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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

**The Grammar Dog Guide to
Narrative of the Life
of Frederick Douglass
by Frederick Douglass**

**All exercises use sentences from the book.
Includes over 240 multiple choice questions.**

About Grammartdog

Grammartdog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammartdog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammartdog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the book..

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

- ___1. I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it.
- ___2. My father was a white man.
- ___3. He made her get upon the stool, and tied her hands to the hook.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

- ___1. She made her journeys to see me in the night, traveling the whole distance on foot, after the performance of her day's work.
- ___2. He would whip her to make her scream, and whip her to make her hush.
- ___3. Before he commenced whipping Aunt Hester, he took her into the kitchen, and stripped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulders, and back, entirely naked.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

h = hyperbole

- ___1. A representative could not be prouder of his election to a seat in the American Congress, than a slave on one of the out-farms would be of his election to do errands at the Great House Farm.
- ___2. The competitors for this office sought as diligently to please their overseers, as the office-seekers in the political parties seek to please and deceive the people.
- ___3. Every tone was a testimony against slavery, and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the type of allusion in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. history b. education/literacy c. religion d. literature e. physical abuse/torture

- ___1. And if their increase will do no other good, it will do away the force of the argument, that God cursed Ham, and therefore American slavery is right.

- ___2. I have known him to cut and slash the women's heads so horribly, that even master would be enraged at his cruelty, and would threaten to whip him if he did not mind himself.

- ___3. To describe the wealth of Colonel Lloyd would be almost equal to describing the riches of Job.

EXERCISE 14 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 2

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

The hearth is desolate. The children, the unconscious children, who once sang and danced in her presence, are gone. She gropes her way, in the darkness of age, for a drink of water. Instead of the voices of her children, she hears by day the moans of the dove, and by night the screams of the hideous owl. All is gloom. The grave is at the door. And now, when weighed down by the pains and aches of old age, when the head inclines to the feet, when the beginning and ending of human existence meet, and helpless infancy and painful old age combine together – at this time, this most needful time, the time for the exercise of that tenderness and affection which children only can exercise towards a declining parent – my poor old grandmother, the devoted mother of twelve children, is left all alone, in yonder little hut, before a few dim embers. She stands – she sits – she staggers – she falls – she groans – she dies – and there are none of her children or grandchildren present, to wipe from her wrinkled brow the cold sweat of death, or to place beneath the sod her fallen remains. Will not a righteous God visit for these things?
(From Chapter VIII)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 The hearth is desolate. The children, the unconscious children, who once sang and danced in her
- 2 presence, are gone. She gropes her way, in the darkness of age, for a drink of water. Instead of
- 3 the voices of her children, she hears by day the moans of the dove, and by night the screams of
- 4 the hideous owl. All is gloom. The grave is at the door. And now, when weighed down by the
- 5 pains and aches of old age, when the head inclines to the feet, when the beginning and ending of
- 6 human existence meet, and helpless infancy and painful old age combine together – at this time,

SAMPLE EXERCISES - NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

7 this most needful time, the time for the exercise of that tenderness and affection which children
8 only can exercise towards a declining parent – my poor old grandmother, the devoted mother –
9 of twelve children, is left all alone, in yonder little hut, before a few dim embers. She stands –
10 she sits – she staggers – she falls – she groans – she dies – and there are none of her children
11 or grandchildren present, to wipe from her wrinkled brow the cold sweat of death, or to place
12 beneath the sod her fallen remains. Will not a righteous God visit for these things?

- ___ 1. ALL of the following words are part of the pattern of repetition EXCEPT . . .
a. children b. time c. old d. drink
- ___ 2. ALL of the following devices are used to create tone EXCEPT . . .
a. sensory imagery
b. poetic devices
c. allusions
d. punctuation
- ___ 3. ALL of the following descriptions are parallel in function EXCEPT . . .
a. *The hearth is desolate.* (Line 1)
b. *the darkness of age* (Line 2)
c. *ending of human existence* (Lines 5-6)
d. *a declining parent* (Lines 8)