



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 7: Module 3: Unit 2: Lesson 5**

## **The Storyteller's Toolbox and Excerpt 4 First Read**



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can compare and contrast different media versions of a literary text (written vs. audio vs. film vs. staged, etc.). I can analyze the impact of the techniques unique to each medium. (RL.7.7)  
 I can read grade-level literary texts proficiently and independently. (RL.7.10)  
 I can read above-grade-level texts with scaffolding and support. (RI.7.10)  
 I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases. (L.7.4)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can compare and contrast written and performed versions of *The People Could Fly*.
- I can explain some of the ways a storyteller uses his or her voice and body to bring a story alive.
- I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in an excerpt of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.
- I can reread a complex text to understand it more deeply.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Independent reading check-in (optional)



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Opening<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Independent Reading Check-in (10 minutes)</li></ol></li><li>2. Work Time<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Learning the Tools of a Storyteller (15 minutes)</li><li>B. Excerpt 4: First Read (15 minutes)</li></ol></li><li>3. Closing and Assessment<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Reviewing Excerpt 4: Second Read Questions (5 minutes)</li></ol></li><li>4. Homework<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Complete Excerpt 4 second read questions.</li><li>B. Read your independent reading book.</li></ol></li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the Opening of this lesson, students participate in an independent reading check-in. Use whichever structure you have established with your class to do this. Feel free to use the Independent Reading Status Check (see supporting materials) as an entry task or design an entry task that better meets your needs. For ideas about structuring the independent reading check-in, see the stand-alone document on EngageNY.org: Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan. The routine you have or will establish should support students in checking to see if they met their previous goal and setting a new goal, allow students to talk about their books with a peer, and give you a chance to confer with some students about their reading. By bringing their independent reading into class, this routine both motivates students and holds them accountable. Students should have the opportunity to make powerful connections between their independent reading book and what they are doing in class.</li><li>• In this lesson, students learn how a storyteller can bring a story to life. They identify the tools of a storyteller by watching <i>The People Could Fly</i> video, as well as listening to the first read through of Excerpt 4 and using the Storyteller's Toolbox anchor chart as a guide. They will refer to this anchor chart over the next several lessons as they watch stories performed and perform stories themselves.</li><li>• If you do not have a copy of <i>The People Could Fly</i>, you can use whatever materials you used in Unit 1, Lesson 1 to share this story. In several parts of this lesson, students revisit the story they heard in that lesson and then analyze how a storyteller brings that part to life. Rather than reading the text, you can remind students of the events in the story or replay that part of the audio version (one of the options provided in Unit 1, Lesson 1). If you are using an alternative to this text, preview Work Time A carefully to make sure you know which parts of the story you will review with students.</li><li>• Consider sharing brief biographical information about Virginia Hamilton (see supporting materials), who drew on oral tradition to write this powerful story.</li><li>• Following their work on storytelling, students begin to unpack Excerpt 4 from the <i>Narrative</i>, which recounts Douglass's fight with Covey. Students may notice the ways in which this text compares to and contrasts with <i>Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery</i>. Encourage this analysis, as they will be making their own decisions in Unit 3 about how to retell a particular episode from Douglass's life.</li></ul>



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As noted in the Unit 2 Overview, use your professional judgment to determine the pace of your students' movement through this excerpt. Excerpt 4 is lengthy, and students are completing some of the second read questions for homework. If your students are not able to comprehend the text well under these circumstances, consider slowing down. You could take another day or two to work with Excerpt 4 instead of moving on to Excerpt 5 in Lesson 9. If you decide to do this, do not have students complete the second read questions for homework; instead, do this during class in Lesson 6 and adjust subsequent lessons accordingly. When students are working on the text in class, you may wish to work with a small group of struggling students who need additional support.</li><li>• In advance: Preview Excerpt 4 and plan when and how you will use tools from the Storyteller's Toolbox anchor chart during your read-aloud. This should not add too much time to your read-aloud; you might consolidate your use of the tools in the first several paragraphs.</li><li>• In advance: Check the audio for <i>The People Could Fly</i>, as the volume is rather low on the video.</li><li>• Please bear in mind that Youtube, social media video sites, and other website links may incorporate inappropriate content via comment banks and ads. While some lessons include these links as the most efficient means to view content in preparation for the lesson, be sure to preview links, and/or use a filter service, such as <a href="http://www.safeshare.tv">www.safeshare.tv</a>, for actually viewing these links in the classroom.</li><li>• Post: Learning targets.</li></ul>



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>compare, contrast, rekindled, revived, field hand, endurance, scarce, saving-fodder time, faculty, cunning, detection, dregs, breaking, languished, disposition, brute, leisure, stupor, wretched, take my life, intimidated, epoch, fanning wheat, attended with, hopper, immense, hastily, hands, gaining my feet, slat, comply, afforded, unaccountable, fell in with, course to pursue, solemnity, render, rejected, disposed, bade, singular conduct, virtue, curry, engaged, spring, assurance, quailed, strove, rekindled, expiring embers, revived, gratification, triumph, compensation, repelled, resurrection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Reading Status Check (optional; one per student)</li> <li>• <i>The People Could Fly</i> (book; from Unit 1, Lesson 1; for teacher reference; see teaching notes for alternatives)</li> <li>• Virginia Hamilton: Quick Facts (for teacher reference)</li> <li>• Computer</li> <li>• <i>The People Could Fly</i> video (<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0C151dnDqg">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0C151dnDqg</a>)</li> <li>• Document camera</li> <li>• Storyteller’s Toolbox anchor chart (new; teacher-created; see supporting materials)</li> <li>• Storyteller’s Toolbox anchor chart, student version (one per student)</li> <li>• Equity sticks</li> <li>• Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey (one per student and one to display)</li> <li>• Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read (for teacher reference)</li> <li>• Reference Sheet: Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes (from Unit 1, Lesson 7)</li> </ul>

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>A. Independent Reading Check-in (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use this time for an independent reading check-in, using whichever routine you have established with your class. For ideas, see the stand-alone document on EngageNY.org: Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan. Remember that in this time:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Students need time to talk with a peer about their book.</li> <li>– You need a chance to confer with students about their reading (you will confer with a few each time, working your way through the class over several weeks).</li> <li>– Students need to check in to see if they met their last goal and set a new goal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• You may wish to use the <b>Independent Reading Status Check</b> during this part of the lesson.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how you might provide additional support to students whose independent reading check-in suggests they are not successfully engaging with a text.</li> </ul>



