

African American Literature
Spring 2019 Midterm Exam Quote List

QUOTE: When de nigger opened up his bundle he found a pick and shovel and a hoe and a plow and chop-axe and then de white man opened up his bundle and found a writin'-pen and ink. So ever since then de nigger been out in de hot sun, usin' his tools and de white man been sittin' up figgerin', ought's a ought, figger's a figger; all for de white man, none for de nigger.

SOURCE: "De Reason Niggers Is Working So Hard" from Zora Neale Hurston's *Mules and Men*, P64

QUOTE: Rabbit scratched his ear and say, "Yeah, but all de dogs ain't been to no convention, and anyhow some of dese fool dogs ain't got no better sense than to run all over dat law and break it up. De rabbits didn't go to school much and he didn't learn but three letter, and that's trust no mistake. Run every time de bush shake."

SOURCE: from Zora Neale Hurston, *What the Rabbit Learned*, P73

QUOTE: She spoke to an old man near her, the oldest man of them all, tall and strong, with a forked beard. He replied; but the driver could not understand what they said; their talk was strange to him.

SOURCE: Unknown, "All God's Chillen Had Wings" (P57)

QUOTE: Is it time yet, daddy?" He answered: "yes, daughter; the time has come. Go; and peace be with you!"..... And stretched out his arms toward her... so.

SOURCE: "All God's Chillen had Wings." Pg 57

QUOTE: And as he spoke to them they all remembered what they had forgotten, and recalled the power which once had been theirs.

SOURCE: as told by Cesar Grant, *All God's Chillen Had Wings*, P57

QUOTE: You mean to tell me you been off to school seven years and can't spell (clucking sound)? Why Ah could spell dat myself and Ah ain't been to schoole a day in mah life. Well jes' say (clucking sound) he'll know what yo' mean and go on wid de letter.

SOURCE: Zora Neale Hurston. "How to Write a Letter." Vol A. Pg. 60

QUOTE: A man ain't nothin' but a man, /But before I'll let dat steam drill beat me down, / I'll die wid my hammer in my hand, / Die wid my hammer in my hand.

SOURCE: Unknown, "John Henry" (P27)

QUOTE: Yes, blame me for my downward course, / But oh! remember well, / Within your homes you press the hand / That led me down to hell.

SOURCE: Francis E.W. Harper, "A Double Standard" (P457)

QUOTE: So I got a pair of glasses, /And straight to work I went, /And never stopped till I could read /The hymns and Testament.

SOURCE: "Learning to Read." Frances E. W. Harper

QUOTE: If the fifteenth century discovered America to the Old World, the nineteenth is discovering woman to herself.

SOURCE: Frances E. Harper, "Woman's Political Future," P470

QUOTE: Some view our sable race with scornful eye;/ "Their colour is a diabolic die."/ Remember, *Christians, Negroes*, black as *Cain*, / May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

SOURCE: Phillis Wheatley "On Being Brought from Africa to America" (pg 144)

QUOTE: This I desire not for their Hurt, but to convince them of the strange Absurdity of their Conduct whose Words and Actions are so diametrically opposite.

SOURCE: Phillis Wheatley, "To Samson Occom" (P149)

QUOTE: . . . and [r]eveals more and more clearly, the glorious Dispensation of civil and religious Liberty, which are so inseparably Limited, that there is little or no Enjoyment of one Without the other: Otherwise, perhaps, the Israelites had been less solicitous for their Freedom from Egyptian slavery; I do not say they would have been contented without it, by no means, for in every human Breast, God has implanted a Principle, which we call Love of Freedom; it is impatient of Oppression, and pants for Deliverance; and by the Leave of our modern Egyptians I will assert, that the same Principle lives in us.

SOURCE: Phillis Wheatley, *To Samson Occum*, P149

QUOTE: No more, America, in mournful strain
Of wrongs, and grievance unredress'd complain,
No longer shalt thou dread the iron chain,
Which wanton *Tyranny* with lawless hand
Had made, and with it meant t' enslave the land

SOURCE: Phillis Wheatley. "To the Right Honourable William, Early of Dartmouth, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for North-America, Etc." P145

QUOTE: "I cannot read a book, but I can read the people," she asserted.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth ca. "Ar'n't I a Woman? Speech to the woman's right convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851." P177

QUOTE: I can't read, but I can hear. I have heard the bible and have learned that Eve caused man to sin. Well if woman upset the world, do give her a chance to set it right side up again.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, "Ar'n't I a Woman? Speech to the woman's right convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851." Pg 178

QUOTE: I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that?

