

Lesson Guidance 4	
Grade	8
Unit	2
Selected Text(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave</i> (Chapter 1) • <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (Chapter 1)
Duration	2 Days

Plan with guidance from the [ELA Instructional Expectations Guide](#)

Learning Goal(s)

Examine the purpose and audience for slave narratives by considering the opening pages of two well known slave narratives.

CCSS Alignment

- RI.8.1** Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.8.9** Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
- SL.8.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly
- W.8.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

End of lesson task *Formative assessment*

After reading both Douglass's and Jacob's first chapters, consider how they are alike. How are they different? How does each underscore the injustice of the institution of slavery?

Knowledge Check *What do students need to know in order to access the text?*

Background Knowledge

- Slave Narrative: [slave narrative](#) | [American literature](#) | [Britannica](#)

[\(ELD Support\)](#)

Key Terms

- **Rhetoric:** language designed to persuade or convince
- **Point of View (POV):** the perspective from which the narrative is told
- **First Person Point of View:** the narrator is a character in the story
- **Syntax:** the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language

[\(ELD Support\)](#)



Vocabulary Words

Explicit Instruction (before reading)

- **Impertinent:** not showing proper respect; rude
- **Intimation:** hint
- **Odiusness:** highly offensive

Implicit Instruction (while reading)

- **Soothing:** having a gently calming effect
- **Joist:** a length of timber or steel supporting part of the structure of a building, typically arranged in parallel series to support a floor or ceiling
- **Profane:** not respectful; irreverent

Core Instruction

Text-centered questions and ways students will engage with the text

Teacher Note: Engaging with texts that elevate hard histories is not easy, and we hope that starting each lesson with an affirmation and discussion about the affirmation can help shape the perspective through which to approach this important work. We also encourage you to create your own affirmations with the students as a way to bring Joy into the classroom. Affirmation resource [HERE](#).

Opening Activity:

Consider the two 19th century paintings found [here](#).

1. Instruct students that their “reading” of the images will be in two parts.
 - a. First – they can record only what they see/notice in the paintings. Students cannot at this point read into the painting – they must record only what can be seen.
 - i. For example:
 1. Both paintings show men playing instruments
 2. Many of the people have their mouths open with their teeth showing in what appears to be smiles.
 - b. Secondly – ask students to record the emotions that can be “inferred” from their “reading of the paintings.”
 - i. For example:
 1. Since men are playing instruments and teeth are showing, it would appear that people are dancing and happy.
2. Ask students:
 - a. Based on what you know about the institution of slavery, particularly thinking about what we learned in the previous lesson, do you think these paintings depict the lives of the enslaved accurately?
 - b. Have students view: [James Horton on Slave Narratives](#) Why do you think slave narratives are an important way of countering this false portrait of the lives of the enslaved?
 - c. When reading slave narratives, what are some important considerations to keep in mind?
 - i. In steering this discussion, ask students to connect their thoughts to what was discussed in Lesson Guidance 2 (Stamped Connection).



Supplemental Text: PBS article: [Slave Narratives and Uncle Tom's Cabin \(ELD Support\)](#)

Reading Resources:

Librivox Recording: [Narrative of Frederick Douglass Chapter 1](#): 11:49 minutes.

Sample Slide Deck: [NFD Reading Journal Template: Chapter 1](#)

Reading journals can serve as a way for students to think through the text and capture the important elements of each chapter. (These journals can be tailored to your own classroom/students)

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction:

1. Introduce each word with these student-friendly definitions.
 - a. **Impertinent**: not showing proper respect; rude
 - b. **Intimation**: hint
 - c. **Odiousness**: highly offensive
2. Model how each word can be used in a sentence.
 - a. The **impertinent** young man spoke rudely to the doctor.
 - b. Give me an **intimation** about what you are going to do to solve the problem.
 - c. Her **odious** attitude kept people from liking her.
3. Active practice:
 - a. Would it be accurate to say that you have poor manners if you are **impertinent**?
 - b. Should you give an **intimation** to a friend during a test? Why or why not?
 - c. How is it different to state that something is **odious** as opposed to unlikeable?

Content Knowledge:

- Point of View (POV): the perspective from which the narrative is told
- First Person Point of View: the narrator is a character in the story

Shared Reading:

Teaching Note: Students may need help working through Douglass' language and sentence structure. Point out that the language is archaic and more formal than modern texts.