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>A. Learning the Tools of a Storyteller (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct students’ attention to the posted learning targets. Ask for a volunteer to read them aloud.</li> <li>• Cold call a student to define the words <i>compare</i> and <i>contrast</i>. Ask:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “How is reading a story similar to and different from listening to that story told by a storyteller?” Accept all reasonable responses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explain that today students will see someone tell parts of a book they read in Unit 1: <i>The People Could Fly</i>. This version of the story is told a little differently from the picture book, but it starts out similarly.</li> <li>• Reread the first several pages of <i>The People Could Fly</i> aloud (through the page that explains how the people from Africa lost their wings in the slave ships).</li> <li>• Consider sharing brief biographical information about Hamilton (see <b>Virginia Hamilton: Quick Facts</b>).</li> <li>• Tell students they will now watch this same part of the story told by a master storyteller, Joslyn Duncan. They should watch Duncan closely to notice what she does with her voice and her body to tell the story.</li> <li>• Use the <b>computer</b> to play the clip of <i>The People Could Fly</i> video (<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0C151dnDqg">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0C151dnDqg</a>) from 0:00 to 1:00 and then pause. (Note: The volume is low on this video. Make sure you have speakers or some way to project the sound.)</li> <li>• Ask students what they noticed, using probing questions, such as:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice Ms. Duncan doing with her voice?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for: “She is singing parts,” and “She is talking louder and softer and with lots of emotion.”           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice Ms. Duncan doing with her body?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for: “She makes her arms into wings and acts out flying. This helps to visually reinforce what’s going on in the story.”           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice Ms. Duncan doing with her face?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for students to notice that it’s highly expressive.</li> <li>• Point out that the storyteller doesn’t just use these tools to be entertaining, but to reinforce meaning and emphasize certain powerful lines. When they are emphasized, they become memorable and linger in the memory of the listener longer. Therefore, the storyteller doesn’t emphasize every line equally, but carefully chooses lines to call attention to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many students will benefit from seeing questions posted on the board or via a document camera, but reveal questions one at a time to keep students focused on the question at hand.</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct students’ attention to the <b>document camera</b>. Post the <b>Storyteller’s Toolbox anchor chart</b> and distribute the <b>Storyteller’s Toolbox anchor chart, student version</b>.</li> <li>• Point out that this chart captures the thinking students just did about how a storyteller uses her voice and body to bring a story alive. It has questions students can ask themselves about why a storyteller does what she does, and also a reminder of why a storyteller might do these things (at the bottom).</li> <li>• Tell students that now they will practice using the Storyteller’s Toolbox anchor chart to analyze other parts of this video.</li> <li>• Remind students that in <i>The People Could Fly</i>, the overseer whips the young woman (named Sarah in the book and Leticia in the storyteller’s version) and then she rises up and all the people fly away. They will now watch this same part in the storyteller’s version:</li> <li>• Watch <i>The People Could Fly</i> video from 4:00–5:42.</li> <li>• Ask probing questions such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice Ms. Duncan doing with her body?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for: “She is pantomiming the action of being whipped,” “She steps back when she is talking about the slaves that were hanging back and not helping,” and “She lifts her arms and wings.”             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice Ms. Duncan doing with her face?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for students to notice that it’s highly expressive.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Why would this part of the story be emphasized by the storyteller? Why is it important?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for students to say that this is the climax of the story.</li> <li>• Watch the rest of <i>The People Could Fly</i> video from 5:42–6:24.</li> <li>• Ask:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What does Ms. Duncan do with her voice or her body to bring this part of the story to life?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for students to note the tools on the Storyteller Toolbox anchor chart.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What word(s) or phrase(s) echo in your mind from this last clip? How did Ms. Duncan emphasize this word or phrase? Why would she emphasize this?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Listen for students to recognize that the word “freedom” and the phrase “the people could fly” are emphasized.</li> </ul>	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Excerpt 4: First Read (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell students that today they will start a new excerpt from the <i>Narrative</i>: the one that includes Douglass's fight with Covey. Remind them that this event was the focus of <i>Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery</i>, which they read in Lesson 1.</li><li>• Ask students to turn and talk:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "Who are the main characters in this story? What is the conflict?"</li></ul></li><li>• Use the <b>equity sticks</b> to call on several students to share out.</li><li>• Tell them that Excerpt 4, like <i>The Last Day of Slavery</i>, is a powerful story. The author of <i>The Last Day of Slavery</i> based his book on Douglass's <i>Narrative</i>, but he took some license—he did not tell the story exactly as Douglass does. Both are powerful stories, but students will notice differences between them.</li><li>• Display and distribute <b>Excerpt 4 text and questions</b>.</li><li>• Ask students to follow along silently as you read Excerpt 4 aloud.</li><li>• As you read, deliberately use the tools from the Storyteller's Toolbox anchor chart. Pause to ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "What did you notice about my voice or my body? What did I do?"</li></ul></li><li>• As students answer, point to the correct part of the Storyteller's Toolbox anchor chart and push them to explain how the choice you made as a storyteller added to the meaning or power of the story.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hearing a complex text read slowly, fluently, and without interruption or explanation promotes fluency and comprehension for students: They are hearing a strong reader read the text aloud with accuracy and expression, and are simultaneously looking at and thinking about the words on the printed page. Be sure to set clear expectations that students follow along silently in their heads as you read the text aloud.</li></ul>



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>A. Reviewing Excerpt 4 Second Read Questions (5 minute)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the <b>Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read</b> to model and provide practice in using context clues to figure out unusual meanings of familiar words in the first few paragraphs.</li> <li>• Tell students that their homework is to complete the Excerpt 4 second read questions. Remind them that they will need their <b>Reference Sheet: Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes</b> to do this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher may offer selected, shorter passages to specific groups based on the readiness and needs of the group. This provides an opportunity for students to read a complex text within the seventh-grade-level span, but differentiates the length of the text, not the complexity.</li> </ul>
Homework	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Excerpt 4 second read questions.</li> <li>• Read your independent reading book.</li> </ul>	



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# Grade 7: Module 3: Unit 2: Lesson 5

## Supporting Materials



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Independent Reading Status Check

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Did you meet your independent reading goal for today's check-in?</b>	
<b>If yes, what helped you do that?</b>	
<b>If no, what got in your way? How can I help you?</b>	



**Virginia Hamilton: Quick Facts**  
(For Teacher Reference)

- Virginia Esther Hamilton was born on March 12, 1934, in Yellow Springs, Ohio.
- In 1958, she moved to New York City to follow her dream of becoming a published author.
- Hamilton wrote and published 41 books in many different genres including folktales, mysteries, science fiction, realistic fiction, and biographies.
- Her books have a strong focus on African American memory, tradition, and history.
- Hamilton has won every major award for children's literature.

