

Frederick Douglass

Abolitionist

Frederick Douglass was born a slave in Maryland in 1817. His exact birth date is not known. His given name was Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey. His mother was a slave who died when he was around seven years old, and he never knew his white father. He learned to read and write when he was sent to live in Baltimore as a companion to his master's nephew. After several failed attempts to escape slavery, Douglass finally gained freedom in 1838 when he fled to New York and was taken in by David Ruggles, a black abolitionist. During this time, Douglass also married Anna Murray, and they moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts. He also changed his last name to Douglass in order to elude slave hunters. When he lived in New Bedford, Douglass became an admirer of the passionate abolitionist and antislavery newspaper editor, William Lloyd Garrison.

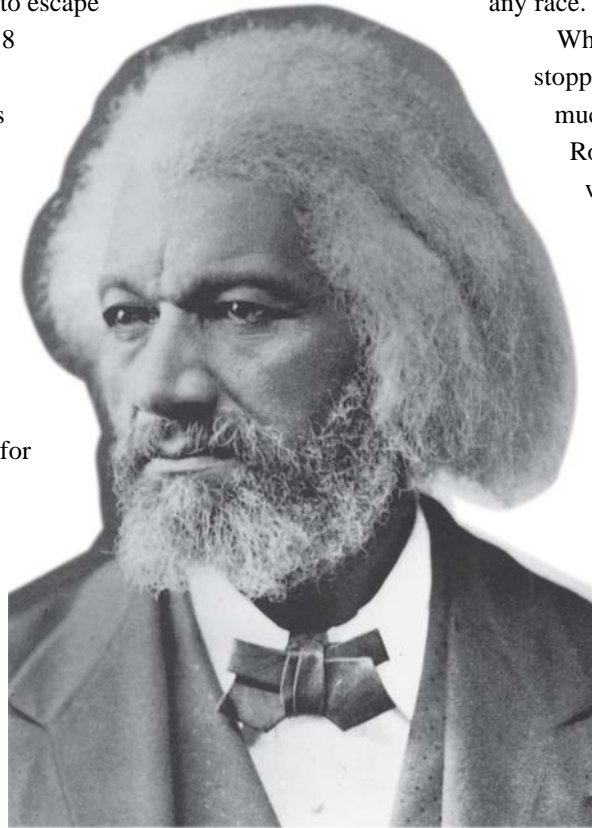
Douglass became an outspoken advocate for racial equality. He spoke passionately for the immediate emancipation of all slaves. His speeches about his life as a former slave stirred many audiences across the United States, Canada, and England. Douglass gained celebrity as a speaker and writer and counted Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth among his many friends.

Later in his life, Douglass was appointed as the diplomatic minister to Haiti.

He also held various government positions under several U.S. presidents. Douglass traveled extensively and spoke publicly throughout the world, earning increasing respect and admiration over the years. He was particularly interested in the rights of African Americans but did not hesitate to speak out against injustices towards people of any race.

When Douglass stopped traveling so much, he lived in Rochester, New York, where he began publishing a newspaper. He named the newspaper the *North Star*, in reference to the star that runaway slaves often used as a guide towards freedom in the North.

Douglass died in 1895.



Activities

1. Compare and contrast the lives of Frederick Douglass and Marcus Garvey. How did their philosophies about freedom for African Americans differ? How were they similar?
2. Research Douglass's escape from slavery. Where did he escape to?