

Name _____

Debating Douglass Answer Key

(Sample Responses)

Note: Student answers will vary; below are guiding examples teachers can use to check depth and accuracy.

If choosing Education

- Evidence #1: Douglass learned to read from Mrs. Auld before being forbidden.
- Evidence #2: He studied "The Columbian Orator," which fueled his passion for freedom.
- Why: Education gave him the knowledge to see slavery's injustice and the skills to plan his escape.
- Counterargument: Resilience gave him the courage to resist Covey and survive.
- Response: Without education, he would not have envisioned a life beyond slavery in the first place.
- Final Statement: Education was the greater factor because it awakened Douglass's mind and gave him the tools to change his destiny.

If choosing Resilience

- Evidence #1: Douglass fought back against Covey, reclaiming his dignity.
- Evidence #2: He persevered through multiple failed escape attempts until he succeeded.
- Why: His resilience ensured that he acted on his knowledge instead of remaining hopeless.
- Counterargument: Education gave him the awareness to want freedom.
- Response: Many enslaved people could read, but not all resisted; Douglass's strength and determination made the difference.
- Final Statement: Resilience was the greater factor because it transformed ideas into action and gave him the courage to risk everything for freedom.