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Teaching Unit™

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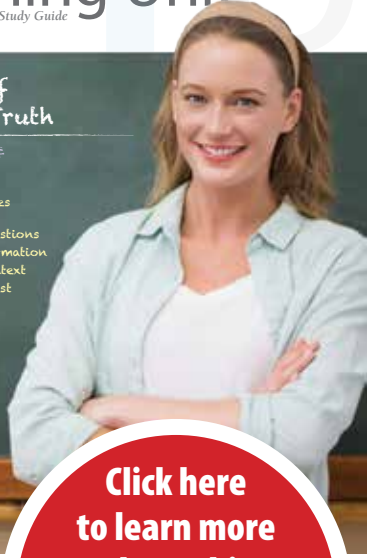
Prestwick House
Literature
Teaching Unit
Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



Narrative of Sojourner Truth

by Sojourner Truth &
Olive Gilbert

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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Item No: 300737

Narrative of Sojourner Truth

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. define vocabulary words used in this story.
2. discuss the significance of the name Sojourner Truth.
3. write and comment on the ways Gilbert tries to gain support for the abolitionist movement.
4. cite incidents from Sojourner's life which illustrate the hardships of slavery including: poor accommodations, harsh punishments, lack of education, separation from family, abandonment in old age, and moral disintegration.
5. find examples of irony in the behavior of the "Christian" masters toward their slaves.
6. trace the development of Sojourner's religious beliefs from her childhood until she decides to become a traveling preacher.
7. cite examples of Sojourner's wit and humor.
8. discuss Sojourner's involvement with "The Kingdom" and whether or not she benefits from her exposure to their religious beliefs.
9. comment on why many different religious groups welcome and accept Sojourner.
10. discuss the problems Sojourner faces battling the white justice system.
11. understand why Sojourner excluded many of the details of her life as a slave.
12. cite incidents from the story to support the following generalizations Sojourner makes about life.
 - The rich rob the poor, and the poor rob each other.
 - It is easier to find lodging in a poor person's home than it is in a rich person's home.
13. understand the significance of each of the following to Sojourner's life: The Women's Suffrage Movement, Frederick Douglass, the Panic of 1837, The Emancipation Act of 1827, and the Abolitionist Movement.

Narrative of Sojourner Truth

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Why does Isabella change her name to Sojourner Truth?
2. What does Isabella learn about God from her mother?
3. Cite one or two incidents from the story illustrating each of the following hardships associated with slavery: separation of family, injustice, false accusations, and abandonment in old age.
4. Find a passage in the narrative where Olive Gilbert tries to persuade her readers that slavery results in moral disintegration for slaves. In what ways does slavery also result in moral disintegration for slaveholders?
5. Why is it ironic that many of the slaveholders considered themselves to be good Christians?
6. Cite three reasons Sojourner decides to leave the details of many of the hardships she suffered as a slave out of the narrative.
7. Why does Isabella prefer Mr. Dumont to Mrs. Dumont? In what ways do each of them disappoint Isabella?
8. What is Isabella's view of slavery during the years she lives with the Dumonts? Why does she look back on those years with "astonishment"?
9. List three adjectives to describe Sojourner's character. Cite an incident from the story to support each of your choices.
10. Who does Isabella credit with helping her get Peter returned after he is sold into the South? Why?
11. How does Eliza Fowler's murder contribute to Isabella's belief that God extracts "retributive justice" from sinners?
12. Find a passage in this story illustrating Isabella's sense of humor.
13. How does the Panic of 1837 contribute to Isabella's decision to leave New York City?

Narrative of Sojourner Truth

INTRODUCTION: by William Kaufman

VOCABULARY

indomitable – not easily defeated

temperance – self- restraint in not drinking alcoholic beverages

imbibe – to drink

animism – the belief that all objects(such as trees, rocks, and the wind) are alive and have souls

saturnalian – riotous, merry

ambience – environment or atmosphere

epiphany – an awareness; an awakening of religious beliefs

imperatives – rules, duties, or requirements

beguiled – deceived or misled

itinerant – a person who travels from place to place

slough – deep hopeless dejection or discouragement; moral degradation

solidarity – unity

resilient – bouncing or springing back to shape; recovering strength or good humor

1. Sojourner Truth becomes a preacher and an orator to fight for human rights issues. List three issues that interest her.

2. Briefly discuss Sojourner's youth including her original name, date of birth, first language, and her family's religious beliefs.

3. For what reasons does Isabella decide to embark on a journey as a preacher-activist?

DEATH OF MAU-MAU BETT.

1. Find a passage in this chapter when the narrator breaks away from the story to speak directly to the reader. Why might this be done?

LAST DAYS OF BOMEFREE.

VOCABULARY

servitude – slavery
lamentations – expressions of grief
superannuated – too old; worn out
bewail – to complain about
anguish – great suffering
ludicrous – absurd, ridiculous
destitution – poverty

1. Find the allusion in this chapter.

2. What does Gilbert mean when she says the Ardinburghs took turns “keeping” Bomefree?

3. How does Bomefree feel about his life in his old age?

GLEANINGS.

VOCABULARY

cupidity – greed; desire to possess
imbecility – stupidity
veracity – truthfulness, honesty
magnanimously – generously

1. List three reasons Isabella chooses to exclude from this narrative many of the details from her past.

2. Cite incidents from this chapter to support the following two ideas: a) Slaves do not love their masters and are not grateful for the chains of slavery. b) The cruelty of slavery exists only in the imagination.

3. Find a use of litotes in this section.