<http://www.virginiahamilton.com/biography/>

<http://www.biography.com/people/virginia-hamilton-21106647>



Storyteller's Toolbox Anchor Chart

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Voice	Body
<p><b>Tone and volume</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the storyteller's tone reinforce emotion?</li> <li>• Is the storyteller talking loudly? When is the storyteller talking softly?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Facial expression</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the storyteller's face mirroring the emotion behind the story?</li> <li>• Is the storyteller's face helping me picture the character?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Speed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is the storyteller speeding up or slowing down her voice?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hand and body motions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the hand motions mimic or reinforce the words?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Repetition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the storyteller repeating? Why is this an important phrase to remember?</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A storyteller uses these tools in order to:</b>            Reinforce the action of the story            Reinforce or mirror emotion of the characters            Help the listener picture the action</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter 10, Paragraphs 1–3, 5, 6, 10–13

**Background:** When he was 16, Douglass was sent to a new master, Thomas Auld, who owned a plantation in St. Michael’s, Maryland. Auld found Douglass defiant, and rented him out for one year to a nearby farmer, Edward Covey, who had a reputation for “breaking” slaves.

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>1. I had left Master Thomas's house, and went to live with Mr. Covey, on the 1st of January, 1833. I was now, for the first time in my life, a <b>field hand</b>.</p>	<p><b>Field hand</b>—someone who works in the fields on a farm</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>2. I lived with Mr. Covey one year. During the first six months, of that year, <b>scarce</b> a week passed without his whipping me. I was seldom free from a sore back. My awkwardness was almost always his excuse for whipping me. We were worked fully up to the point of <b>endurance</b>. Long before day we were up, our horses fed, and by the first approach of day we were off to the field with our hoes and ploughing teams. Mr. Covey gave us enough to eat, but scarce time to eat it. We were often less than five minutes taking our meals. We were often in the field from the first approach of day till its last lingering ray had left us; and at <b>saving-fodder time</b>, midnight often caught us in the field binding blades.</p>	<p><b>Scarce</b>—barely</p> <p><b>Endurance</b>—the capacity to do something difficult for a long time</p> <p><b>Saving-fodder time</b>—the weeks in the year when they were cutting the hay and storing it for winter</p> <p>1. Why does Douglass say that the slaves were worked up to the point of <i>endurance</i>?</p>	<p>1. What type of figurative language does the phrase “midnight often caught us” use?</p> <p>A. metaphor</p> <p>B. simile</p> <p>C. allusion</p> <p>D. personification</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>3. Covey would be out with us. The way he used to stand it, was this. He would spend the most of his afternoons in bed. He would then come out fresh in the evening, ready to <b>urge us on</b> with his words, example, and frequently <b>with the whip</b>. Mr. Covey was one of the few slaveholders who could and did work with his hands. He was a hard-working man. He knew by himself just what a man or a boy could do. There was no deceiving him. His work went on in his absence almost as well as in his presence; and he had the <b>faculty</b> of making us feel that he was ever present with us. This he did by surprising us. He seldom approached the spot where we were at work openly, if he could do it secretly. He always aimed at taking us by surprise.</p>	<p>2. What does it mean to “urge us on with ... the whip?”</p> <p><b>Faculty—</b></p>	<p>2. Why does Douglass use the word <i>cunning</i> to describe Covey, rather than intelligence or effectiveness? How does that connect to his purpose in telling this story?</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>Such was his <b>cunning</b>, that we used to call him, among ourselves, "the snake." When we were at work in the cornfield, he would sometimes crawl on his hands and knees to avoid <b>detection</b>, and all at once he would rise nearly in our midst, and scream out, "Ha, ha! Come, come! Dash on, dash on!" This being his mode of attack, it was never safe to stop a single minute. His comings were like a thief in the night. He appeared to us as being ever at hand. He was under every tree, behind every stump, in every bush, and at every window, on the plantation.</p>	<p><b>Cunning</b>—</p> <p><b>Detection</b>—</p> <p>3. How did Covey make sure that the slaves were working hard all the time?</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>4. If at any one time of my life more than another, I was made to drink the bitterest <b>dregs</b> of slavery, that time was during the first six months of my stay with Mr. Covey. We were worked in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold; it could never rain, blow, hail, or snow too hard for us to work in the field. Work, work, work, was scarcely more the order of the day than of the night. The longest days were too short for him, and the shortest nights too long for him. I was somewhat unmanageable when I first went there, but a few months of this discipline tamed me. Mr. Covey succeeded in <b>breaking</b> me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit.</p>	<p><b>Dregs</b>—the last, usually not very good tasting, sips of a drink</p> <p><b>Breaking</b>—</p>	<p>“The longest days were too short for him, and the shortest nights too long for him.”</p> <p>3. What is the name for this type of figurative language? What does this sentence mean? How does it help Douglass make his point about Covey?</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect <b>languished</b>, the <b>disposition</b> to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a <b>brute</b>!</p>	<p><b>Languished</b>—did poorly</p> <p>4. The word “<b>disposition</b>” means tendency or frame of mind. What prefix does it use? What root?</p> <p><b>Brute</b>—a beast</p> <p>5. How did working for Covey affect Douglass?</p>	<p>4. Douglass says that the “dark night of slavery closed in on me.” What device from the poet’s toolbox is he using? Why is darkness a powerful image here?</p> <p>a. simile b. metaphor c. personification d. apostrophe</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>5. Sunday was my only <b>leisure</b> time. I spent this in a sort of beast-like <b>stupor</b>, between sleep and wake, under some large tree. At times I would rise up, a flash of energetic freedom would dart through my soul, accompanied with a faint beam of hope, that flickered for a moment, and then vanished. I sank down again, mourning over my <b>wretched</b> condition. I was sometimes prompted to <b>take my life</b>, and that of Covey, but was prevented by a combination of hope and fear. My sufferings on this plantation seem now like a dream rather than a stern reality.</p>	<p><b>Leisure</b>—</p> <p><b>Stupor</b>—</p> <p><b>Wretched</b>—</p> <p><b>Take my life</b>—kill myself</p> <p>6. What did Douglass do on Sundays?</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>6. I have already <b>intimated</b> that my condition was much worse during the first six months of my stay at Mr. Covey’s, than in the last six. The circumstances leading to the change in Mr. Covey’s course toward me form an <b>epoch</b> in my humble history. You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man.</p>	<p><b>Intimated</b>—suggested</p> <p><b>Epoch</b>—important period of time</p>	<p>“You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man.”</p> <p>5. How does this sentence preview the rest of the story? What does Douglass want his audience to pay attention to?</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>7. On one of the hottest days of the month of August 1833, Bill Smith, William Hughes, a slave named Eli, and myself, were engaged in <b>fanning wheat</b>. Hughes was clearing the fanned wheat from before the fan. Eli was turning, Smith was feeding, and I was carrying wheat to the fan. The work was simple, requiring strength rather than intellect; yet, to one entirely unused to such work, it came very hard. About three o'clock of that day, I broke down; my strength failed me; I was seized with a violent aching of the head, <b>attended with</b> extreme dizziness; I trembled in every limb. Finding what was coming, I nerved myself up, feeling it would never do to stop work. I stood as long as I could stagger to the <b>hopper</b> with grain. When I could stand no longer, I fell, and felt as if held down by an <b>immense</b> weight.</p>	<p><b>Fanning wheat</b>—a process of separating the grain part of the wheat from the stalk it grew on, by using a fanning device</p> <p><b>Attended with</b>—accompanied by</p> <p><b>Hopper</b>—the place in the machine where Douglass was loading the wheat</p> <p><b>Immense</b>—</p> <p>7. Why did Douglass stop working?</p>	<p>6. In this paragraph, Douglass describes how terrible he was feeling. List three words or phrases that help create the mood in this paragraph.</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>The fan of course stopped; everyone had his own work to do; and no one could do the work of the other and have his own go on at the same time.</p>		
<p>8. Mr. Covey was at the house, about one hundred yards from the treading-yard where we were fanning. On hearing the fan stop, he left immediately, and came to the spot where we were. He <b>hastily</b> inquired what the matter was. Bill answered that I was sick, and there was no one to bring wheat to the fan. I had by this time crawled away under the side of the post and rail-fence by which the yard was enclosed, hoping to find relief by getting out of the sun. He then asked where I was. He was told by one of the <b>hands</b>.</p>	<p><b>Hastily</b>—quickly <b>Hands</b>—workers</p>	<p>7. Why does Douglass describe the kick Covey gave him as “savage” and not “hard”? How does that contribute to the description of the events?</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>He came to the spot, and, after looking at me awhile, asked me what was the matter. I told him as well as I could, for I scarce had strength to speak. He then gave me a savage kick in the side, and told me to get up. I tried to do so, but fell back in the attempt. He gave me another kick, and again told me to rise. I again tried, and succeeded in <b>gaining my feet</b>; but, stooping to get the tub with which I was feeding the fan, I again staggered and fell. While down in this situation, Mr. Covey took up the hickory <b>slat</b> with which Hughes had been striking off the half-bushel measure, and with it gave me a heavy blow upon the head, making a large wound, and the blood ran freely; and with this again told me to get up. I made no effort to <b>comply</b>, having now made up my mind to let him do his worst.</p>	<p><b>Gaining my feet</b>—standing up</p> <p><b>Slat</b>—piece of wood</p> <p><b>Comply</b>—obey</p> <p>8. What did Covey do to Douglass when he found him in the shade?</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
In a short time after receiving this blow, my head grew better.  Mr. Covey had now left me to my fate.		

