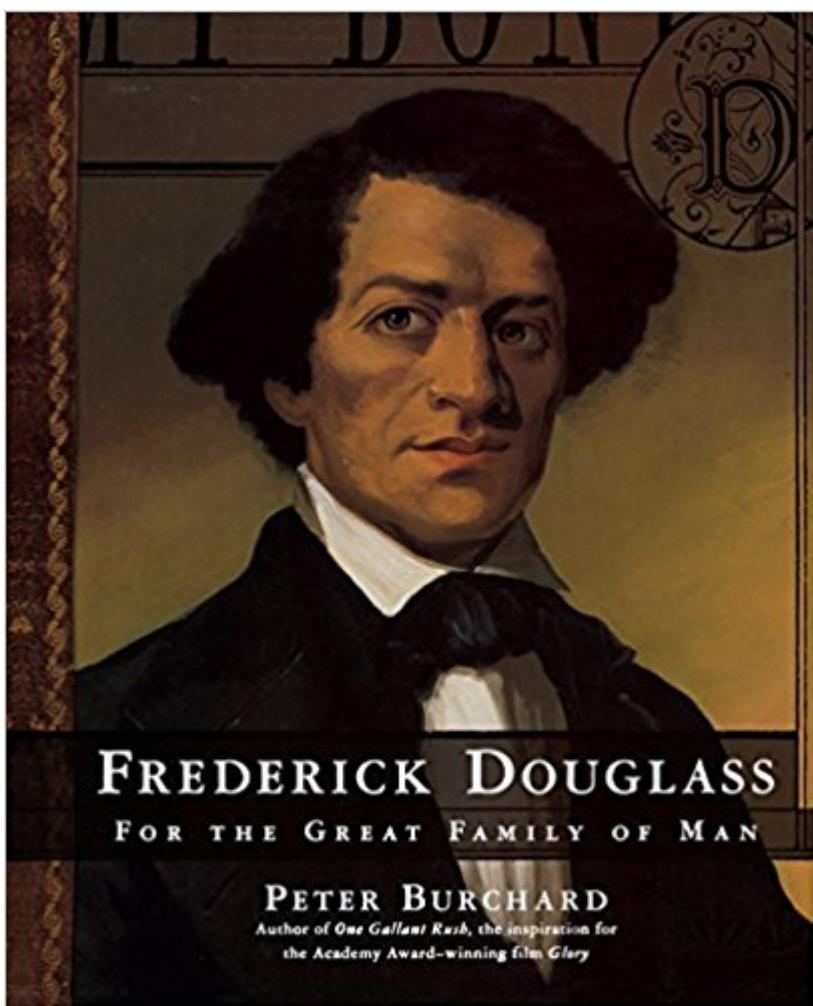


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Frederick Douglass: For The Great Family Of Man



Synopsis

Here in a swift and compelling narrative, Peter Burchard tells the story of the greatest black American of the nineteenth century, a pioneer who laid down a firm foundation for all men and women who came after him. As a child and as a youth, Frederick Douglass was a slave, but his intelligence, his resilient character, and his innate charm, together with a measure of good fortune, made it possible for him to rise above a state of servitude. He became a forceful speaker and persuasive writer and conducted a campaign to abolish slavery and secure civil rights for his people and for all Americans. He saw himself as a soldier in a battle for the dignity of the "great family of man." This new biography presents Douglass as he lived through the misery, tragedy, and heartbreak of his early years, as he escaped from slavery only to endure anxiety and outrage in the free states of the North. He eventually made his way to Great Britain, where he lectured forcefully against slavery. In the United States, as the Civil War began, Douglass recruited young black men to fight and die for their freedom and the freedom of their brothers held in bondage in the South. He became a friend and counselor to presidents, senators, and governors. Here is a full-length portrait of this strong and passionate American.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Up-Douglass was best known for his unflinching work for the human rights of all blacks in

the years before the Civil War. In Burchard's biography, readers see his advocacy and are given a glimpse into his personal life and his work outside the United States to bring equality to blacks (and other oppressed groups) all over the world. Beginning with Douglass's early life with his grandmother, the author takes readers through many of the significant events that shaped the famous orator, including his own escape from slavery when he was 18 and his relationship with Abraham Lincoln. The source notes and lengthy bibliography lend credibility to this biography. Students may struggle with the barrage of names that appear throughout the book, but ultimately, this is a solid resource that enables readers to see the many facets of the subject's personality. Lynn Evarts, Sauk Prairie High School, Prairie du Sac, WI
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Gr. 7-12. This highly attractive, readable biography weaves together Douglass' dramatic personal story--his youth as a slave, his escape, his world-renown as abolitionist speaker and writer, and his support for women's rights--with a general history of the struggle against slavery through the end of the Civil War. Drawing on the vast scholarship about Douglass and his time, Burchard discusses Douglass' memoirs and also adds to them, including details about Douglass' relationship with John Brown and President Lincoln. On a personal level, he describes Douglass' devotion as a father; his troubled relationship with his first wife, Anna; and the criticism he received when he later married a white woman. Burchard quotes scholars, including Henry Louis Gates Jr., who suggest that the memoirs may not always be entirely accurate, but he points out that they do tell the truth about the anguish of slavery. What this biography shows is the undeniable charisma of the abolitionist whose personal experience enabled him to speak with eloquence and authority. The book design is spacious, with occasional prints and photos, and a detailed bibliographic essay and chapter notes. Hazel Rochman
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