

Student Essay on Fredrick Douglass: The Author

Fredrick Douglass: The Author

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Essay

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The joyful and paranoid tones the author uses in this passage demonstrate his feelings toward his newfound freedom. The author escaped his old troubles, but by running from his past, new ghosts began to haunt him. The complementary tones he uses are a perfect way to express these feelings.

In this story, the author's diction is used to give it an honest, humble feel. In the second paragraph, the author writes of his aspirations to get away from the "wretchedness of slavery," and to the "blessedness of freedom." These word choices are rather mature in the use, making it feel like he is being totally honest in what he says. However, his aspirations were short lived, because he soon was "again seized with a feeling of great insecurity and loneliness". Yet his diction is not bitter, but redundantly and beautifully honest.

Next, the details that Douglas uses in the story are important to the context. It's amazing how the reader takes for granted the little information that guides one to understanding what is going on in the story. Chronological importance is critical, and when he tells that time was during the first six months of my stay with Mr. Covey, it gives the reader an idea of when Mr. Douglas is talking about. Another important detail is a spatial detail, showing the location of what the author is talking about. For instance, when the author writes, "Mr. Covey was at the house, about one-hundred yards from the trading-yard" the reader can pick up on that distance and relate to it, making it more realistic. This is very important to a biography or an Autobiography alike.

Perspective is also important in developing a relationship with the reader. Douglas shows honesty in its purest form when he talks about how "Mr. Covey succeeded in breaking me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died." This is Douglas sharing to the reader how his manhood and his human characteristics were shed, which in essence makes him naked to the reader, which would develop a relationship fairly quickly. His perspective is in first person, so the reader can easily put himself in the author's position, making it more realistic and hitting harder.