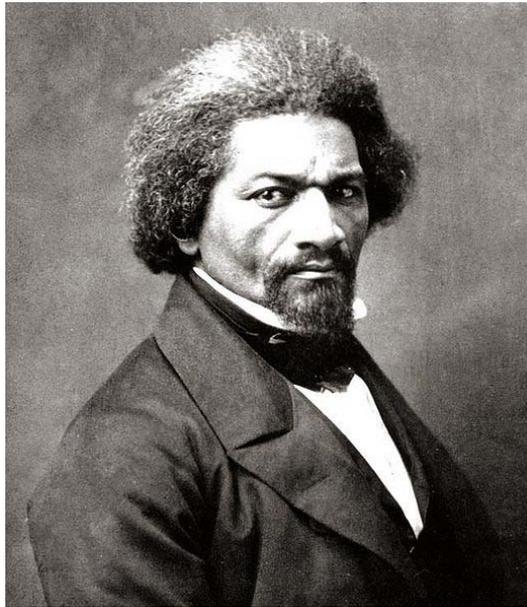


Famous African Americans Frederick Douglass



Sojourner Truth was not the only famous African American abolitionist. Frederick Douglass was another. He was the leading African American speaker of the 1800s. He also met with President Abraham Lincoln in the White House during the Civil War.

Douglass was a former slave from Maryland. His freedom was not easily **obtained**.¹ As a child, his master's wife taught him how to read and write. After that, he knew he wanted to be free. He escaped to New Bedford, Massachusetts.

The first time he spoke was at the Massachusetts Antislavery Society. Douglass simply told the audience what freedom meant to him. Everyone was very impressed by his speech. So the society sent him **on the road**² to lecture about life as a slave.

¹ **obtained:** gained or acquired

² **on the road:** to travel from place to place

Douglass published his autobiography in 1845. After that he fled to England. He wanted to avoid being recognized as a runaway slave in America. Runaway slaves could be arrested. While in England, Douglass continued to speak against slavery. Through the help of his friends, he was able to buy his freedom.

Two years later, Douglass returned to the United States. He created an anti-slavery newspaper. He also aided the Underground Railroad. Eventually, he became an **unofficial**¹ advisor to Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War.

¹ **unofficial:** not officially appointed; not having the job title and not getting paid

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. According to the passage, how did Frederick Douglass get his freedom?
 - a. He became an abolitionist.
 - b. He moved to Massachusetts.
 - c. He moved to England.
 - d. He bought his freedom.

2. Which of these words does **not** describe Douglass?
 - a. abolitionist
 - b. athlete
 - c. speaker
 - d. writer

3. In paragraph two, the pronoun “he” refers to
 - a. Abraham Lincoln.
 - b. Frederick Douglass.
 - c. Douglass’ master’s wife.
 - d. an unknown slave.

4. Douglass went to England to
 - a. avoid arrest.
 - b. tour the great cathedrals.
 - c. get money to buy his freedom.
 - d. help end slavery there.

5. Based on the passage, Douglass created an anti-slavery newspaper to
 - a. tell people about why slavery is right
 - b. tell people about why slavery is wrong
 - c. practice his writing.
 - d. spend more time reading newspapers.

6. How do you think President Lincoln felt about Frederick Douglass? Why?

7. Based on the passage, was Frederick Douglass a good speaker? Why or why not?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

The Massachusetts Antislavery Society was very impressed by his speech, _____ they sent Douglass on the road to lecture about life as a slave.

- a. so
- b. though
- c. but
- d. after

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Douglass fled to England after he published his autobiography because he wanted to avoid being recognized as a runaway slave.

Who? Douglass

What? _____

(to) Where? _____

When? _____

Why? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** impressed: admire or think highly of.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____

Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 560

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: This passage describes the life of Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist in the 1800's. Douglass was a slave who was able to escape, and then wrote an autobiography about his experience. He spent his life speaking and writing against slavery.

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6. How do you think President Lincoln felt about Frederick Douglass? Why?

Suggested answer: President Lincoln liked and admired Frederick Douglass, because he asked him to be his unofficial advisor.

7. Based on the passage, was Frederick Douglass a good speaker? Why or why not?

Suggested answer: Yes, because the passage states that people were impressed with his speech, and then sent him on the road to speak with other people.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

The Massachusetts Antislavery Society was very impressed by his speech, _____ they sent Douglass on the road to lecture about life as a slave.

- a. so
- b. though
- c. but
- d. after

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Douglass fled to England after he published his autobiography because he wanted to avoid being recognized as a runaway slave.

Who? Douglass

What? **fled**

(to) Where? **to England**

When? **after he published his autobiography**

Why? **because he wanted to avoid being recognized as a runaway slave**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** impressed: admire or think highly of.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.