1. The culminating activity will be to write an message about Douglass's argument against slavery, both his descriptions and his use of rhetorical devices (Lesson Guidance 5). Students will be asked to build on their reading from today's Lesson Guidance 4 to help them understand both Douglass's command of language and his use of the rhetorical device of Logos. Certain questions in each lesson will address the rhetorical devices used in order to continue to build towards this culminating activity.
2. Students may need help working through Douglass' language and sentence structure. Point out that the language is archaic and more formal than modern texts. Examples of guided reading practices are incorporated into the lesson.

Shared Reading: Read Aloud or Audio Book

Page 17 (stop after " 1st paragraph "old.")

Introduce the language features and help students dissect Douglass' language and structures. Have students read and then put into their own words.

"I was born in Tuckahoe, near Hillsborough, and about twelve miles from Easton, in Talbot county, Maryland. I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my



knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. I do not remember to have ever met a slave who could tell of his birthday. They seldom come nearer to it than planting-time, harvest-time, cherry-time, spring-time, or fall-time. A want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood. The white children could tell their ages. I could not tell why I ought to be deprived of the same privilege. I was not allowed to make any inquiries of my master concerning it. He deemed all such inquiries on the part of a slave improper and impertinent, and evidence of a restless spirit. The nearest estimate I can give makes me now between twenty-seven and twenty-eight years of age. I come to this, from hearing my master say, some time during 1835, I was about seventeen years old."

Possible sentences to help students break down the text:

- "I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it."
 - *I don't know how old I am; there are no records.*
- By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant.
 - *Most enslaved people don't know how old they are because most enslavers want to keep it that way.*
- They seldom come nearer to it than planting-time, harvest-time, cherry-time, spring-time, or fall-time.
 - *Most enslaved people can only tell the time of the year they were born, and those times are based on the work that is being done: planting, harvesting, spring or fall.*
- "A want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood."
 - *Not knowing my age made me unhappy even when I was a child.*
- "I come to this, from hearing my master say, some time during 1835, I was about seventeen years old."
 - *I figured out my age because I heard my enslaver say that I was about seventeen years old in 1835.*

Have students silently reread the passage. Then ask them to respond to the following [NFD Reading Journal Template: Chapter 1](#) (Slide #3):

1. After reading the first paragraph, consider why Douglass begins his narrative with the fact that he does not know his age.
2. Douglass states that "it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant." Consider the possible rationale for concealing the ages of enslaved persons. What possible effect or consequence would this have had on the enslaved?

Shared Reading: Read Aloud or Audio Book

Pages 17-19 (stop after "the death of a stranger.")

My mother was named Harriet Bailey. She was the daughter of Isaac and Betsey Bailey, both colored, and quite dark. My mother was of a darker complexion than either my grandmother or grandfather.

My father was a white man. He was admitted to be such by all I ever heard speak of my parentage. The opinion was also whispered that my master was my father; but of the correctness of this opinion, I know nothing; the means of knowing was withheld from



me. My mother and I were separated when I was but an infant—before I knew her as my mother. It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age. Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off, and the child is placed under the care of an old woman, too old for field labor. For what this separation is done, I do not know, unless it be to hinder the development of the child's affection toward its mother, and to blunt and destroy the natural affection of the mother for the child. This is the inevitable result.

I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life; and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve miles from my home. She made her journeys to see me in the night, traveling the whole distance on foot, after the performance of her day's work. She was a field hand, and a whipping is the penalty of not being in the field at sunrise, unless a slave has special permission from his or her master to the contrary—a permission which they seldom get, and one that gives to him that gives it the proud name of being a kind master. I do not recollect of ever seeing my mother by the light of day. She was with me in the night. She would lie down with me, and get me to sleep, but long before I waked she was gone. Very little communication ever took place between us. Death soon ended what little we could have while she lived, and with it her hardships and suffering. She died when I was about seven years old, on one of my master's farms, near Lee's Mill. I was not allowed to be present during her illness, at her death, or burial. She was gone long before I knew any thing about it. Never having enjoyed, to any considerable extent, her soothing presence, her tender and watchful care, I received the tidings of her death with much the same emotions I should have probably felt at the death of a stranger.

3. Have students underline key phrases/passages in the text that define who Douglass is. Students can create a chart of what they have learned about Douglass and what they have learned about Slavery. (Slide #4) For example:

Douglass	Slavery
Doesn't know his age	Enslavers choose to keep the enslaved people ignorant of their age/birth
Was separated from mother as an infant	Enslavers take children away from mothers so that there is no bond between mother and child.

