

Douglass: Shaping History in the Historical Moment

Assignment: Using Frederick Douglass' writings as your primary sources, you have been asked to demonstrate how Douglass sought to shape history in two historical moments: 1] with his 1845 *Narrative*, part of a larger "war on slavery"; and 2] when the Civil War erupted in 1861. This grid will help you get started with some of the keywords, phrases, and figures of speech you find important or interesting in Douglass's creation of the sense of historical moments. Your essay must use evidence from your own close reading of the texts; it may use material from lectures, a good dictionary, class discussion, Writer's Handbook, or secondary sources. **Method:** Before you start, re-read the assigned texts, underlining keywords or short phrases that seem to signal historical or time-sensitive moments, issues, references, and factual claims. [1] Choose some of the most interesting key phrases referring to slavery or emancipation [2] Paraphrase and identify audience, if important. 3] Briefly identify time frame: present? recent or long-ago past? personal childhood? future? eternal? 4] Why is this particular phrase interesting as part of Douglass's attempt to shape history? Irony? Legal term? Authority of natural law? Reference to force? Gender? Appeal for action? 5] Check Handbook for tips that could help you explain why you think this keyword or key phrase is important. Then draw a line under your work for this keyword, and pick another keyword that may reinforce – or complicate – your understanding of Douglass's representation of how individuals or nations might shape history in a particular historical moment.

Quote <u>one</u> keyword or short phrase (4-5 words maximum) referring to slavery or emancipation	Paraphrase in your own words	How is this description time-sensitive ? Past, present, future?	How might this reference to slavery or emancipation make its appeal for the public to shape history?	How does this key phrase relate to the logic of FD's attempt to shape history?	<u>So what?</u>
Quote exactly from the text; give page #.		Refer to the present (at the time of writing or speaking)? Or describe recent or distant past? Predict the future	Emotional appeal? Authority of speaker as ex-slave, scholar? Past historical or literary examples? Gender? Class? Religion? Metaphor?	Does he use logic words such as if/then? Therefore? Yes/but? Nevertheless? Structures of analogy or counterargument?	How does this time-sensitive key phrase suggest that the public or audience shape history, either through the authority of past examples <u>or</u> the need for change?