QUOTE: "One claimed superior rights and privileges for man on the ground of superior intellect; another, because of the manhood of Christ"

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth*

QUOTE: *I am that I am*

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* , P176

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth "Ar'n't I a Woman? Speech to the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851" (pg 178)

QUOTE: I have heard much about the sexes being equal. I can carry as much as any man, and can eat as much too, if I can get it. I am as strong as any man that is now. As for intellect, all I can say is, if woman have a pint, and man a quart--why can't she have her little pint full? You need not to be afraid to give us our rights for fear that we will take too much—for we can't take more than our pint'll hold.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth "Ar'n't I Woman? Speech to the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851" (P178)

QUOTE: I can't read, but I can hear. I have heard the Bible and have learned that Eve cause man to sin. Well, if women upset the world, do give her a chance to det it right side up again.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth. *Ar'n't I a Woman?*. Vol A. Pg. 178

QUOTE: Nobody eber help me into carriages, or ober mud puddles, or gives me any best place, and ar'n't I a woman?

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, *Ar'n't I Woman? Speech to the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851*" Norton pg. 180

QUOTE: If my cup won't hold but a pint and yourn holds a quart, would n't ye be mean not to let me have my little half-measure full?

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth *Arn't I a woman* Vol. 1 Pg. 180

QUOTE: 'if de fust woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down, all 'lone, dese togedder [and she glanced her eye over us], ought to be able to turn it back and get it right side up again, and not dey is asking to do it, de men better let em.'

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth *Arn't I a woman* Vol. 1 Pg. 180

QUOTE: Before we taste food we always wash our hands: indeed our cleanliness on all occasions is extreme; but on this it is an indispensable ceremony. After washing, libation is made, by pouring out a small portion of food, in a certain place, for the spirits of departed relations, which the natives suppose to preside over their conduct, and guard them from evil.

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (pg 118)

QUOTE: We are almost a nation of dancers, musicians and poets.

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself*

QUOTE: "Agriculture is our chief employment; and everyone, even the women and children are engaged in it. Thus, we are all habituated to from our earliest years. Everyone contributes something to the common stock; and as we are acquainted with idleness, we have no beggars"

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano , *The Interest Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

QUOTE: I hope the reader will not think I have trespassed on his patience in introducing myself to him with some account of the manners and customs of my country. They had been implanted in me with great care, and made an impression on my mind, which time could not erase, and which all the adversity and variety of fortune I have experienced served only to rivet and record; for, whether the love of one's country be real or imaginary, or a lesson of reason, or an instinct of nature, I still look back with pleasure on the first scenes of my life, though that pleasure has been for the most mingled with sorrow.

SOURCE: Equiano, Olaudah *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano. Or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Written by Himself* (P124).

QUOTE: Let the polished and haughty European recollect that his ancestors were once, like the Africans, uncivilized, and even barbarous. Did Nature make *them* inferior to their sons? And should *they too* have been made slaves? Every rational mind answers: *No*. Let such reflections as these melt the pride of their superiority into sympathy for the wants and miseries of their sable brethren, and compel them to acknowledge, that understanding is not confined to feature or color.

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, The African, Written by Himself*, P124

QUOTE: Are they treated as men? Does not slavery itself depress the mind, and extinguish all its fire and every noble sentiment? But, above all, what advantages do not a refined people possess over those who are rude and uncultivated.

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (1789) P124

QUOTE: “When we went to rest the following night they offered us some victuals; but we refused it; and the only comfort we had was in being in one another’s arms all that night, and bathing each other with our tears. But alas! we were soon deprived of even the small comfort of crying together.”

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano. Or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Written by Himself*, P125

QUOTE: We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men, as soon as they appeared to us; and, when soon after we were all put down under the deck again, there was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be heard all the night in these apprehensions, insomuch that at the last white people get some old slaves from the land to pacify us.

SOURCE: Equiano, Olaudah *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano. Or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Written by Himself* (P133).

QUOTE: told him as well as I could that I would be called Jacob; but he said I should not, and still called me Gustavus

SOURCE: Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (PG. 135)

QUOTE: I had a great curiosity to talk to the books, as I thought they did; and so to learn how all things had a beginning: for that purpose I have often taken up a book, and have talked to it, and then put my ears to it, when alone, in hopes it would answer me; and I have been very much concerned when I found it remained silent.

SOURCE: Oludah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Oludah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (P136)

QUOTE: When consciousness returned I found myself alone, in utter darkness and in chains.

SOURCE: Solomon Northup *Twelve Years a Slave* (P190)

QUOTE: “It could not be that a free citizen of New-York, who had wronged no man, nor violated any law, should be dealt with thus inhumanly.”

SOURCE: Solomon Northrup, *Twelve Years a Slave*, P190

QUOTE: It is fact I have more than once observed, that those who treated their slaves most leniently, were rewarded by the greatest amount of labor.

SOURCE: Solomon Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave*, P192

QUOTE: ...a man like Ford, who allowed his slaves to have Bibles, was “ not fit to own a nigger.”

