

## **Frederick Douglass Discussion Chapters 1-3**

### **Chapter 1**

1. What kinds of knowledge are kept from slaves, and why does he believe this is important?
2. What does Douglass regret in his memories of his parents? What qualities does he associate with memories of his mother? Why wasn't he able to live with her?
3. What does he believe are some of the worst consequences of masters' siring of children on their slaves?
4. Douglass says, "He was a cruel man, hardened by a long life of slaveholding." Who is Douglass talking about, and what point might he be trying to make?
5. What kinds of cruelty did Douglass witness as a boy? What may be the motivation of the cruel beating of Aunt Hester?

### **Chapter 2**

6. What were the economic circumstances of Douglass's master, Colonel Lloyd? What conditions does he describe on the plantations? How were the slaves housed and clothed? Under what conditions did they work?
7. What explanation does Douglass give for the singing of slaves? What features does he ascribe to the songs he heard? How do you interpret the refrain he reproduces? ("I am going away to the Great House Farm!/ O, yea! O, yea! O!")
8. What seems his attitude toward the desire of other slaves to travel to the Great House Farm?

### **Chapter 3**

9. What happens in the garden of Colonel Lloyd? Is there any symbolism here?
10. How did Col. Lloyd treat his stable keepers? What incident does Douglass narrate to indicate why slaves often gave seemingly contented replies when asked about their treatment?
11. What does Douglass think of the practice he describes of slaves fighting to defend the alleged virtues of their masters? To what psychological impulse does he attribute this?
12. Discuss the prejudice that existed among slaves from different plantations. Examine the irony of this prejudice.