After reading and collecting evidence, have students answer the following questions and chart their responses (this will be referenced in Lesson Guidance 5):

- Douglass provides his maternal ancestry, but notes that he and his mother were separated when he was an infant. Notice how he discusses this separation. Remember that Douglass writes his narrative as an adult, but there is a distinct lack of emotion in his narration. What is the impact of this very factual description on the reader? What might it reveal about Douglass's purpose in writing?
- Douglass adds the narrative of his mother's "four or five" visits. Again, his narrative is very factual. How does this help convey the inhumanity of the institution of slavery?

Shared Reading: Read Aloud or Audio Book

Pages 19-20 (stop after “defend”)

Key passages:

“The whisper that my master was my father, may or may not be true; and, true or false, it is of but little consequence to my purpose whilst the fact remains, in all its glaring odiousness, that slaveholders have ordained, and by law established, that the children of slave women shall in all cases follow the condition of their mothers; and this is done too obviously to administer to their own lusts, and make a gratification of their wicked desires profitable as well as pleasurable”

“such slaves invariably suffer greater hardships, and have more to contend with, than others. They are, in the first place, a constant offence to their mistress.”

“The master is frequently compelled to sell this class of his slaves, out of deference to the feelings of his white wife; and, cruel as the deed may strike any one to be, for a man to sell his own children to human flesh-mongers, it is often the dictate of humanity for him to do so; for, unless he does this, he must not only whip them himself, but must stand by and see one white son tie up his brother, of but few shades darker complexion than himself.”

6. After Douglass tells of his mother's death, he shares his lack of knowledge about his father, but goes into how enslaved children suffer from their “mistresses” resentment and implies that enslaved women are often the subject of their enslaver's lust. How does this section show the lack of humanity of enslavers, both men and women? (Slide #5).

Shared Reading: Read Aloud or Audio Book

Pages 20-22

Key Passages:

“He was a cruel man, hardened by a long life of slave- holding. He would at times seem to take great pleasure in whipping a slave. I have often been awakened at the dawn of day by the most heart-rending shrieks of an own aunt of mine, whom he used to tie up to a joist, and whip upon her naked back till she was literally covered with blood. No words, no tears, no prayers, from his gory victim, seemed to move his iron heart from its bloody purpose. The louder she screamed, the harder he whipped; and where the blood ran fastest, there he whipped longest. He would whip her to make her scream, and whip her to make her hush; and not until overcome by fatigue, would he cease to swing the blood-clotted cowskin. I remember the first time I ever witnessed this horrible exhibition. I was quite a child, but I well remember it. I never shall forget it whilst I remember any thing.”

He had ordered her not to go out evenings, and warned her that she must never let him catch her in company with a young man, who was paying attention to her belonging to Colonel Lloyd. The young man's name was Ned Roberts, generally called Lloyd's Ned. Why master was so careful of her, may be safely left to conjecture. She was a woman of noble form, and of graceful proportions, having very few equals, and fewer superiors, in personal appearance, among the colored or white women of our neighborhood.

“after rolling up his sleeves, he commenced to lay on the heavy cowskin, and soon the warm, red blood (amid heart-rending shrieks from her, and horrid oaths from him) came dripping to the floor. I was so terrified and horror-stricken at the sight, that I hid myself in a closet, and dared not venture out till long after the bloody transaction was over. I expected it would be my turn next. It was all new to me. I had never seen anything like it before. “

Turn and Talk: Have students highlight the portions of the text that stand out to them. Give students the opportunity to turn and talk about their findings. **(Slides #6 & 7).** Ask students to share out.

7. Douglass focuses the first chapter mainly on enslaved women . Why is this an essential part of the narrative?
8. Notice the way in which Douglass describes the overseer’s and the enslaver’s cruelty? What does his lack of emotion and matter of fact recounting in the description convey about them? What does it also reveal about his own state of mind?

[\(ELD Support\)](#)

Move to SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: Incidents in the Life of A Slave Girl (Chapters 1 and 2)

The goal of reading these two chapters of Harriet Jacobs’ work is to provide students with an alternate slave narrative that provides a different perspective (female). Weaving the two texts will be challenging, but it will afford students the opportunity to begin to consider the idea of how who we are and where we come from shapes how we see the world.

Shared Reading:

Pages 131-133 (stop after “The honor of a slaveholder to a slave!”)

Guide students through the reading of the section, asking them to pick out key passages that stand out to them.

Focus for the reading: What does Jacobs reveal about her childhood? How is her narrative different from that of Douglass? How are they the same?

