Did it make you want to read more? Did it make you uncomfortable?*
27. *How does this book relate to your life or experiences?*
28. *What chapter or passage stood out for you or gave you an "a-ha!" moment about the topic?*
29. *Did this book change your perspective — or maybe even your life?*
30. *What did you learn from this book that you didn't know before?*
31. *Would you like to read more about this particular subject? Why?*
32. *What did you find surprising about the facts introduced in this book? How has reading this book changed your opinion of a certain person or topic?*
33. *How does the culture differ from yours? What was most surprising, intriguing, or hard to understand aspect of the book? Have you gained a new perspective—or did the book affirm your prior views?*

Questions about author's purpose

34. *What is the purpose of this book, and who do you believe is the intended audience? Does the book have wide appeal?*
35. *What did you already know about this book's subject before you read this book?*
36. *What new things did you learn? What questions do you still have?*
37. *What else have you read on this topic, and would you recommend these books to others?*
38. *What does the author celebrate or criticize in the culture? I.e., family traditions, economic and political structures, the arts, food, or religion.*
39. *Does the author wish to preserve or reform the culture? If reform, what and how? Either way—by instigating change or by maintaining the status quo—what would be gained or what would be at risk?*
40. *Does the book offer a central idea or premise? What are the problems or issues raised? Are they personal, spiritual, societal, global, political, economic, medical, scientific?*
41. *Do the issues affect your life? How so—directly, on a daily basis, or more generally? Now, or sometime in the future?*
42. *Does the author—or can you—draw implications for the future? Are there long- or short-term consequences to the issues raised in the book? If so, are they positive or negative? Affirming or frightening?*
43. *Does the author—or can you—offer solutions to the issues raised in the book? Who would implement those solutions? How probable is success?*
44. *Does the author make a call to action to readers—individually or collectively? Is that call realistic? Idealistic? Achievable? Would readers be able to affect the desired outcome?*
45. *Are the book's issues controversial? How so? And who is aligned on which sides of the issues? Where do you fall in that line-up?*
46. *Did you learn something new? Did it broaden your perspective about a personal or societal issue? Perhaps about another culture in another country or an ethnic/regional culture in your own country?*

Example to question over theme:

{CLAIM} *In his autobiography, Frederick Douglass suggests that slavery destroys both the slave and the slave-owner. {EVIDENCE} For example, when Douglass leaves Lloyd's plantation and moves to Baltimore, he encounters Mrs. Auld, who "had never had a slave under her control" (28). {ANALYSIS} At first, Douglass is enamoured with Mrs. Auld because as a young slave from the South, he has never encountered a white person as kind and gentle as Mrs. Auld. She treats him as a human, not as a piece of property. {EVIDENCE} Nevertheless because of slavery, Mrs. Auld soon changes, and later Douglass describes her as "a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings"; however, once she falls into the clutches of slavery and "the fatal poison of irresponsible power [is] already in her hands", her "cheerful eye" becomes "red with rage" and her "voice, made all of sweet accord" changes to "one of harsh and horrid discord" (29). {ANALYSIS} In this example, Douglass acknowledges how slavery has the power to corrupt and destroy even the most pure spirit. By owning slaves, people lose their humanity and this has long-reaching consequences, not only to individuals but to society as a whole. By describing this part of his life, Douglass is appealing to his white, educated audience and hopes to bring slavery to an end.*

***Note the in-text citation is simply the page numbers within parentheses after the quotation marks and before the period.**

EXTRA CREDIT: You have the opportunity to earn extra credit for the summer reading assignment by participating in MISD's Reading Across the World. This provides you with the opportunity to read whatever you want. Here is the information that you will need to register and to participate in earning points and badges for reading:

<https://www.mesquiteisd.org/academics/library-services/mesquite-reads>

For each 25 challenge points you earn, you will receive five points of extra credit up to a total of 20 points. Yes, you can score a 120 for the summer reading.