

Read the sixth and seventh paragraphs in Chapter 1 of W. E. B. DuBois's "Of Our Spiritual Strivings", from "Away back in the days of bondage" to "by the simple ignorance of a lowly people."

1. What is the impact of beginning paragraph 6 with "Away back in the days of bondage"?
2. How does Du Bois explain what "Freedom" (par. 6) meant to African Americans? What is the impact of this explanation?
3. How does Du Bois use allusion and imagery in paragraph 6 to further develop his point of view about "Freedom"?
4. What could *implored* mean in this context?
5. What is the impact of Du Bois's use of parallel structure to describe slavery?
6. What effect does Du Bois create through his use of syntax and punctuation in this section?
7. Whose "national life" (par. 6) does Du Bois refer to in the first sentence of this excerpt?
8. What is the impact of the phrase "and yet" (par. 6) in this sentence?

9. What does the “swarthy spectre” (par. 6) represent?

10. What does the phrase “accustomed seat” suggest about the “national life” (par. 6) of African Americans?

11. What makes African Americans cry to the nation’s “social problem” “in vain” (par. 6)?

12. How does Du Bois refine the central idea of “the problem” (introduced in paragraph 1) through the metaphor of the “spectre”?

13. What does Du Bois mean by the phrase “[t]he Nation has not yet found peace from its sins” (par. 7)?

14. What is “the shadow of a deep disappointment” (par. 7) to which Du Bois refers?

15. Why is the “disappointment all the more bitter” (par. 7)? How does this explanation advance Du Bois’s point of view?