

Plan Your Agency Essay

A reference, not another assignment. Use this guide in class or at home. Use one shared Word online file to plan, draft, and revise the essay. No research log or work-session record is required.

Your central task

Explain **how Jacobs exercised agency to protect herself and her children, and what her strategies cost or left unresolved.** Use brief Wright and Northup or Douglass comparisons to sharpen your analysis of Jacobs. Agency does not require success.

Build an evidence plan in Word

As you choose evidence, consider the **goal, action, constraint or cost, outcome, and your interpretation.** Keep exact source locations for citations. Mark copied language as a quotation. These are planning prompts, not required log entries.

Jacobs: choose at least four passages with at least one from each block: I-X, XI-XXI, XXII-XXXI, and XXXII-XLI. Address at least three forms of agency and include a passage that complicates your claim. Keep roughly two-thirds to three-quarters of your analysis on Jacobs.

Wright family: use two distinct primary details: the claim or action on printed p. 134 and the limit of the decree on p. 144. The class PDF reproduces excerpts; [open the original pages for verification](#). Cite the report, not the handout summary.

Optional context: you may use a provision of the 1850 Act, chapter 133, §3 or §20. Explain the coercive power it authorized. The law alone does not prove how a particular person resisted.

Douglass OR Northup: select one or two details that deepen a comparison. Keep this comparison brief and connected to your argument.

Historical context: connect one Jacobs passage to the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law or another relevant development studied in class. Explain its effect on people's choices.

Turn evidence into an outline

1. Write a working claim that answers both **how** and **to what extent**.
2. Group evidence by a point you want to prove, such as family protection or access to information.
3. For every body paragraph, write an analytical topic sentence, two research points with exact locators and proposed footnotes, and 2-3 sentences of analysis (due Dec. 9).
4. Include a meaningful limit or counterexample. Revise the thesis if the evidence requires it.

Checkpoints, all at 3:25 p.m.: Oct. 26 shared Word essay link; Dec. 7 thesis + opening paragraph; Dec. 9 topic sentences + research points + footnotes; Dec. 11 full draft; Dec. 14 peer review + self-assessment; Dec. 16 final + updated self-assessment. Unit 3 ends Dec. 4; these checkpoints continue alongside the next unit. See the [assignment sheet](#) for the full requirements. Additional research is optional.

Cite the Evidence You Use

Use **Chicago-style footnotes and a bibliography**. Add a footnote for quotations, paraphrases, and source-based claims. Insert footnotes in Word. These are models: replace bracketed directions with the chapter, page, section, or URL you actually used.

Wright case | A primary court report

Footnote: *Hudgins v. Wrights*, 11 Va. (1 Hen. & Mun.) 134, 144 (1806), [original report](#).

Later note: *Hudgins v. Wrights*, 134. Change the final pinpoint to 144 when citing the decree.

Bibliography: *Hudgins v. Wrights*. 11 Va. (1 Hen. & Mun.) 134 (1806). [William & Mary scan](#).

The decision is from 1806; this report was published in 1808. The case begins on p. 134; cite the particular printed page you used. Legal cases are often omitted from bibliographies, but include it for this assignment.

Jacobs | Required Dover copy; emergency online citation

Footnote: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Written by Herself*, ed. L. Maria Child (Boston: Published for the Author, 1861), chap. I, "Childhood," [chapter link](#).

Later note: Jacobs, *Incidents*, chap. I.

Bibliography: Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Written by Herself*. Edited by L. Maria Child. Boston: Published for the Author, 1861. [Project Gutenberg text](#).

For your required print Dover copy, use its actual title/copyright-page publication details and the cited page.

The model above is only for emergency online use; online access does not count as being prepared for class.

California | A statute

Footnote: California, "An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians," April 22, 1850, chap. 133, §3, *Statutes of California* (1850), 408, [official scan](#). For §20 use printed p. 410 (PDF page 420).

Bibliography: California. "An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians." April 22, 1850. Chapter 133. In *Statutes of California*, 408-410. [Official volume](#).

Douglass or Northup | A narrative

Douglass footnote: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave. Written by Himself* (Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845), chap. [VII or X], [text link](#).

Northup footnote: Solomon Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave* (Auburn, NY: Derby and Miller, 1853), chap. [XVI or XIX], [text link](#).

In the bibliography, invert the author's name, remove the cited chapter, and list the book title, publication facts, and URL. Use the edition you actually consulted.

Online secondary sources

Use author or responsible institution, page/article title, site or journal, date when available, and URL. Add the specific printed page for a scholarly article. For an undated webpage, record your actual access date. Copy the underlying link address into your note; a label such as "text link" is not the URL. See the [Wright Research Guide](#) for further sources and citation models.