

Annotation and summary of Fredrick Douglass's Learning To Read And Write

Some key terms or key ideas I saw in this story were mostly about how Fredrick Douglass wanted a better life or to be free. The story begins with him getting taught to read and write by his master wife first thing they had to do it in secret since slaves weren't supposed to have any knowledge he often had to hide it or do it in private could never be caught for example he said "From this time I was most narrowly watched. If I was in a separate room any considerable length of time, I was sure to be suspected of having a book". He said that "At times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing" he felt that way because now having the knowledge he could understand how unfortunate he was due to him being enslaved he could not use his knowledge or even better it he felt trapped. He felt so trapped he did not want to live like this he would say stuff like "I often found myself regretting my own existence and wishing myself dead". But with that being said he wanted to learn more about slavery and knowing what was going on he said "I was a ready listener" he was interested in knowing what was the abolishment and what it had to do with slavery but had no idea what it was. He said " It was a time before I found what the word meant" he had no clue what it meant but later found that every time slaves did something bad it was taken as " the fruit of abolition". He wanted to figure out what it meant he later got one of his city papers then got a understanding of what it meant and tried to keep up with it "Always drew near when that word was spoken, expecting to hear something of importance to myself and fellow-slaves. But with him being so young he did not want to escape at this time because he thought it would be very dangerous. Instead he found no ways to better his knowledge to better his life even if he was a slave. Well the way he learned to write was the most interesting to me he used the letters of lumber from a ship-yard he saw how the carpenters "wrote the name of the part of the ship for which it was intended on the lumber". He used that as a way of learning the names of the letters he then found his own teachers "After that, when I met with any boy who I knew could write, I would tell them I could write as well as he" and he learned from the little boys. He keep practicing by any means " my copy-book was the board fence, brick wall, and pavement; my pen and ink was a lump of chalk" with using those he learned how to write. He then keep practicing in copy books that little master Thomas would write over he would rewrite what he wrote and learned in a few years how to write. Some questions I have for this story is How did Fredrick Douglass later use his knowledge to become a free man? What kick started his drive to what to read and write? Also how did he pull of reading and writing with out his master knowing? Those are the many questions I had for this story.