***Douglass at this point decided to go to his master (Thomas Auld, who had rented him to Covey for one year) and ask for help. He walked to his master's, but his master sent him back to Covey the next morning.***



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>9. I reached Covey's about nine o'clock; and just as I was getting over the fence that divided Mrs. Kemp's fields from ours, out ran Covey with his cowskin, to give me another whipping. Before he could reach me, I succeeded in getting to the cornfield; and as the corn was very high, it <b>afforded</b> me the means of hiding. He seemed very angry, and searched for me a long time. My behavior was altogether <b>unaccountable</b>. He finally gave up the chase, thinking, I suppose, that I must come home for something to eat; he would give himself no further trouble in looking for me. I spent that day mostly in the woods, having the alternative before me,—to go home and be whipped to death, or stay in the woods and be starved to death.</p>	<p><b>Afforded</b>—</p> <p><b>Unaccountable</b>—unable to be explained</p> <p>9. What problem would Douglass face if he did not return to Covey?</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>10. That night, I <b>fell in with</b> Sandy Jenkins, a slave with whom I was somewhat acquainted. Sandy had a free wife who lived about four miles from Mr. Covey’s; and it being Saturday, he was on his way to see her. I told him my circumstances, and he very kindly invited me to go home with him. I went home with him, and talked this whole matter over, and got his advice as to what <b>course</b> it was best for me <b>to pursue</b>. I found Sandy an old adviser. He told me, with great <b>solemnity</b>, I must go back to Covey; but that before I went, I must go with him into another part of the woods, where there was a certain <i>root</i>, which, if I would take some of it with me, carrying it <i>always on my right side</i>, would <b>render</b> it impossible for Mr. Covey, or any other white man, to whip me.</p>	<p><b>Fell in with</b>—ran into and spent time with</p> <p><b>Course to pursue</b>—plan to follow</p> <p><b>Solemnity</b>—seriousness</p> <p><b>Render</b>—</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>He said he had carried it for years; and since he had done so, he had never received a blow, and never expected to while he carried it. I at first <b>rejected</b> the idea, that the simple carrying of a root in my pocket would have any such effect as he had said, and was not <b>disposed</b> to take it; but Sandy impressed the necessity with much earnestness, telling me it could do no harm, if it did no good. To please him, I at length took the root, and, according to his direction, carried it upon my right side.</p>	<p><b>Rejected—</b></p> <p>10. <b>Disposition</b> (Paragraph 4) is a noun, meaning tendency or frame of mind. <b>Disposed</b> is the verb. What does it mean?</p> <p>11. What does Sandy tell Douglass he should do?</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>11. This was Sunday morning. I immediately started for home; and upon entering the yard gate, out came Mr. Covey on his way to meeting. He spoke to me very kindly, <b>bade</b> me drive the pigs from a lot nearby, and passed on towards the church. Now, this <b>singular conduct</b> of Mr. Covey really made me begin to think that there was something in the ROOT which Sandy had given me; and had it been on any other day than Sunday, I could have attributed the conduct to no other cause than the influence of that root; and as it was, I was half inclined to think the <i>root</i> to be something more than I at first had taken it to be. All went well till Monday morning. On this morning, the <b>virtue</b> of the ROOT was fully tested.</p>	<p><b>Bade</b>—told</p> <p><b>Singular conduct</b>—unusual behavior</p> <p><b>Virtue</b>—power</p> <p>12. How does Covey behave towards Douglass when he first arrives back at the farm?</p>	<p>8. Why does Douglass end the paragraph with the sentence: “On this morning, the virtue of the ROOT was fully tested?”</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>12. Long before daylight, I was called to go and rub, <b>curry</b>, and feed, the horses. I obeyed, and was glad to obey. But whilst thus <b>engaged</b>, whilst in the act of throwing down some blades from the loft, Mr. Covey entered the stable with a long rope; and just as I was half out of the loft, he caught hold of my legs, and was about tying me. As soon as I found what he was up to, I gave a sudden <b>spring</b>, and as I did so, he holding to my legs, I was brought sprawling on the stable floor. Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he</p>	<p><b>Curry</b>—comb and brush</p> <p><b>Engaged</b>—busy</p> <p><b>Spring</b>—jump</p>	<p>9. What details does Douglass provide that portray Covey as a bully and not a fair fighter?</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose. He held on to me, and I to him. My resistance was so entirely unexpected that Covey seemed taken all aback. He trembled like a leaf. This gave me <b>assurance</b>, and I held him uneasy, causing the blood to run where I touched him with the ends of my fingers. Mr. Covey soon called out to Hughes for help. Hughes came, and, while Covey held me, attempted to tie my right hand. While he was in the act of doing so, I watched my chance, and gave him a heavy kick close under the ribs. This kick fairly sickened Hughes, so that he left me in the hands of Mr. Covey.</p>	<p>13. How does the fight between Douglass and Covey start?</p> <p>14. Paraphrase the sentence that shows Douglass's response: "Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose."</p> <p><b>Assurance</b>—confidence</p>	



