**Narrative of Frederick Douglas**

**Section 1**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: You are on your way to answering the lesson question how does Frederick Douglass use a personal narrative to tell his story? You have just thought about what kind of ideas people can be committed to. Frederick Douglass was committed to ending slavery in the United States. Here, he's pictured with Abraham Lincoln, who also |
| 00:00:21 | opposed slavery. Before you begin to read Douglass's story, you will take a look at his background. |

**Section 2**

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| 00:00:01 | TEACHER: Douglass was born in February 1818 in Maryland. Exactly where is unclear because records were not kept on children born to enslaved people. He was born in a rural part of Maryland. As an infant, he was taken from his mother and placed with his grandmother until the age of six when he went to live on a plantation. He was taken to serve in the main house on a plantation. |
| 00:00:23 | And he rarely saw his grandmother again. He was never sure of the identity of his father. When he was seven or eight, Douglass was sent to serve a family in Baltimore. There, he learned to read and became self educated. At 20 years old, he escaped a cruel owner. And he fled to New York. He got married and moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts. |
| 00:00:43 | He and his wife, Anna, also freed from slavery, had five children. Douglass wrote three personal narratives and became a leader in the abolitionist movement, a movement to end slavery. He wrote the story of his life to address people who doubted his origins, since few enslaved people could read or write. In order to understand Douglass better, let's examine |
| 00:01:06 | life in 19th century America. Many Southern states depended on enslaved laborers. In the early 1800s, few enslaved people could read or write. White men were the only people who were allowed to vote. And slavery was a heated subject between Northern and Southern states. And this was a major factor in the Civil War. |
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**Section 5**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: Since Douglass's narrative is about real events and real places in history, it is necessary that you know the historical context so you can understand what's going on. Historical context is the time in history that events occur. And there are challenges when reading a text with historical context in mind. These challenges include identifying with the author's circumstances or situation. |
| 00:00:25 | Think about a time when you put yourself in someone else's shoes. While we may not be able to identify with the circumstances or situations that Douglass encountered, we could still emphasize or understand how he might have felt. You may also read about places and things that do not exist today. |
| 00:00:43 | You may need to use background information and things you have learned in this lesson about 19th century America. You will also encounter vocabulary from a different era. So it might be very wise to keep a dictionary handy so that you can refer to it when you don't understand a word. You are also going to encounter situations and events that may require a little more research. |
| 00:01:07 | When you think about them, these events happened a long time ago, 160 plus years. This book was published in 1845. So you can only imagine the changes that have taken place. In this next task, look at historical context a little more. |

**Section 7**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: Now, you were able to use your background knowledge to answer a question about historical context. But if you wanted to explain or write about historical context in Douglass' text, you would have to use evidence from the text to support your explanation. Evidence is something that proves that something else exists or is true. In a reading, evidence means words or phrases |
| 00:00:25 | that support an idea. Here is a strategy to find evidence of historical context. I want you to look for evidence that describes what was happening. I want you to identify the time or the place where events are happening. I want you to use your background knowledge to |
| 00:00:42 | support your understanding. And I want you to determine the context of what is happening by asking yourself why or how. Now let's use this strategy on this excerpt from the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. "I was seldom whipped by my old master, and suffered little from anything else than hunger and cold. I suffered much from hunger, but much more from cold. |
| 00:01:07 | In hottest summer and coldest winter, I was kept almost naked-- no shoes, no stockings, no jacket, no trousers, nothing on but a coarse tow linen shirt, reaching only to my knees. I had no bed." Now let's use this strategy. Let's look for evidence that describes what was happening. |
| 00:01:26 | Well, we see that here he is enslaved. And he is suffering from hunger and cold. He's kept almost naked with no shoes, no stockings, no jacket, no trousers. And he has no bed. So the conditions are miserable. About the time or the place where these events are happening, we have a small passage here, don't we? |
| 00:01:53 | So we don't have a lot of details about the time or the place. But we do know wherever this is taking place, it's cold. Now let's use our background knowledge to support our understanding. Well, we have to think back. What have we learned about Frederick Douglass? What about the title of this narrative? |
| 00:02:10 | What about the subject in general? What do we know about that? And then we have to determine the context of what is happening by asking ourselves why this is happening or how this is happening. Well, we realize that Frederick Douglass was enslaved. And while he was enslaved, the conditions were not good. |
| 00:02:32 | He suffered greatly. Now then, I want you to find more evidence of historical context. |

**Section 9**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: You're working to answer the lesson question, how does Frederick Douglass use a personal narrative to tell his story? So far, you have looked at the historical context and background of Douglass's story. You've been hearing the word, narrative. Now it's time to learn what a personal narrative is and the characteristics of a personal narrative before reading an |
| 00:00:22 | excerpt of Frederick Douglass's account of his own life. |

**Section 10**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: Has something happened in your life that was so big that it changed the way you thought or felt about something? Some people use these life changing events to write personal narratives. They're real stories written by the author of what happened to them and how it affected them. So it's very important that we understand the personal |
| 00:00:20 | narrative because after all, that's what we're studying in this lesson, the narrative of "The Life of Frederick Douglass." So a personal narrative is a text about a person's life written by that person. A personal narrative includes recollections or facts and impressions recalled by the writer, the historical context, or period in history, in which |
| 00:00:43 | the events took place. And personal narratives also include the author's interpretation of how events shaped his or her life. Take the time now to distinguish a personal narrative from other genres. |