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### Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave

Frederick Douglass's narrative touches upon a variety of issues. The writer shares his experiences and manages to raise readers' awareness regarding slavery and the atrocities performed at the expense of slaves. His contribution as an abolitionist is also considered essential and admirable, as his eye-opening story awakened the masses and shed light onto the inhumane treatment of African American people. Douglass, after earning his freedom, became an abolitionist leader, inspiring others through his speeches. In his narrative, he also refers to the influence religion had on people and the way the white supremacists used it as an excuse for their cruel acts. At the beginning of his essay, Douglass introduces us to his family background. He is separated from his mother from a very young age and he speculated that his father was Captain Anthony, who seemingly raped his mother. In his writing he reflects his feelings towards his "parents" and his lack of family. In this essay, I will demonstrate Douglass's potential parental figures, his efforts to gain family affection and whether he succeeded or not.

At the beginning of his narrative, Douglass states that he did not know who his father was and that he did not feel close to his mother. He was raised by his grandmother and

he did not feel sad when his mother died. In my opinion, a potential father figure could be William Freeland. He did not have a close relationship with Freeland, but the rest of his masters were by far crueler. As Douglass says, Freeland was the best master he ever had. He treated slaves nicely and they were well fed. Freeland was the most straightforward and fair of all masters Douglass had. This is why Douglass created the pun Free Land, based on Freeland's kindness. Douglass was also content with the fact that Freeland was not religious. He had horrible experiences with owners who practiced religion, on the name of which they acted with brutality. Regarding Douglass's mother figure, I believe he looked up to Sophia Auld. Despite the fact that she became cruel after her husband's influence, Sophia was very kind to Douglass at the beginning. She was loving, caring and affectionate. He immediately connected with her and felt grateful for her behavior. In addition, she taught him how to read and write and this way he was introduced to the reality of slavery. He at last understood the barbarity imposed on slaves.

Apart from family relationships, Douglass developed a strong bond with his fellow slaves during his stay with Freeland. He valued friendship and he considered them his brothers. When he attempted to escape from the South, he could not leave his friends behind. As a result, he planned fleeing with them. When he was sent away from them he was devastated by what he called "the pain of separation". In my opinion, his fellow slaves were the family he never had. Douglass in general was in search of a relationship. Growing without parents or generally family was very difficult. During his slave life in the South, I believe his substitute for friends was his fellow slaves, since he was feeling a special connection to them. He was looking for company, because he was alone before meeting these people. They bonded, they shared the same love for reading and writing

and they planned their escape together. What is more, after running away to the North he was feeling lonely. He was by himself, without food, home or job and he needed his friends. This was a different kind of loneliness, as he was missing them. Nevertheless, his new substitute for family in the North was his wife, Anna Murray, with whom he created his own family. In general, I consider his search successful. He managed to find the family we was looking for, either through his friends or his wife Anna, and fill in the void.

All in all Douglass's narrative is very powerful in terms of the messages it transmits. It becomes evident that he was searching for a family, for friends. I feel sure he found one in his fellow slaves, with whom he experienced many difficulties. After fleeing, he created a new family with Anna Murray. However, I believe that he felt a closer connection to his friends. This is due to the fact that he mentioned Anna only at the end of the narrative and he did not give many details about their life and his feelings towards her. In general, after all the hardships he succeeded in finding people that he cared for and people who cared for him.