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>This kick had the effect of not only weakening Hughes, but Covey also. When he saw Hughes bending over with pain, his courage <b>quailed</b>. He asked me if I meant to persist in my resistance. I told him I did, come what might; that he had used me like a brute for six months, and that I was determined to be used so no longer.</p>	<p><b>Quailed</b>—weakened, became less</p>	
<p>13. With that, he <b>strove</b> to drag me to a stick that was lying just out of the stable door. He meant to knock me down. But just as he was leaning over to get the stick, I seized him with both hands by his collar, and brought him by a sudden snatch to the ground. By this time, Bill came. Covey called upon him for assistance. Bill wanted to know what he could do.</p>	<p><b>Strove</b>—</p>	<p>10. Why does Douglass describe Covey as “puffing and blowing at a great rate?”</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>Covey said, “Take hold of him, take hold of him!” Bill said his master hired him out to work, and not to help to whip me; so he left Covey and myself to fight our own battle out. We were at it for nearly two hours. Covey at length let me go, puffing and blowing at a great rate, saying that if I had not resisted, he would not have whipped me half so much. The truth was, that he had not whipped me at all. I considered him as getting entirely the worst end of the bargain; for he had drawn no blood from me, but I had from him. The whole six months afterwards that I spent with Mr. Covey, he never laid the weight of his finger upon me in anger. He would occasionally say he didn't want to get hold of me again. “No,” thought I, “you need not; for you will come off worse than you did before.”</p>	<p>15. What does Bill do that helps Douglass?</p> <p>16. How does the fight end?</p> <p>17. Why doesn't Covey try to whip Douglass again?</p>	<p>10. Why does Douglass describe Covey as “puffing and blowing at a great rate?”</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>14. This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It <b>rekindled</b> the few <b>expiring embers</b> of freedom, and <b>revived</b> within me a sense of my own manhood. It recalled the departed self-confidence, and inspired me again with a determination to be free. The <b>gratification</b> afforded by the <b>triumph</b> was a full <b>compensation</b> for whatever else might follow, even death itself. He only can understand the deep satisfaction which I experienced, who has himself <b>repelled</b> by force the bloody arm of slavery. I felt as I never felt before. It was a glorious <b>resurrection</b>, from the tomb of slavery, to the heaven of freedom. My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place;</p>	<p><b>Rekindled</b>—</p> <p><b>Expiring embers</b>—the last coals of a fire, just going out</p> <p><b>Revived</b>—</p> <p><b>Gratification</b>—pleasure, satisfaction</p> <p><b>Triumph</b>—victory</p> <p><b>Compensation</b>—payment</p> <p><b>Repelled</b>—</p> <p><b>Resurrection</b>—rebirth</p>	<p>11. Why does Douglass refer to the fight as a “resurrection?” To what is he alluding? Why would this appeal to his audience?</p>



Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Text	Second Read Questions	Third Read Questions
<p>and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact. I did not hesitate to let it be known of me, that the white man who expected to succeed in whipping, must also succeed in killing me.</p>	<p>18. Why was the fight with Covey important for Douglass?</p>	<p><i>“I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact.”</i></p> <p>12. What does that mean? How does the rest of the paragraph support it?</p>
<p>15. From this time I was never again what might be called fairly whipped, though I remained a slave four years afterwards. I had several fights, but was never whipped.</p>		

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Boston, Massachusetts: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845. Project Gutenberg. Web.



**Excerpt 4 Text and Questions: The Fight with Covey**  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

**Whole Excerpt**

**PURPOSE:** How does this excerpt support the two positions Douglass held about slavery that are listed below?

1. Slavery is terrible for slaves.
2. Slavery corrupts slave holders.



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

“The Fight with Covey” in *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*, Chapter 10, Paragraphs 1–3, 5, 6, 10–13 (some are shortened; some are divided into several paragraphs)

**Background:** When he was 16, Douglass was sent to a new master, Thomas Auld, who owned a plantation in St. Michael’s, Maryland. Auld found Douglass defiant, and rented him out for one year to a nearby farmer, Edward Covey, who had a reputation for “breaking” slaves.

