Name: _____ Date: _____

FREDERICK DOUGLASS



Read the biography of Frederick Douglass and answer the comprehension questions using the passage for reference.

Frederick Douglass (1818 – 1895), born Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey, was an American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. Born into slavery in Talbot County, Maryland, Douglass was separated from his mother, Harriet Bailey, at a young age and raised by his maternal grandmother. Despite the hardships of his early life, he developed a passion for learning.

In 1838, Douglass made a daring escape to freedom, journeying to New York City using the papers of a free Black sailor. He later settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and became a prominent leader in the abolitionist movement. His autobiographies, especially "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave" (1845), played a crucial role in exposing the horrors of slavery.

Douglass's exceptional oratory skills and persuasive writings made him a central figure in the fight against slavery. He advised President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, significantly influencing the decision to allow African Americans to serve in the Union Army and emphasizing the importance of abolition.

Post-Civil War, Douglass continued to fight for civil rights and women's suffrage, holding various public offices. His later years were marked by his role as U.S. Marshal and Minister Resident and Consul General to Haiti. His inadvertent nomination as Vice President on the Equal Rights Party ticket, alongside Victoria Woodhull, further underscores his impact on civil rights movements.

Douglass remains a pivotal figure in American history, symbolizing resilience and the pursuit of justice and equality.

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1 Describe Frederick Douglass's early life and family background.

2 What was Frederick Douglass's role during the Civil War, and how did he influence President Lincoln?

3 Why is Frederick Douglass considered a key figure in American history, and what aspects of his legacy are most significant?

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