



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

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

About Gramwardog

Gramwardog 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 Gramwardog.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.

Gramwardog'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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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 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

I did not, when a slave, understand the deep meaning of those rude and apparently incoherent songs. I was myself within the circle; so that I neither saw nor heard as those without might see and hear. They told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones loud, long, and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery, and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains. The hearing of those wild notes always depressed my spirit, and filled me with ineffable sadness. I have frequently found myself in tears while hearing them. The mere recurrence to those songs, even now, afflicts me; and while I am writing these lines, an expression of feeling has already found its way down my cheek. To those songs I trace my first glimmering conception of the dehumanizing character of slavery. I can never get rid of that conception. Those songs still follow me, to deepen my hatred of slavery, and quicken my sympathies for my brethren in bonds. If any one wishes to be impressed with the soul-killing effects of slavery, let him go to Colonel Lloyd's plantation, and, on allowance-day, place himself in the deep pine woods, and there let him, in silence, analyze the sounds that shall pass through the chambers of his soul – and if he is not thus impressed, it will only be because “there is no flesh in his obdurate heart.”

I have often been utterly astonished, since I came to the north, to find persons who could speak of the singing, among slaves, as evidence of their contentment and happiness. It is impossible to conceive of a greater mistake. 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 happiness. Crying for joy, and singing for joy, were alike uncommon to me while in the jaws of slavery. The singing of a man cast away upon a desolate island might be as appropriately considered as evidence of contentment and happiness, as the singing of a slave; the songs of the one and of the other are prompted by the same emotion. (From Chapter II)

SAMPLE EXERCISES - NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

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 I did not, when a slave, understand the deep meaning of those rude and apparently incoherent songs.
2 I was myself within the circle; so that I neither saw nor heard as those without might see and hear.
3 They told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones
4 loud, long, and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest
5 anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery, and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains.
6 The hearing of those wild notes always depressed my spirit, and filled me with ineffable sadness. I have
7 frequently found myself in tears while hearing them. The mere recurrence to those songs, even now,
8 afflicts me; and while I am writing these lines, an expression of feeling has already found its way down
9 my cheek. To those songs I trace my first glimmering conception of the dehumanizing character of
10 slavery. I can never get rid of that conception. Those songs still follow me, to deepen my hatred of
11 slavery, and quicken my sympathies for my brethren in bonds. If any one wishes to be impressed
12 with the soul-killing effects of slavery, let him go to Colonel Lloyd's plantation, and, on allowance-day,
13 place himself in the deep pine woods, and there let him, in silence, analyze the sounds that shall pass
14 through the chambers of his soul – and if he is not thus impressed, it will only be because “there is no
15 flesh in his obdurate heart.”
16 I have often been utterly astonished, since I came to the north, to find persons who could speak of the
17 singing, among slaves, as evidence of their contentment and happiness. It is impossible to conceive of a
18 greater mistake. Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy. The songs of the slave represent the
19 sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears. At least,
20 such is my experience. I have often sung to drown my sorrow, but seldom to express my happiness. Crying
21 for joy, and singing for joy, were alike uncommon to me while in the jaws of slavery. The singing of a man
22 cast away upon a desolate island might be as appropriately considered as evidence of contentment and
23 happiness, as the singing of a slave; the songs of the one and of the other are prompted by the same emotion.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

- ___1. The underlined words in Line 8 are an example of . . .
a. assonance b. consonance c. alliteration d. rhyme
- ___2. The use of the word *they* in Lines 3 and 4 is an example of . . .
a. anadiplosis b. antimetabole c. anaphora d. asyndeton
- ___3. Lines 8-9 contain an example of . . .
a. anecdote b. inference c. allegory d. idiom

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