**Directions for second read: The summary version**

- \* Model how a word can have many different meanings using the word “faculty.”
- \* Students work in pairs to determine the meaning of breaking (Paragraph 3) and debrief.
- \* Students complete the remainder of the questions for homework.
- \* Review in Lesson 6, focusing on questions 3, 5, 9, 13, 14, 16–18, and any vocabulary that was particularly challenging.

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>1. I had left Master Thomas's house, and went to live with Mr. Covey, on the 1st of January, 1833. I was now, for the first time in my life, a <b>field hand</b>.</p>	<p><b>Field hand</b>—someone who works in the fields on a farm</p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>2. I lived with Mr. Covey one year. During the first six months, of that year, <b>scarce</b> a week passed without his whipping me. I was seldom free from a sore back. My awkwardness was almost always his excuse for whipping me. We were worked fully up to the point of <b>endurance</b>. Long before day we were up, our horses fed, and by the first approach of day we were off to the field with our hoes and ploughing teams. Mr. Covey gave us enough to eat, but scarce time to eat it. We were often less than five minutes taking our meals. We were often in the field from the first approach of day till its last lingering ray had left us; and at <b>saving-fodder time</b>, midnight often caught us in the field binding blades.</p>	<p><b>Scarce</b>—<i>barely</i></p> <p><b>Endurance</b>—<i>the capacity to do something difficult for a long time</i></p> <p><b>Saving-fodder time</b>—<i>the weeks in the year when they were cutting the hay and storing it for winter</i></p>	<p>Remind students that as they read this excerpt, they will use context clues to determine the meaning of words in context. Remind them that words often have many meanings, and that meanings often shift over time; they should focus on determining the meaning of the word as Douglass is using it.</p>



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
	<p><b>1. Why does Douglass say that the slaves were worked up to the point of <i>endurance</i>?</b></p> <p>The slaves worked very long hours, with almost no breaks. If they had been worked any harder, they would not have been able to endure it.</p>	<p>Direct students' attention to the word <i>faculty</i> in Paragraph 3 and think aloud about how you would determine its meaning in context, making sure to explain that the definition you know for faculty (a group of teachers or professors at a given school) clearly doesn't fit here, so you are figuring out a different meaning for the word.</p> <p>Direct students to work with a partner to determine the meaning of <i>breaking</i> in Paragraph 3. Circulate to listen in and prompt as needed.</p>



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
		<p>Quickly debrief. If you feel your students need more guided practice, consider asking them to look at ahead at the second sentence of paragraph 5, and ask them which set of context clues would help them figure out the meaning of the word <i>stupor</i>.</p> <p>Choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. tree, rise, freedom</li><li>b. sleep, wake, beast-like</li><li>c. leisure, rise, soul</li></ul> <p>Remind students to continue using these strategies as they complete their homework.</p>



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>3. Covey would be out with us. The way he used to stand it, was this. He would spend the most of his afternoons in bed. He would then come out fresh in the evening, ready to <b>urge us on</b> with his words, example, and frequently <b>with the whip</b>. Mr. Covey was one of the few slaveholders who could and did work with his hands. He was a hard-working man. He knew by himself just what a man or a boy could do. There was no deceiving him. His work went on in his absence almost as well as in his presence; and he had the <b>faculty</b> of making us feel that he was ever present with us. This he did by surprising us. He seldom approached the spot where we were at work openly, if he could do it secretly. He always aimed at taking us by surprise.</p>	<p><b>2. What does it mean to “urge us on with ... the whip?”</b></p> <p>To make the slaves work harder by whipping them.</p> <p><b>Faculty</b>—ability</p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>Such was his <b>cunning</b>, that we used to call him, among ourselves, "the snake." When we were at work in the cornfield, he would sometimes crawl on his hands and knees to avoid <b>detection</b>, and all at once he would rise nearly in our midst, and scream out, "Ha, ha! Come, come! Dash on, dash on!" This being his mode of attack, it was never safe to stop a single minute. His comings were like a thief in the night. He appeared to us as being ever at hand. He was under every tree, behind every stump, in every bush, and at every window, on the plantation.</p>	<p><b>Cunning</b>—cleverness in deceiving other people</p> <p><b>Detection</b>—being seen</p> <p><b>3. How did Covey make sure that the slaves were working hard all the time?</b></p> <p>He snuck around and watched them secretly, then jumped out. They always thought he might be watching, even if they could not see him.</p>	



Excerpt 4 Second Read Close Reading Guide  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>4. If at any one time of my life more than another, I was made to drink the bitterest <b>dregs</b> of slavery, that time was during the first six months of my stay with Mr. Covey. We were worked in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold; it could never rain, blow, hail, or snow too hard for us to work in the field. Work, work, work, was scarcely more the order of the day than of the night. The longest days were too short for him, and the shortest nights too long for him. I was somewhat unmanageable when I first went there, but a few months of this discipline tamed me. Mr. Covey succeeded in <b>breaking</b> me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit.</p>	<p><b>Dregs</b>—<i>the last, usually not very good tasting, sips of a drink</i></p> <p><b>Breaking</b>—crushing his spirit and defiance</p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect <b>languished</b>, the <b>disposition</b> to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a <b>brute</b>!</p>	<p><b>Languished:</b> <i>did poorly</i></p> <p><b>4. The word <i>disposition</i> means tendency or frame of mind. What prefix does it use? What root?</b></p> <p>Prefix: dis Root: pos</p> <p><b>Brute</b>—<i>a beast</i></p> <p><b>5. How did working for Covey affect Douglass?</b></p> <p>It affected him very badly: he stopped reading and thinking and lost hope.</p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>5. Sunday was my only <b>leisure</b> time. I spent this in a sort of beast-like <b>stupor</b>, between sleep and wake, under some large tree. At times I would rise up, a flash of energetic freedom would dart through my soul, accompanied with a faint beam of hope, that flickered for a moment, and then vanished. I sank down again, mourning over my <b>wretched</b> condition. I was sometimes prompted to <b>take my life</b>, and that of Covey, but was prevented by a combination of hope and fear. My sufferings on this plantation seem now like a dream rather than a stern reality.</p>	<p><b>Leisure:</b> Rest</p> <p><b>Stupor:</b> a state of being not very aware of anything</p> <p><b>Wretched:</b> miserable</p> <p><b>Take my life:</b> <i>kill myself</i></p> <p><b>6. What did Douglass do on Sundays?</b></p> <p>He sat and didn't do anything, except when he occasionally had a moment of hope—but those passed quickly.</p>	