SOURCE: Solomon Northup *Twelve Years a Slave* P192

QUOTE: His manners are repulsive and coarse, and his language gives speedy and unequivocal evidence that he has never enjoyed the advancements of education.

SOURCE: Solomon Northup *Twelve Years A Slave* (pg 193)

QUOTE: The enslaved victim of lust and hate, Patsey had no comfort in her life.

SOURCE: Solomon Northup. *Twelve Years of Slave*. Pg 194

QUOTE: Stepping to the piazza, he took down a heavy whip, and placing it in my hands, commanded me to lash her. Unpleasant as it was, I was compelled to obey him. Nowhere that day, on the face of the whole earth, I venture to say, was there such a demoniac exhibition witnessed as then ensued.

SOURCE: Northup, Solomon (P196). *Twelve Years a Slave*

QUOTE: The tempestuous emotions that were raging there were little in harmony with the calm and quiet beauty of the day. I could look on Epps only with unutterable loathing and abhorrence, and thought within myself – “Thou devil, sooner or later, somewhere in the course of eternal justice, thou shalt answer for this sin!

SOURCE: Solomon Northup. *Twelve Years a Slave* P197

QUOTE: Strike harder, or *your* turn will come next, you scoundrel, he yelled. Oh, mercy, massa!-oh! have mercy, do. Oh, God! pity me,” Patsey exclaimed continually, struggling fruitlessly, and the flesh quivering at every stroke.

SOURCE: Solomon Northup *12 years a slave* (PG. 197)

QUOTE: Thou devil, sooner or later, somewhere in the course of eternal justice, thou shalt answer for this sin!

SOURCE: Solomon Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave* Norton pg. 198

QUOTE: She was, also very beautiful; but the flowers and sunshine of love were not for her. She drank the cup of sin, and shame, and misery whereof her persecuted race are compelled to drink.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs *Incidents In the Life of a Slave Girl* (pg 233)

QUOTE: I would give much to blot out from my memory that one great wrong. As a child, I loved my mistress; and, looking back on the happy days I spent with her, I try to think with less bitterness of this act of injustice.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs *Incidents In the Life of a Slave Girl* (Pg. 224)

QUOTE: God judges men by their hearts, not by the color of their skins.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Norton pg. 226

QUOTE: No promise or writing given to a slave is legally binding; for, according to Southern laws, a slave *being* property, can *hold* no property

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, P225

QUOTE: You are my child, and when I call you, you should come immediately, if you have to pass through fire and water.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Vol A. Pg. 227

QUOTE: When they told me my new-born babe was a girl, my heart was heavier than it had ever been before.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (P240)

QUOTE: "My relentlessness increased. I had lived too long in bodily pain and anguish of spirit. Always I was in dread that by some accident, or some contrivance, slavery would succeed in snatching my children from me"

SOURCE: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs

QUOTE: How earnestly I prayed that she might never feel the weight of slavery's chain, who iron entereth into the soul!

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Pg 241

QUOTE: "Sally, they are going to carry my children to the plantation tomorrow; and they will never sell them to anybody so long as they have me in their power. Now, would you advise me to go back?"

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs *Incidents In The Life Of A Slave Girl* Vol. 1 Pg. 242

QUOTE: I put a lucky thought into my head. I said to myself, "Now I will have some light. Now I will see my children."

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, P244

QUOTE: This is a fair specimen of how the moral sense is educated by slavery. When a man has his wages stolen from him, year after year, and the laws sanction and enforce the theft, how can he be expected to have more regard to honesty than has the man who robs him?

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, P255

QUOTE: The anticipation of being a free woman proved almost too much for my weak frame.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (P248)

QUOTE: Will the preachers take for their text, 'Proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of prison doors to them that are bound?' or will they preach from the text, 'Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you'?

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* P258

QUOTE: The more my mind became enlightened, the more difficult it was for me to consider myself an article of property; and to pay money to those who had so grievously oppressed me seemed like taking from my sufferings the glory of triumph.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, P259

QUOTE: Oh! how shall I speak of my proud country's shame? / Of the stains on her glory, how give them their name? / How say that her wanna in mockery waves — / Her "star spangled banner"—o'er millions of slaves?

SOURCE: Frances E. W. Harper "Eliza Harris" (pg 449)

QUOTE: For she is a mother—her child is a slave—/ And she'll give him his freedom, or find him his grave!

SOURCE: Frances E. W. Harper, "Eliza Harris," (P449)

QUOTE: With her step on the ice, and her arm on the child,/ The danger was fearful, the pathway was wild;
/ But, aided by Heaven, she gained a free shore, /Where the friends of Humanity open'd their door.

