

<p>DAY 1: Patrick Henry "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"</p>	<p>Use your handouts and answer the questions in the right-hand column of responding to the text.</p>
<p>DAY 2: Patrick Henry "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"</p>	<p>Review the vocabulary words used in the speech and write an original sentence using each of them.</p>
<p>DAY 3: Patrick Henry "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"</p>	<p>Key Word Search</p>
<p>DAY 4: Patrick Henry "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"</p>	<p>Literary Techniques: Tone, Foreshadowing, and Character Analysis</p>
<p>DAY 5: Patrick Henry "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"</p>	<p>What the Text Said and Thoughts and Connections</p>

Patrick Henry | LIBERTY OR DEATH

CLOSE READING OF THE TEXT: Use the questions and stop points in the right column as a guide to understand this speech better and interact with the text.

Liberty or Death March 23, 1775

(1) No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope that it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if entertaining, as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my **sentiments** freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery. And in proportion to the **magnitude** of the subject, ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country and of an act of disloyalty towards the majesty of Heaven which I **revere** above all earthly kings.

(2) Mr. President it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are **apt** to shut our eyes against a painful truth—and listen to the song of the siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men engaged in a great and **arduous** struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their **temporal** salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT

What is Henry's purpose in acknowledging the opposition in the opening paragraph? What tone is set in the opening paragraph?

sentiments (n.): view; attitude; feelings

THINK ALOUD

The underlined sentence in the opening paragraph states there are only two options. What are these options, and why will they carry so much weight in Henry's speech?

magnitude (n.): great importance or size

revere (v.): to feel deep respect for; to be in awe of

apt (adj.): tendency to do something

THINK ALOUD

"song of the siren": In Greek mythology, sirens were beautiful women who used haunting, enchanting songs to lure sailors to their deaths on rocks. What is Henry's purpose in using this allusion?

arduous (adj.): difficult; requiring great effort

temporal (adj.): relating to worldly not spiritual matters; related to time

STOP & JOT

In paragraph 3, what imagery does Henry use to describe the British and what is his purpose in using this imagery?

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(3) I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to **solace** themselves and the house? Is it that **insidious** smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a **snare** to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition **comports** with these warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and **subjugation**—the last arguments to which kings resort.

(4) I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial **array** if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motives for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging.

(5) And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer on the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble **supplication**? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted?

(6) Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done everything that could be done to **avert** the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned—we have **remonstrated**—we have supplicated—we have **prostrated** ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne.

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT

Henry uses the lamp as a **metaphor** for experience, but what other things could the lamp represent in relation to this speech?

solace (v.): to give comfort to

insidious (adj.): intended to entrap; proceeding in a gradual way with harmful effects

THINK ALOUD

What famous **allusion** does Henry use in the line, “Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss,” and what is its purpose?

snare (n.): a trap

comports (v.): behaves; works in accordance with

subjugation (n.): the act of bringing under control

array (n.): impressive display; things arranged in a particular way

rivet (v.): to join; to fasten

STOP & JOT

What **metaphor** is used in the underlined sentence in paragraph 4, and to what does it refer?

supplication (n.): the action of asking or begging

avert (v.): to prevent; to avoid

remonstrated (v.): to argue; to disagree; to make a forceful protest

prostrated (v.): to cast oneself facedown in humility, reverence, or submission

THINK ALOUD

What **parallelism** (repetition) is used in paragraph 6, and how does this device strengthen Henry’s plea?

(7) In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve **involute** those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

(8) They tell us, sir, that we are weak—unable to cope with so **formidable** an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying **supinely** on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of Hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot?

(9) Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us.

(10) Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were **base** enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged, their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

(11) It is in vain, sir, to **extenuate** the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun. The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT

In paragraph 7, what is Henry's solution to British tyranny? Has he strongly supported his argument in paragraphs 1 through 7 to the extent that it justifies his solution?

involute (adj.): sacred; safe from injury

formidable (adj.): powerful; intensive; impressive

supinely (adv.): lying face upwards; failing to act

THINK ALOUD

In paragraphs 8 through 10, who does Henry say will be on the side of the colonies?

base (adj.): lowest part of something

STOP & JOT

What punctuation and literary device does Henry use in the underlined sentence in paragraph 10 to make his point?

