# Step 5 They lived to tell the tale!

**Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Frederick Douglass, 1845.**

I was born in Tuckahoe, near Hillsborough, and about twelve miles from Easton, in Talbot county, Maryland. I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. [...] A want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood. The white children could tell their ages. I could not tell why I ought to be deprived of the same privilege. I was not allowed to make any inquiries; [...] such inquiries on the part of a slave improper and impertinent, and evidence of a restless spirit.

*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, Frederick Douglass, 1845.

**Speech for the celebration of July 4 th, Frederick Douglass, 1852**.

What to the American slave is your Fourth of July? I answer, a day that reveals to him more than all other days of the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him your celebration is a sham; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mock; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation of the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of these United States at this very hour.

Speech for the celebration of July 4th, Frederick Douglass,

**“Famous Speech Friday: Harriet Tubman’s Fable on Colonizing Slaves”, Denise Graveline, 2016.**

Harriet Tubman’s speech took place at a meeting of the New England Colored Citizens’ Convention, where the audience had voted to condemn the proposed repatriation of slaves to Africa, Boston 1859. She told the story of a man who sowed onions and garlic on his land to increase his dairy productions; but he soon found the butter was strong and would not sell, and so he concluded to sow clover instead. But he soon found the wind had blown the onions and garlic all over his field. Just so, she said, the white people had got the "nigger" here to do their drudgery, and now they were trying to root ’em out and send ’em to Africa. "But," she said, "they can’t do it; we’re rooted here, and they can’t pull us up."

“Famous Speech Friday: Harriet Tubman’s Fable on Colonizing Slaves”, Denise Graveline, 2016

Exercise 1: For each text, look for information about the author. Is this text fictional or historical? Justify.

# Exercise 2: Sum up the content. What is the aim of the author?

# Exercise 3: MEDIATION: What are the common points and differences? What is the strength of each document?

# Which document do you find the most effective? Why?

# ****ACTIVITY: Choose a historical character. Do some research and prepare an article to participate in the editing of a leaflet to pay tribute to the heroes of the Underground Railroad.****