Abolitionists in the 1800’s used various forms of media to advertise & advance their ideas, with the written word being the most relied upon. From the prolific amount of abolitionist writings, two specific examples illustrate to us how the tone an author conveys can be influenced by their personal perspective, and how that tone can shape or impact an argument.

**Background information on the authors & readings:**

**Frederick Douglass's "What to the Slave is the 4th of July?" - excerpt**

Frederick Douglass - Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in Maryland. He served multiple masters and was separated from family and loved ones throughout his time as a slave. In his 20’s, after many failed attempts, he escaped to New York, eventually settling in Massachusetts where he worked for both religious and abolitionist organizations. Fortunate to learn literacy skills as a young man, Douglass developed great skill with the written and spoken word as a freed man. He travelled from city to city, penning editorials, essays, and books as well as delivering passionate abolitionist speeches. His speech, “What to the Slave is the 4th of July?”, was delivered on July 5, 1852. It is widely considered to be one of the most powerful & influential speeches of the time.

**Harriet Beecher Stowe’s "Uncle Tom's Cabin" - excerpt**

Harriet Beecher Stowe - Harriet Beecher Stowe grew up in New England in a family of ministers and church leaders. At the time, it was rare to be an educated woman, however Harriet’s sister Caroline was a strong advocate for women’s education and ensured that her siblings, regardless of gender, learned to read and write. Stowe wrote over 30 books from novels to picture books to books filled with advice on child rearing. Of all of Stowe’s books, the abolitionist tale *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was the most popular and earned her a place amongst literary greats. In the novel, she explores the story of a slave named Tom, who grapples with the ideas of running away to a free state, and the morality of the institution of slavery that binds him to his masters. The final chapter outlines Stowe’s personal beliefs on slavery & her support for abolition movements.
**Analysis of the Writing** - Read the above selections and answer the following analysis questions:

**What to the Slave is the 4th of July?**

1) In part one of his speech, who does Frederick Douglass suggest earned their freedom?

2) What do you think are the principles in the Declaration of Independence that Frederick Douglass is referring to?

3) According to the opening lines of part two, does Douglass feel included in the celebrations of freedom? Why or why not?

4) What does Frederick Douglass mean when he writes the following?

   "Standing there identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future."

5) According to Frederick Douglass, what to the slave is the 4th of July?


7) How do you think Frederick Douglass’s experiences as a former slave impacted or shaped his arguments or claims in this speech?

**Uncle Tom’s Cabin**

1) What law prompted Stowe to write this book?

2) What was she trying to accomplish with this novel?

3) What does Stowe suggest a slave owner actually is? What is her reasoning behind this?

4) Who does Stowe blame, the South, the North, or both? What is her reasoning behind this?

5) How does Stowe use Christianity to support her arguments against slavery?

6) Explain the final paragraph of Stowe’s chapter in your own words. What does it mean?

7) How do you think Harriet Beecher Stowe’s background as an advocate for women’s rights, and a daughter of church leaders, influenced her argument or claims?
Comparing and Contrasting

Part 1 - Venn Diagram - To begin a deeper analysis, create and complete a Venn Diagram that compares and contrasts the writing of Harriet Beecher Stowe & Frederick Douglass. Define their arguments using this venn diagram. Pay close attention to & specifically analyze the similarities and differences in their abolitionist arguments. Are they using similar or different reasons to argue against slavery?

Part 2 - Comparing and Contrasting Tone - Fill out the chart as instructed!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compare &amp; Contrast</th>
<th>Harriet Beecher Stowe</th>
<th>Frederick Douglass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone</strong></td>
<td>How would you describe the tone of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s argument?</td>
<td>How would you describe the tone of Frederick Douglass’s argument?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(YOUR CLAIMS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Suggest textual evidence to support your claims made above.</td>
<td>Suggest textual evidence to support your claims made above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(from text - supporting your claims)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Perspective & Tone & Primary Sources: Writing Task**

**Directions:** Using information from the documents, you will now write a response to the task with regards to excerpts from the documents provided above.

**Task:** Using the information from the documents above, and your knowledge of US History complete the following writing prompt:

*Why might it be important for historians to consider the sourcing information of a primary source document when doing historical research?*

- In a 1 - 2 page paper, using the abolitionist writings of Harriet Beecher Stowe & Frederick Douglass as examples, **analyze and explain** how can an author’s perspective both:
  1. impact the tone of their argument
  2. shape their argument

**analyze means** “to determine the nature and relationship of the component elements”

**explain means** “to make plain or understandable; to give reasons for or causes of; to show the logical development or relationships of”