SOURCE: Frances E. W. Harper *Eliza Harris* Vol. 1 Pg. 449

QUOTE: Oh! how shall I speak of my proud country's shame? /Of the stains on her glory, how give them their name? /How say that her banner in mockery waves — /Her "star spangled banner" -o'er millions of slaves?

SOURCE: Frances E. W. Harper *Eliza Harris* Vol.1 Pg. 449

QUOTE: He is not hers, although she bore
For him a mother's pains; He is not hers, although her blood
Is coursing through her veins!

SOURCE: Frances E. W. Harper, "The Slave Mother," (P450)

6. QUOTE: Weep not, oh my well-sheltered sisters,
Weep not for the Negro alone,
But weep for your sons who must gather
The crops which their fathers have sown.

SOURCE: Frances E. W. Harper, "An Appeal to My Country Women," P459

QUOTE: On the July 2d of July, 1776, the old Continental Congress, to dismay of the lovers of ease, and the worshippers of property clothed to the dreadful idea with all the authority of national sanction"

SOURCE: What to the Slave is the Fourth of July? Fredrick Douglass

QUOTE: They hate all changes, but silver, gold, and copper change! Of this sort of change they are always strongly in favor.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass: "From What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" P405

QUOTE: But, such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common.

SOURCE: "From What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" Pg 408

QUOTE: Slaves sing when they are most unhappy. The songs of the slaves represent the sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, not only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears. At least such is my experience. I have often sung to drown my sorrows...

SOURCE: Douglass, Frederick (P343) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

QUOTE: It may, perhaps, be fairly questioned, whether any other portion of the population of the Earth could have endured the privation, sufferings and horrors of slavery, without having become more degraded in the scale of humanity than the slaves of the African descent. Nothing has been left undone to cripple their intellects, darken their minds, debase their moral nature, obliterate all traces of their relationship to mankind; and yet how wonderfully they have sustained the mighty load of a most frightful bondage, under which they have been groaning for centuries!

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. Vol A. Pg. 332

QUOTE: Every tone was a testimony against slavery, and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* P343

QUOTE: I have often been utterly astonished since I came to the north, to find persons who could speak of the singing, among slaves, as evidence of their treatment and happiness. The singing of a man cast away upon a desolate island might be as appropriately considered as evidence of contentment and happiness, as the singing of a slave; the sons of the one and of the other are prompted by the same emotion.

SOURCE: Fredrick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*, P343

QUOTE: “ Mr. Auld found out what was going on and forbade Mrs. Auld to instruct me further, telling her among other things, that it was unsafe, to teach a slave to read. To use his own words, further, he said, ‘if you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell. A nigger should only know nothing but to obey his master—to do as he is told to do. Learning would spoil the best nigger’”

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*

QUOTE: They never knew when they were safe from punishment. They were frequently whipped when least deserving, and escaped whipping when most deserving it.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

QUOTE: “I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Any thing, no matter what, to get rid of thinking!”

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, P355

QUOTE: O God, save me! God, deliver me! Let me be free? Is there any God? I had as well be killed running as die standing.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (P361)

QUOTE: In this state of mind, he prayed with more than ordinary spirit. Poor Man! Such was his disposition, and success at deceiving, I do verily believe that he sometimes deceived himself into the solemn belief, that he was a sincere worshipper of the most high God; and this, too, at a time when he may be said to have been guilty of compelling his women slave to commit the sin of adultery.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. Vol A. Pg. 364

QUOTE: It may be that my misery in slavery will only increase my happiness when I get free. There is a better day coming.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, (P365)

QUOTE: I have said my master found religious sanction for his cruelty.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* Norton pg. 365

QUOTE: When in Mr. Gardner's employment, I was kept in such a whirl of excitement, I could think of nothing, scarcely, but my life; and in thinking of my life, I almost forgot my liberty. I have observed this in my experience of slavery,—that whenever my condition was improved, instead of its increasing my contentment, it only increased my desire to be free, and set me to thinking of plans to gain my freedom. I have found that, to make a contented slave, it is necessary to make a thoughtless one.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, P380

QUOTE: Their minds had been starved by their cruel masters. They had been shut up in mental darkness.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, (P373)

QUOTE: rather bear those ills we had, Than fly to others, that we know not of

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (P375)

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (P380)

QUOTE: The man who robs me of my earnings at the end of each week meets me as a class-leader on Sunday morning, to show me the way of life, and the path to salvation.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (P389)

QUOTE: Trust no man!

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. Vol A. Pg. 384

QUOTE: The dealers in the bodies and souls of men erect their stand in the presence of the pulpit, and they mutually help each other. The dealer gives his blood-stained gold to support the pulpit, and the pulpit, in return, covers his infernal business with the garb of Christianity. Here we have religion and robbery the allies of each other—devils dressed in angels' robes, and hell presenting the semblance of paradise.

SOURCE: Frederick Douglass. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. Vol A. Pg. 389-390