

**Distilled Notes**  
*American Literature*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** After reading and annotating the text (or viewing the film), it is now your job to look over what you have and think about some basic ideas and concepts you wish to add to the classroom conversation. Write those down in the spaces provided. Each section should be fresh and different—do not repeat ideas from one section to another; nor should you repeat what we've already discussed in class. Use your own noggin. For help, refer to your "Observation vs. Insight" handout.

List 2 **questions** you still have about the work that should provoke further debate or discussion.

Ex. *Harry Potter*: *Why does Dumbledore remind me so much of Obi-Wan Kenobi or Gandalf? Is that on purpose?*

1. *Why does Douglass say he's not "included within the pale of this glorious anniversary"? An intentional pun?*
2. *Why does Truth rely so heavily on religion in her speech?*

List 2 **concepts** you want to discuss. First identify the concept and then define it more clearly in the lines below.

Ex. *Lord of Rings*

Concept: *Human Nature*

Explanation: *Gollum as a symbol for those of us who lose ourselves among temptation, greed, and envy, in our quest to possess.*

1. Concept: *Hypocrisy*

Explanation: *Douglass points out the hypocrisy of the nation by using the Declaration of Independence ("All men created equal") and the Bible (good "Christian" behavior) to challenge their views.*

2. Concept: *Gender Equality*

Explanation: *Truth suggests that people should be judged not by their sex but by what they can do ("I can carry as much as a man and eat as much too").*

List 1 **insightful statement** you have developed regarding the work. Use the back if necessary.

Remember, insights go deeper than observations, answering not just *what* but also *why* or *how*. Insights require interpretation.

Ex. *Twilight*: *What better way for the author to evoke the intensity and romance of young love than to make Edward a vampire, who, in choosing Bella, a human, is literally choosing her for eternity—there is perhaps no bigger compliment and nothing more romantic than to be chosen as someone's eternal love, a sentiment that I'm sure was not lost on the author's young readership.*

1. *Though speaking about different populations (Slaves and Women), Douglass and truth seem to share a common concern (Equal Rights) and to make a common point: While our nation claims to be a "Christian model of democracy," there are a significant number of people who are excluded from that very model. Using what white America seems to value (Christianity and Democracy) they encourage their audience either to change or to allow hypocrisy to haunt their conscience and unravel their country.*