FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery in 1838, at the age of 20. Unlike many enslaved people, Douglass learned to read and write as a youth, and he honed these skills to become one of the most formidable leaders of the abolitionist movement. He conferred with President Lincoln on the treatment of black soldiers, played a key role in the passage of the 15th Amendment and fought for African American civil rights until his death in 1895.