

Document A: John Brown's Speech (Modified)

I have, may it please the court, a few words to say. In the first place, I deny everything but what I have all along admitted -- the design on my part to free the slaves. That was all I intended. I never did intend murder, or treason, or the destruction of property, or to excite or incite slaves to rebellion, or to make insurrection.

I have another objection: had I so interfered in behalf of the rich, the powerful, the intelligent, the so-called great, or in behalf of any of their friends . . . it would have been all right; and every man in this court would have deemed it an act worthy of reward rather than punishment.

I believe that to have done what I have done--on behalf of God's despised poor was not wrong, but right. Now, if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life to further the end of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust acts-- I say: so let it be done!

Vocabulary

Insurrection: revolt

Forfeit: give up

Source: This was John Brown's last speech. November 2, 1859.

Document B: Last Meeting Between Frederick Douglass and John Brown (Modified)

About three weeks before the raid on Harper's Ferry, John Brown wrote to me, informing me that before going forward he wanted to see me . . .

We sat down and talked over his plan to take over Harper's Ferry. I at once opposed the measure with all the arguments at my command. To me such a measure would be fatal to the work of the helping slaves escape [Underground Railroad]. It would be an attack upon the Federal government, and would turn the whole country against us.

Captain John Brown did not at all object to upsetting the nation; it seemed to him that something shocking was just what the nation needed. He thought that the capture of Harper's Ferry would serve as notice to the slaves that their friends had come, and as a trumpet to rally them.

Of course I was no match for him, but I told him, and these were my words, that all his arguments, and all his descriptions of the place, convinced me that he was going into a perfect steel-trap, and that once in he would never get out alive.

Source: In this passage, Frederick Douglass describes his last meeting with John Brown, about three weeks before the raid on Harper's Ferry. Douglass published this account in 1881 in The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass.

- Rising National Tensions
- 1850-1860
- Capture and the Middle Passage
 - After capture, Africans were packed tightly into slave ships.
 - The death rate of the “passengers” was _____.
- The Middle Passage
- The Beginnings of Slavery in the United States
 - The _____ and Spanish had already brought Africans to South and Latin America.
 - In 1619, the first Africans were brought to the colony _____, Virginia by the Dutch.
- Anthony Johnson
 - He was an _____ brought to the colonies in the 1620s.
 - He obtained his _____, and purchased _____ acres of land in Virginia.
 - He owned at least one _____ and white _____ servants.
 - This shows that blacks were not thought of strictly as slaves until much later.
- The Effects of the American Revolution and the Constitution
 - Gradual _____ of slavery in the northern colonies
 - End of the Atlantic Slave Trade in _____
 - Entrenchment of slavery in the South with the invention of the _____ in 1793 by _____
- Life of a Slave
 - Most slaves had _____ off and they went to church.
 - Most slaves could not read or write, and it was _____ for them to learn.
 - Slave Codes-They could not: leave their home without a pass, carry a weapon, gather in _____, own property, legally _____, defend themselves against a white person, or speak in _____.
- Resistance
 - Flight-Slaves would _____.
 - _____-Flight for a short amount of time and then the slave came back.
 - Refusal to reproduce-Women _____.
 - Covert Action-Slaves would sometimes kill animals, _____, start fires, steal stuff, break tools, poison food.
- Violence
- 4 major slave revolts-
 - _____-failed revolt in South Carolina in 1739
 - Gabriel Prosser led failed revolt in Virginia in 1800
 - _____-led failed revolt in South Carolina in 1822
 - _____-killed 60 white people in Virginia in 1831
- Punishment
 - Slaves were often _____ for misbehaving.
 - Punishments included: whipping, _____, being sold, gagged (silence), separated from family, and other torturous methods were used. (“Being sold down the river.”)
- Abolitionism
 - *Spread in North*
 - _____: runaway slave who became abolitionist leader
 - **William Lloyd Garrison**: editor of _____, The Liberator
 - **Underground Railroad**: elaborate network of white abolitionists, free blacks and slaves (not only Harriet Tubman)
 - Total number of fugitives assisted by the UGR 1830-1860 was between _____

- Compromise of 1850
 - California wanted to be a _____
 - The South had assumed it wouldn't be and was upset it was
 - As a compromise, California would enter the Union as a free state with the condition that Utah and New Mexico would _____ (popular sovereignty)
 - _____ – meant to appease South, many Northerners felt it turned them into _____-catchers
- Kansas-Nebraska Act
 - Proposed by _____ (a compromise so northerners could construct a _____ through this territory)
 - People in _____ would vote on whether to have slavery or not (popular sovereignty).
 - Sounded like a sound compromise, but it upset some anti-slavery forces
 - **Free-soilers** (poor farmers who couldn't compete with slave-owners), and pro-slavery forces streamed in
 - Mini civil war: "Bleeding Kansas"
- The Dred Scott Decision
 - Dred Scott was a slave who was taken to a free territory by his owner.
 - He sued for his freedom because he lived in the free territory.
 - His case went all the way to the _____, where Scott loses because he was not considered a citizen, thus could not sue in federal court. (He was " _____" and could be taken anywhere.)
- John Brown
 - Abolitionist
 - Involved in the Underground Railroad
 - Moved to _____ to support the anti-slavery cause
 - Responded to violence by pro-slavery men by organizing the _____: Pottowatomie Creek Massacre
- John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry
 - Brown planned a _____
 - He wanted to distribute weapons to slaves
 - Action failed. Brown and his men were mostly captured or killed within 36 hours
 - Brown was ultimately _____
- Central Historical Question"
- Was John Brown a "misguided fanatic"?