Possible Key Passages:

I WAS born a slave; but I never knew it till six years of happy childhood had passed away. My father was a carpenter, and considered so intelligent and skilful in his trade, that, when buildings out of the common line were to be erected, he was sent for from long distances, to be head workman. On condition of paying his mistress two hundred dollars a year, and supporting himself, he was allowed to work at his trade, and manage his own affairs. His strongest wish was to purchase his children; but, though he several times offered his hard earnings for that purpose, he never succeeded. In complexion my parents were a light shade of brownish yellow, and were termed mulattoes. They lived together in a comfortable home; and, though we were all slaves, I was so fondly shielded that I never dreamed I was a piece of merchandise, trusted to them for safe keeping, and liable to be demanded of them at any moment. I had one brother, William, who was two years younger than myself—a bright, affectionate child. I had also a great treasure in my maternal grandmother, who was a remarkable woman in many respects. She was the daughter of a planter in South Carolina, who, at his death, left her mother and his three children free, with money to go to St. Augustine, where they had relatives. It was during the Revolutionary War; and they were captured



on their passage, carried back, and sold to different purchasers. Such was the story my grandmother used to tell me; but I do not remember all the particulars. She was a little girl when she was captured and sold to the keeper of a large hotel. I have often heard her tell how hard she fared during childhood. But as she grew older she evinced so much intelligence, and was so faithful, that her master and mistress could not help seeing it was for their interest to take care of such a valuable piece of property.

My grandmother remained in her service as a slave; but her children were divided among her master's children. As she had five, Benjamin, the youngest one, was sold, in order that each heir might have an equal portion of dollars and cents. There was so little difference in our ages that he seemed more like my brother than my uncle. He was a bright, handsome lad, nearly white; for he inherited the complexion my grandmother had derived from Anglo-Saxon ancestors. Though only ten years old, seven hundred and twenty dollars were paid for him. His sale was a terrible blow to my grandmother; but she was naturally hopeful, and she went to work with renewed energy, trusting in time to be able to purchase some of her children. She had laid up three hundred dollars, which her mistress one day begged as a loan, promising to pay her soon. The reader probably knows that no promise or writing given to a slave is legally binding; for, according to Southern laws, a slave, being property, can hold no property. When my grandmother lent her hard earnings to her mistress, she trusted solely to her honor. The honor of a slaveholder to a slave!

Small Group Discussion : After reading Jacobs, ask students to discuss their responses to the focus questions and accumulate their findings using a Venn Diagram (Slide #8).

Possible answers:

- *Jacobs begins with her father – Douglass does not know his father*
- *Jacobs “was born a slave, but (I) never knew it till six years of happy childhood had passed away.” Douglass never recounts any happiness in his childhood.*
- *Jacobs description of her ancestry is rooted in her “comfortable” home and relationships with her father and grandmother. Douglass has no real connection to his mother as he was separated from her almost at birth.*
- *They are alike in that they both have white ancestry in their background. Jacobs states that her maternal grandmother was the daughter of a southern planter. Douglass believes his father was his mother’s master.*
- *They were both born into life as enslaved people.*
- *Jacobs emphasizes how both her grandmother and her father wanted to “purchase” their children from their enslavers.*

Next, have students refer back to the initial chapters of Douglass text.

Ask students to reread pages 17-19 (death of a stranger).

1. Ask students to find passages that show distinct differences between Jacobs and Douglass.
2. As they read the passages, ask students to go beyond just the life differences, have them look at the language of the text.
 - a. What do they notice about Jacobs’ writing vs. Douglass?
 - i. Douglass is more matter of fact – he lists names/places
 - ii. Douglass seems disconnected – “it is the common custom” – at times he seems to remove himself from the situation.
 - iii. Jacobs narrative is filled with her connections to her family. She describes her grandmother as intelligent and her father as skilled. Jacobs establishes her family as people first and enslaved people second; whereas Douglass describes his mother

primarily in terms of her reality as an enslaved person.

1. How does each opening impact the reader of the narrative?
3. The last part of this section tells of how grandmother earns money and then lends it to her enslaver.
 - a. What was the author's purpose in telling this story as part of the first chapter? What does it help establish in the reader's mind? What is ironic in this situation?
 - b. Jacobs ends this with "the honor a a slaveholder to a slave." What is the irony here?

[\(ELD Support\)](#)

Shared Reading:

Pages 131-133 (stop after "The honor of a slaveholder to a slave!")

Possible Key Passages:

"my mother was a most faithful servant to her whiter foster sister. On her death-bed her mistress promised that her children should never suffer for any thing; and during her lifetime she kept her word. They all spoke kindly of my dead mother, who had been a slave merely in name, but in nature was noble and womanly. I grieved for her, and my young mind was troubled with the thought who would now take care of me and my little brother. I was told that my home was now to be with her mistress; and I found it a happy one."

"When I was nearly twelve years old, my kind mistress sickened and died."

