

Michael Hernandez, *Principal*Jennifer Cheatham, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Schools**Assistant Principals:*Randi Kubek  
Mikki Smith  
Alex Thompson  
Maggie Zywicki

August 14, 2017

Dear Honors US History 9 student,

Welcome to Honors U.S. History 9! I look forward to pursuing U.S. History from Reconstruction through World War II with you in the next school year.

In order to help you prepare for the class, and as your first assignment, please read *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs (pseudonym Linda Brent) and/or the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* by Frederick Douglass. Jacobs and Douglass wrote their stories with the hope that others would come to better understand the specific and grim realities of slavery and both have distinctly interesting and important perspectives of the 'peculiar institution' of slavery and who it hurt. While you read, pay special attention to what Jacobs and Douglass had to say about the role of family, power, education, religion, and rebellion in their lives as slaves. Also, please think about the way in which each coped with slavery, reacted to places, and historical events. Your task is to summarize the ideas you feel that Jacobs and/or Douglass most wanted their readers to understand. Please type your summary (12 point font, 1.5 spacing) or write it out in ink by Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Be as precise in your writing as possible and use specific examples and ideas from the text(s) to support your views. I will be expecting a thoughtful and thorough understanding of the narrative(s) so that we can better discuss the text and the very complex nature of slavery when this assignment is due.

Both of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* are available in several editions and forms and can be easily located in libraries and bookstores. The *Classic Slave Narratives* edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is a nice edition and includes both the story of Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass. However, both slave narratives are also available in full text online at the following addresses. Links to these sites will also be available on my website, [www.mshotz.net](http://www.mshotz.net).

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl by Harriet Jacobs

- <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/menu.html>

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglass

- <http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DouNarr.html>
- <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm>

Again, welcome to Honors U.S. History 9. I look forward to seeing you when school begins.

Sincerely,

Jessica Hotz  
U.S. History Teacher  
[jhotz@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:jhotz@madison.k12.wi.us)