HISTORY CONNECTION

Throughout the speech Henry refers to God. On a historical level, why would this reference appeal to the audience in 1775?

extenuate (v.): to make seem less serious

THINK ALOUD

Discuss the power of these famous words underlined in the final paragraph.

HISTORY CONNECTION

Listen to "Liberty or Death" at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNfxqapECV4 and consider the emphasis placed on certain words and images. Underline the words and phrases Henry emphasized and repeated. Why did he choose them? What effect was he hoping to create?

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AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES

Vocabulary

Directions: Review the vocabulary words in the speech and write an original sentence using each word.

WORD	USE IN SENTENCE
sentiments (n.): view; attitude; feelings	
magnitude (n.): great importance or size	
revere (v.): to feel deep respect for; to be in awe of	
apt (adj.): tendency to do something	
arduous (adj.): difficult; requiring great effort	
temporal (adj.): relating to worldly not spiritual matters; related to time	
solace (v.): to give comfort to	
insidious (adj.): intended to entrap; proceeding in a gradual way with harmful effects	
snare (n.): a trap	
comports (v.): behaves; works in accordance with	

subjugation (n.): the act of bringing under control	
array (n.): impressive display; things arranged in a particular way	
rivet (v.): to join; to fasten	
supplication (n.): the action of asking or begging	
avert (v.): to prevent; to avoid	
remonstrated (v.): to argue; to disagree; to make a forceful protest	
prostrated (v.): to cast oneself facedown in humility, reverence, or submission	
inviolable (adj.): sacred; safe from injury	
formidable (adj.) powerful; intensive; impressive	
supinely (adv.): lying face upwards; failing to act	
base (adj.): lowest part of something	
extenuate (v.): to make seem less serious	

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Key Word Search

Words have enormous power—not only to define the world around us, but also to stir passionate feelings in those who read or hear the words. Speeches, particularly those designed to persuade people to join a cause or accept the speaker's opinion, rely on deliberate utilization and specific meanings to convey and reinforce the speaker's message. Henry used elevated words in his speech.

Directions: Choose five key words from the speech and find simpler, more “everyday” synonyms for them. On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph summary of Henry's speech using the original words, and then write a summary using the synonyms. Which paragraph is more powerful? Check your work. If either paragraph sounds stilted, work to make it more natural. Did you make any other changes to the paragraph besides making the five word changes?

KEY WORD	SYNONYM

Literary Techniques

Tone: *Tone* is the writer's attitude toward a subject, and the writer's choice of words and details sets the tone. The overall tone of a speech may determine the success or failure of its purposes. What is Henry's overriding tone throughout his speech?

Directions: Examine the notes you have made about the effectiveness of Henry's ideas throughout the speech, and justify your opinions. List three examples and support your choices.

TONE

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Foreshadowing: *Foreshadowing* is the use of information to hint at what is to come. It is a literary device used both in fiction and nonfiction and can be direct or subtle.

Directions: Identify three foreshadowing elements that Henry employs, and his intended outcome.

FORESHADOWING	INTENDED OUTCOME

Character Analysis: In the study of literature, the focus on *characterization* is fundamental to the understanding of the work as a whole. In a speech, the characters are in the form of the speaker and the audience. Much of human nature can be inferred from what a speaker says and how he or she says it. The perceived reaction of an audience can also be revealing. From a written speech, the focus on the use of language, organization of ideas, and personal reflections can enable us to determine the character of the speaker.

Directions: Cite three passages where Henry references his own character traits or those of others, explain the qualities of those traits, and address what the use of the phrases was intended to accomplish.

CHARACTER TRAIT	QUALITIES	INTENT

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Respond to the Speech

Textual Response: Find a section of the text that appeals to you. Explain what thoughts and connections come to mind when you read this part of the speech.

WHAT THE TEXT SAID	THOUGHTS AND CONNECTIONS Write at least four sentences.