"After a brief period of suspense, the will of my mistress was read, and we learned that she had bequeathed me to her sister's daughter, a child of five years old. So vanished our hopes. My mistress had taught me the precepts of God's Word: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." But I was her slave, and I suppose she did not recognize me as her neighbor. I would give much to blot out from my memory that one great wrong. As a child, I loved my mistress; and, looking back on the happy days I spent with her, I try to think with less bitterness of this act of injustice. While I was with her, she taught me to read and spell; and for this privilege, which so rarely falls to the lot of a slave, I bless her memory."

"not one of her children escaped the auction block. These God-breathing machines are no more, in the sight of their masters, than the cotton they plant, or the horses they tend."

4. Students should continue to compare and contrast both the events of the two narratives and the style in which they are written.
 - a. Both narratives discuss the inhumanity of the enslavers treatment
 - i. Douglass describes the beatings of his aunt. Jacobs is more subtle and talks about how children/grandchildren are sold or "inherited" but never freed, even when promised.
 - b. Stylistically, Jacobs' tone is more conversational in telling her story. She also expresses her emotions, using terms such as "happy" and "comfortable" and "kindly." Douglass rarely expresses any emotions.
 - c. Jacobs speaks of her "love" for her mistress. Douglass never uses any positive language when discussing his master or situation.

Formative Assessment:

After reading both Douglass's and Jacob's expositions, how are they alike? How are they different? How does each underscore the injustice of slavery? **(Slide #9)**

[\(ELD Support\)](#)

Fluency, Comprehension and Writing Supports

Fluency	Fluency Protocol
Sentence Comprehension	Juicy Sentence <i>She had laid up three hundred dollars, which her mistress one day begged as a loan, promising to pay her soon.</i>
Writing	Pattan Writing Scope and Sequence

Additional Supports

[ELD Practices](#)

Practices to promote Tier 1 access


Key Background knowledge: ELs may need visuals and an audio to build background.


 [How to Get to TrueFlix Via Power Library](#)


Key Terms: Students who can read in their first language may find it useful to use the ELA word to word glossary. [Bilingual Glossaries and Cognates | NYU Steinhardt](#)


 "Understanding Point of View: First Person and Third Person" by Waterf...


Opening Activity, Small Group Discussion Formative Assessment: Some students may find it helpful to use a Venn diagram and comparison sentence frames (see page 3) to help them in the discussion.

 Compare and contrast


 [curr-eld-instruction-academic-language-function-toolkit \(1\).pdf](#)

 [Google Draw Venn Diagram](#)

Introduce:  [Triple Entry Journal Templates](#)

 [Tracking My Understanding of New Concepts](#)

Turn and Talk:  [Think – \(Write\)-Pair-Share](#) Some ELs may need help with having a conversation in a group.  [Academic Conversations Tools.pdf](#)

 [WIDA-Speaking-Rubric-Gr-1-12.pdf](#)

[SpEd Practice](#)

Practices to promote Tier 1 access

- Before engaging with the lesson, activate students' background knowledge about concepts that are critical to the lesson

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage students in conversations surrounding key concepts and other important background knowledge to encourage participation in the lesson ○ Work collaboratively with students to create anchor charts and/or graphic organizers that will be beneficial in completing the lesson ● Pre teach new and unfamiliar vocabulary by engaging students in an explicit vocabulary instruction routine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students can complete a vocabulary log or Word Study activity to increase understanding ● During the lesson, pause and ask standards based questions to check for student understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is a strong inference from this portion of the text? ○ What specific details does the author use to convey this idea or claim? ○ In what paragraph is there evidence that most strongly supports (x)? ○ What is explicitly stated in the text about (X)? ○ Based on the selection, what can be inferred about (X)? ○ Which piece of evidence most strongly supports your analysis of (x)? ○ How does each text present the topic? ○ Why does the information conflict? ○ Does the factual information conflict between the texts? ○ Which text is more effective for its purpose? ○ How does the presentation of facts of the interpretation of information in each text create a contrast between them ? ● Prior to engaging in the formative assessment, host small group discussions surrounding the prompt. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Model for students how to gain information from the text to support ○ Brainstorm ideas with students for task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create thought web or other graphic organizer for students to gather their thoughts/ information ● Prior to engaging in the formative assessment, provide students with an exemplar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post exemplar and allow students to access throughout the completion of the task ● During formative assessment, allow students to use digital writing tools (ie: Google Docs or Microsoft Word, text to speech, etc) to increase engagement ● During formative assessment, provide frequent check-ins and feedback
<u>MTSS Practices</u>	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
Enrichment Practices	Practices to promote Tier 1 access