

Writing Prompt and Task Sheet

Historical Background

The Declaration of Independence states that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

In the decades preceding the Civil War, abolitionists sought to realize these ideals. Some abolitionists, like Frederick Douglass, took nonviolent action, while others, like John Brown, resorted to violence.

Prompt

Who more effectively argued against slavery, Brown or Douglass?

Task

Write a well thought-out historical argument in response to the prompt. All responses must be grounded in evidence.