

**FILM STUDY WORKSHEET – FOR THE MOVIE *12 YEARS A SLAVE*  
A WORK OF HISTORICAL FICTION**

If you haven't seen the movie already, read the questions before you watch the film so that you will know what to look for. If you make notes while the movie is playing, make sure that your note taking doesn't interfere with careful watching. You do not need to make any notes on the worksheet but when the film is over you will be required to fully respond to the questions.

Complete the assignment by answering each question in paragraph form on a separate sheet of paper. Answers need to be complete and comprehensive, demonstrating that you paid attention and thought about what was shown on the screen. You may use more than one paragraph if necessary. Be sure that the topic sentence of your first paragraph uses key words from the question. All responses should be in complete sentences using proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Question 6 asks about your personal experience and you may respond in the first person. All other responses should be in the third person.

1. Name and describe the antagonist in this story.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. In the story told by the film, what is the main conflict and how is it resolved?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Historical fiction employs the elements of literature and the devices of fiction. Identify and describe two literary elements or devices that are evident in the movie other than climax, antagonist, and protagonist. Other literary elements or devices may include: prologue, expository phase, voice, symbol, foreshadowing, flashback, irony, foil, opposition, archetype, motif, characterization, climax, and denouement. For each literary device that you identify, describe the role that it plays in presenting the story told by the film.

Notes: #1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Music and lighting are part of the way that the moviemakers communicate their message. Go deeper than that. Give two specific examples of how other elements of the cinematic art, such as shot framing, camera angles, camera movement, color, editing choice, or length of take were used by the filmmakers to get their point across.

Notes: #1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

5. Describe two images or scenes from the film that stand out in your mind. Discuss why those images impressed you and how they relate to the themes of the movie.

Notes: #1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

6. What happened to Solomon Northrup was terrible but there is another character in the film whose life was much worse than his. Who was that character and what does that tell you about slavery in the American South?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Analyze the conduct of Mr. Ford from an ethical standpoint.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Was Mrs. Epps a victim or a perpetrator?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Pick one of the following factors that is shown playing a role in the enslavement of Solomon Northrup. Chose among political, economic, religious, social, and ideological. How does the story told by the film reflect the factor you identified? Be specific. For extra credit, pick a second factor and describe how the film reflects that factor.)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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Extra credit factor: \_\_\_\_\_

10. "History is what the present choose to remembers about the past." Given the fact that the audience will take away from the movie an impression of the historical events or figures portrayed in the film on the whole does this movie improve the viewer's understanding of the historical events? Justify your conclusion.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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