Excerpt 4 Second Read Close Reading Guide  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>6. I have already <b>intimated</b> that my condition was much worse during the first six months of my stay at Mr. Covey’s, than in the last six. The circumstances leading to the change in Mr. Covey’s course toward me form an <b>epoch</b> in my humble history. You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man.</p>	<p><b>Intimated</b>—<i>suggested</i></p> <p><b>Epoch</b>—<i>important period of time</i></p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>7. On one of the hottest days of the month of August 1833, Bill Smith, William Hughes, a slave named Eli, and myself, were engaged in <b>fanning wheat</b>. Hughes was clearing the fanned wheat from before the fan. Eli was turning, Smith was feeding, and I was carrying wheat to the fan. The work was simple, requiring strength rather than intellect; yet, to one entirely unused to such work, it came very hard. About three o'clock of that day, I broke down; my strength failed me; I was seized with a violent aching of the head, <b>attended with</b> extreme dizziness; I trembled in every limb. Finding what was coming, I nerved myself up, feeling it would never do to stop work. I stood as long as I could stagger to the <b>hopper</b> with grain.</p>	<p><b>Fanning wheat</b>—<i>a process of separating the grain part of the wheat from the stalk it grew on, by using a fanning device</i></p> <p><b>Attended with</b>—<i>accompanied by</i></p> <p><b>Hopper</b>—<i>the place in the machine where Douglass was loading the wheat</i></p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>When I could stand no longer, I fell, and felt as if held down by an <b>immense</b> weight. The fan of course stopped; everyone had his own work to do; and no one could do the work of the other and have his own go on at the same time.</p>	<p><b>Immense</b>—enormous</p> <p>7. <b>Why did Douglass stop working?</b></p> <p>He was weak and dizzy and he collapsed.</p>	
<p>8. Mr. Covey was at the house, about one hundred yards from the treading-yard where we were fanning. On hearing the fan stop, he left immediately, and came to the spot where we were. He <b>hastily</b> inquired what the matter was. Bill answered that I was sick, and there was no one to bring wheat to the fan. I had by this time crawled away under the side of the post and rail-fence by which the yard was enclosed, hoping to find relief by getting out of the sun. He then asked where I was.</p>	<p><b>Hastily</b>—<i>quickly</i></p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>He was told by one of the <b>hands</b>. He came to the spot, and, after looking at me awhile, asked me what was the matter. I told him as well as I could, for I scarce had strength to speak. He then gave me a savage kick in the side, and told me to get up. I tried to do so, but fell back in the attempt. He gave me another kick, and again told me to rise. I again tried, and succeeded in <b>gaining my feet</b>; but, stooping to get the tub with which I was feeding the fan, I again staggered and fell. While down in this situation, Mr. Covey took up the hickory <b>slat</b> with which Hughes had been striking off the half-bushel measure, and with it gave me a heavy blow upon the head, making a large wound, and the blood ran freely; and with this again told me to get up.</p>	<p><b>Hands</b>—<i>workers</i></p> <p><b>Gaining my feet:</b> — <i>standing up</i></p> <p><b>Slat</b>—<i>piece of wood</i></p> <p><b>Comply</b>—<i>obey</i></p> <p><b>8. What did Covey do to Douglass when he found him in the shade?</b></p> <p>He kicked him, told him to get up, and hit him in the head with a piece of wood.</p>	



Excerpt 4 Close Reading Guide, Second Read  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*  
(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>I made no effort to <b>comply</b>, having now made up my mind to let him do his worst. In a short time after receiving this blow, my head grew better. Mr. Covey had now left me to my fate.</p>		

***Douglass at this point decided to go to his master (Thomas Auld, who had rented him to Covey for one year) and ask for help. He walked to his master's, but his master sent him back to Covey the next morning.***



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(For Teacher Reference)

Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>9. I reached Covey's about nine o'clock; and just as I was getting over the fence that divided Mrs. Kemp's fields from ours, out ran Covey with his cowskin, to give me another whipping. Before he could reach me, I succeeded in getting to the cornfield; and as the corn was very high, it <b>afforded</b> me the means of hiding. He seemed very angry, and searched for me a long time. My behavior was altogether <b>unaccountable</b>. He finally gave up the chase, thinking, I suppose, that I must come home for something to eat; he would give himself no further trouble in looking for me. I spent that day mostly in the woods, having the alternative before me,—to go home and be whipped to death, or stay in the woods and be starved to death.</p>	<p><b>Afforded</b>—provided</p> <p><b>Unaccountable</b>—<i>unable to be explained</i></p> <p><b>9. What problem would Douglass face if he did not return to Covey?</b></p> <p>He would not have anything to eat.</p>	



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<p>10. That night, I <b>fell in with</b> Sandy Jenkins, a slave with whom I was somewhat acquainted. Sandy had a free wife who lived about four miles from Mr. Covey’s; and it being Saturday, he was on his way to see her. I told him my circumstances, and he very kindly invited me to go home with him. I went home with him, and talked this whole matter over, and got his advice as to what <b>course</b> it was best for me <b>to pursue</b>. I found Sandy an old adviser. He told me, with great <b>solemnity</b>, I must go back to Covey; but that before I went, I must go with him into another part of the woods, where there was a certain <i>root</i>, which, if I would take some of it with me, carrying it <i>always on my right side</i>, would <b>render</b> it impossible for Mr. Covey, or any other white man, to whip me.</p>	<p><b>Fell in with</b>—<i>ran into and spent time with</i></p> <p><b>Course to pursue</b>—<i>plan to follow</i></p> <p><b>Solemnity</b>—<i>seriousness</i></p> <p><b>Render</b>—<i>make</i></p>	



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<p>He said he had carried it for years; and since he had done so, he had never received a blow, and never expected to while he carried it. I at first <b>rejected</b> the idea, that the simple carrying of a root in my pocket would have any such effect as he had said, and was not <b>disposed</b> to take it; but Sandy impressed the necessity with much earnestness, telling me it could do no harm, if it did no good. To please him, I at length took the root, and, according to his direction, carried it upon my right side.</p>	<p><b>Rejected</b>—said no to</p> <p><b>10. Disposition (Paragraph 4) is a noun, meaning tendency or frame of mind. <i>Disposed</i> is the verb. What does it mean?</b></p> <p>inclined, wanting to</p> <p><b>11. What does Sandy tell Douglass he should do?</b></p> <p>Go back to Covey, but take the root so he would not be beaten.</p>	



