



STUDY GUIDE

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: FROM SLAVE TO STATESMAN

KEY TERMS:

revered
Jim Crow

abolitionist
American

liberty
virtue

NOTE-TAKING COLUMN: Complete this section during the video. Include definitions and key terms.

Why did slave owners often make a point of separating families?

How did Mr. Douglass escape from slavery?

Mr. Douglass was fond of saying that freedom was dependent upon which three boxes?

CUE COLUMN: Complete this section after the video.

How did Mr. Douglass become the man that he did?

What were Mr. Douglass' beliefs regarding liberty?

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- In the video, Mr. Sandefur notes that Mr. Douglass, “...believed that the Constitution was fundamentally opposed to slavery. ‘Interpreted as it ought to be interpreted,’ Douglass said, ‘the Constitution is a glorious liberty document.’” Why do you think that Mr. Douglass held this view regarding the Constitution, in terms of slavery? Explain.
- Mr. Sandefur goes on to share with us that, “For Douglass, it was self-evident that black Americans, as citizens, were entitled to full freedom—and full legal protection. At a speech in 1893, when white hecklers began booing him, Douglass set his speech aside and spoke extemporaneously. ‘There is no Negro problem,’ he roared. ‘The problem is whether the American people have honesty enough, loyalty enough, honor enough, patriotism enough, to live up to their own Constitution.’” Why do you think that some people in Mr. Douglass’ time argued that black Americans were not entitled to the same full rights and privileges as granted by the Constitution to any other American? What do you think Mr. Douglass meant when he said ‘live up to their own Constitution?’ Explain.
- Later in the video, Mr. Sandefur explains that Mr. Douglass, “...believed that true liberty would only come for black Americans, as it comes for anyone, when they took full responsibility for their own fate. Ultimately, hard work and education would secure blacks the rights they deserved.” What do you think Mr. Sandefur means by ‘true liberty?’ Why do you think that Mr. Douglass foresaw black Americans working hard and getting an education as the right pathway for securing the rights that they deserved? Explain. Do you think that Mr. Douglass’ hopeful vision has come true? Why or why not?
- Mr. Sandefur points out that Mr. Douglass followed up the thought about black Americans taking responsibility for their own fate by stating, “‘There can be no independence without a large share of self-dependence... This virtue cannot be bestowed. It must be developed from within,’ he declared in his most popular lecture, appropriately titled Self-Made Men.” In simple terms, what exactly do you think Mr. Douglass meant by this passage from his lecture? Explain.
- At the end of the video, Mr. Sandefur concludes that Mr. Douglass, “...had well understood the deep prejudice that existed, but he never accepted it as an inherent part of American culture. ‘My cause,’ he wrote, ‘was and is that of the black man. Not because he is black, but because he is a man.’” Why do you think that Mr. Douglass had such a mature and wise outlook regarding prejudice- having never ‘accepted it as an inherent part of American culture?’ Explain. What do you think Mr. Douglass meant by the last part of his statement? Do you think that prejudice and/or racism is an inherent part of American culture? Why or why not?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: Briana Williams

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Single Mom Graduates From Harvard Law School With Daughter In Her Arms,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Who is Briana Williams, and what did she do? Why and when did she request an epidural? Who does Miss Williams credit with inspiring her to reach her dream? What subject is Miss Williams’ undergraduate degree in? What words of encouragement did Miss Williams’ father give to her? What title did Miss Williams hold in her third year of law school? How did Miss Williams approach choosing her courses? What does Miss Williams do now?
- What meaningful insights could one take away from Miss Williams’ story? Do you think that Miss Williams could be an inspiration to other single mothers? Why or why not? Do you think that Frederick Douglass would consider Miss Williams to be a ‘self-made’ person? Why or why not? Do you think that Miss Williams represents at least a part of what Frederick Douglass was working to achieve for black Americans? Why or why not?
- What do you think Mr. Douglass would say about the overall state of black Americans today? Explain. Do you think that Mr. Douglass would view the fact that Americans twice voted for and elected Barak Obama to be the President of the United States as an example of black Americans having secured the rights they deserved through hard work and education? Why or why not?



