

Kailey Stark

8 March 2021

Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* Essay Prompt

I believe the reasons that Frederick Douglass wrote his book is because he wanted to show people in the north how bad slavery is, to show how little worth the lives of enslaved people were treated with, and how being a person holding enslaved people actively made your character worse.

While this section of the book isn't written by Frederick Douglass himself, looking at the preface it shows that other abolitionist activists had told him it would be a good idea to express his ideas and his past into a book form, because a lot of people in the north didn't know the conditions enslaved people were subjected to. The author of the preface says that Douglass lived in better conditions than many enslaved people lived in in the south, but that even then Douglass went through hell.

Douglass didn't just want to show those conditions, but also to highlight the lack of value given to the lives of enslaved individuals. The lack of prosecution when someone kills an enslaved person happens multiple times throughout the book, and just highlights the lack of regard given to those who were enslaved.

In Chapter 6, Douglass point talks about getting a new enslaver, Mrs. Auld, who was new to holding enslaved people. He talks about how at first she was nice and radiant as she didn't know the customs of enslavement, and over time she starts to treat her enslaved people like everyone else. Society, as well as her husband, made her a worse person over all in order for her to be a 'better enslaver.'

To wrap this up, Douglass wanted to illustrate how slavery was not only hurting the enslaved people, but also the enslavers. He highlighted these awful conditions to the

people of the north who might not have known just how bad it was in the south.