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<p>11. This was Sunday morning. I immediately started for home; and upon entering the yard gate, out came Mr. Covey on his way to meeting. He spoke to me very kindly, <b>bade</b> me drive the pigs from a lot nearby, and passed on towards the church. Now, this <b>singular conduct</b> of Mr. Covey really made me begin to think that there was something in the ROOT which Sandy had given me; and had it been on any other day than Sunday, I could have attributed the conduct to no other cause than the influence of that root; and as it was, I was half inclined to think the <i>root</i> to be something more than I at first had taken it to be. All went well till Monday morning. On this morning, the <b>virtue</b> of the ROOT was fully tested.</p>	<p><b>Bade</b>—<i>told</i></p> <p><b>Singular conduct</b>—<i>unusual behavior</i></p> <p><b>Virtue</b>—<i>power</i></p> <p><b>12. How does Covey behave towards Douglass when he first arrives back at the farm?</b></p> <p>He speaks pleasantly to him and tells him to bring the pigs in.</p>	



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Text	Second Read Questions	Teacher Directions
<p>12. Long before daylight, I was called to go and rub, <b>curry</b>, and feed, the horses. I obeyed, and was glad to obey. But whilst thus <b>engaged</b>, whilst in the act of throwing down some blades from the loft, Mr. Covey entered the stable with a long rope; and just as I was half out of the loft, he caught hold of my legs, and was about tying me. As soon as I found what he was up to, I gave a sudden <b>spring</b>, and as I did so, he holding to my legs, I was brought sprawling on the stable floor. Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he</p>	<p><b>Curry</b>—<i>comb and brush</i></p> <p><b>Engaged</b>—<i>busy</i></p> <p><b>Spring</b>—<i>jump</i></p> <p><b>13. How does the fight between Douglass and Covey start?</b></p> <p>Covey tried to tie Douglass up, but Douglass jumped up.</p>	



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<p>pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose. He held on to me, and I to him. My resistance was so entirely unexpected that Covey seemed taken all aback. He trembled like a leaf. This gave me <b>assurance</b>, and I held him uneasy, causing the blood to run where I touched him with the ends of my fingers. Mr. Covey soon called out to Hughes for help. Hughes came, and, while Covey held me, attempted to tie my right hand. While he was in the act of doing so, I watched my chance, and gave him a heavy kick close under the ribs. This kick fairly sickened Hughes, so that he left me in the hands of Mr. Covey.</p>	<p><b>14. Paraphrase the sentence that shows Douglass’s response: “Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose.”</b></p>	



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<p>This kick had the effect of not only weakening Hughes, but Covey also. When he saw Hughes bending over with pain, his courage <b>quailed</b>. He asked me if I meant to persist in my resistance. I told him I did, come what might; that he had used me like a brute for six months, and that I was determined to be used so no longer.</p>	<p>Covey thought that he had me in his control. At that moment, for reasons I can't explain, I decided to fight. I took action by grabbing Covey by the throat and standing up.</p> <p><b>Assurance</b>—confidence</p> <p><b>Quailed</b>—weakened, became less</p>	



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<p>13. With that, he <b>strove</b> to drag me to a stick that was lying just out of the stable door. He meant to knock me down. But just as he was leaning over to get the stick, I seized him with both hands by his collar, and brought him by a sudden snatch to the ground. By this time, Bill came. Covey called upon him for assistance. Bill wanted to know what he could do. Covey said, “Take hold of him, take hold of him!” Bill said his master hired him out to work, and not to help to whip me; so he left Covey and myself to fight our own battle out. We were at it for nearly two hours. Covey at length let me go, puffing and blowing at a great rate, saying that if I had not resisted, he would not have whipped me half so much. The truth was, that he had not whipped me at all.</p>	<p><b>Strove</b>—tried</p> <p><b>15. What does Bill do that helps Douglass?</b></p> <p>He refuses to help Covey hold him.</p> <p><b>16. How does the fight end?</b></p> <p>They fight for two hours and then Covey finally stopped trying to beat him. Douglass was not hurt, but Covey was.</p>	



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<p>I considered him as getting entirely the worst end of the bargain; for he had drawn no blood from me, but I had from him. The whole six months afterwards that I spent with Mr. Covey, he never laid the weight of his finger upon me in anger. He would occasionally say he didn't want to get hold of me again. "No," thought I, "you need not; for you will come off worse than you did before."</p>	<p><b>17. Why doesn't Covey try to whip Douglass again?</b></p> <p>He knew that if he did, Douglass would fight and hurt him.</p>	



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<p>14. This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It <b>rekindled</b> the few <b>expiring embers</b> of freedom, and <b>revived</b> within me a sense of my own manhood. It recalled the departed self-confidence, and inspired me again with a determination to be free. The <b>gratification</b> afforded by the <b>triumph</b> was a full <b>compensation</b> for whatever else might follow, even death itself. He only can understand the deep satisfaction which I experienced, who has himself <b>repelled</b> by force the bloody arm of slavery. I felt as I never felt before. It was a glorious <b>resurrection</b>, from the tomb of slavery, to the heaven of freedom. My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place;</p>	<p><b>Rekindled</b>—lit again</p> <p><b>Expiring embers</b>—<i>the last coals of a fire, just going out</i></p> <p><b>Revived</b>—brought back to life</p> <p><b>Gratification</b>—<i>pleasure, satisfaction</i></p> <p><b>Triumph</b>—<i>victory</i></p> <p><b>Compensation</b>—<i>payment</i></p> <p><b>Repelled</b>—fought off something that was attacking you</p>	



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<p>and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact. I did not hesitate to let it be known of me, that the white man who expected to succeed in whipping, must also succeed in killing me.</p>	<p><b>Resurrection—rebirth</b></p> <p><b>18. Why was the fight with Covey important for Douglass?</b></p> <p>Resisting Covey made Douglass feel free, and the fact that he fought back and won gave him confidence. He decided he wasn't going to let anyone treat him "like a slave" again.</p>	
<p>15. From this time I was never again what might be called fairly whipped, though I remained a slave four years afterwards. I had several fights, but was never whipped.</p>		

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Boston, Massachusetts: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845. Project Gutenberg. Web