QUIZ

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: FROM SLAVE TO STATESMAN

1. Having been born a slave, Frederick Douglass _____.
 - a. never knew the exact date of his birth
 - b. never knew his father
 - c. never saw his mother after the age of seven
 - d. All of the above.

2. How did Mr. Douglass make his escape from slavery in 1838?
 - a. by beating up his master and running away with a group of escapees
 - b. by saving money and paying a guide to take him along the underground railroad
 - c. by slipping into the north disguised as a U.S. Navy sailor
 - d. None of the above.

3. Frederick Douglass believed that the Constitution was fundamentally opposed to slavery.
 - a. True
 - b. False

4. Frederick Douglass was fond of saying that freedom depended on _____.
 - a. the ballot box
 - b. the jury box
 - c. the cartridge box
 - d. All of the above.

5. Under what condition did Frederick Douglass believe that true liberty would come for black Americans?
 - a. Only when all Jim Crow laws were abolished.
 - b. Only when they took full responsibility for their own fate.
 - c. Only when a black president was elected.
 - d. None of the above.



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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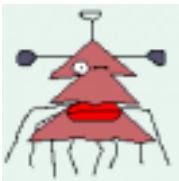
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https://www.theinbox.me/breaking-news/single-mom-graduates-from-harvard-law-school-with-daughter-in-her-arms/?utm_source=Social&utm_medium=MChestnut&utm_campaign=MChestnut

Single Mom Graduates From Harvard Law School With Daughter In Her Arms



by Carl Joseph 2 months ago2 months ago

24-year-old Briana Williams received her Juris Doctor degree from the prestigious Harvard Law School, all while single-handedly raising her daughter Evelyn. By her Instagram account, Brianna Williams seems as if she has it all. She's beautiful, stylish, well-traveled, and she's the mom of an adorable little girl named Evelyn.

Williams is also a hard-working, smart, financially savvy, single mother graduate of Harvard Law School.



A few months ago, she carried her baby daughter across the stage as she accepted her Juris Doctor degree from one of the most prestigious law schools in the world.

In an emotional post, Williams explained the unusual struggles she faced during her pregnancy.

“I went into labor in April—during the final exam period. I immediately requested an epidural so that my contractions wouldn’t interfere with my Family Law grade. And, with tears in my eyes, I finished it.

This ‘biting the bullet’ experience is quite quintessential of my time at Harvard.”



After the birth of Evelyn, Williams challenges only got bigger.

“To say that my last year of law school, with a newborn, and as a single mom was a challenge would be an understatement. Some days I was so mentally and emotionally fatigued that I did not leave my bed.”

“I struggled with reliable childcare,” she admitted. “Evie attended classes often.”

Sometimes her self-confidence wavered.



“So I’m going, to be honest with you guys...I didn’t think I could do it. I did not think that, at 24 years old, as a single mom, I would be able to get through one of the most intellectually rigorous and challenging positions of my life. It was hard. It hurt.”

Williams credits her daughter for the inspiration to reach her dream.



“Evelyn—they said that because of you I wouldn’t be able to do this. Just know that I did this BECAUSE OF YOU. Thank you for giving me the strength and courage to be invincible. Let’s keep beating all their odds, baby.”

Calling herself a small-town girl from Atlanta, Williams was the first in her family to graduate from college. She attended and graduated from Saint John’s University, magna cum laude, with a degree in Legal Studies. “I went to college with one suitcase and one pair of shoes, holding on to a bible that my older sister had tucked away in my bag.”

Although she was intimidated by all the students who had graduated from other Ivy League schools when she entered Harvard Law School, her father’s words gave her encouragement.

“You got something they don’t get—you’re street smart. You’re book smart AND you’re street smart,” he told her.



She thrived at Harvard Law School and was even the communications director for the Harvard Black Law Students Association in her third year. “I made sure to engage in courses that contextualized the law with my blackness, femininity, and income strata,” she wrote.

This story is so inspiring because it reminds us that having children does not mean life stops or that mothers can’t reach their dreams. Handling an unexpected pregnancy, young and alone, did not slow this badass mother down. Now a Harvard educated lawyer, Williams works in Los Angeles encouraging other young women—as her father encourage her—to reach their own dreams, no matter their circumstances.

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