

Lesson 06: Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will summarize the text of Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death."
- Students will analyze a seminal U.S. document of historical and literary significance, including how it addresses related themes about freedom.
- Student will determine a central idea of the text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.
- Students will cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Students will analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
- Students will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- Students will analyze in detail how the author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences and paragraphs.
- Students will determine Henry's purpose in the text and analyze how he uses rhetoric to advance that purpose.

Patrick Henry, a former attorney, farmer, and politician, was one of America's Founding Fathers and a respected speaker. He is especially known for his speeches that helped to foment the American Revolution, and he is also partly responsible for the Bill of Rights. He is most well-known for his "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech.

Grading Rubric:

To get a 10: All answers are correct, substantial, well-written, and offer ample evidence from the text.

To get a 9: All answers are correct and sufficient to meet the objectives. But up to 2 are too brief or do not contain enough evidence from the text.

To get an 8: All answer are sufficient to meet the objectives. But up to 4 are too brief or do not contain enough evidence from the text, OR 1 may miss the mark, reflecting an inaccurate reading of the speech.

To get a 7: Although an earnest attempt has been made to give a thorough answer to all questions, up to 4 answers miss the mark, reflecting an inaccurate reading of parts of the essay.

To get a 6: Although an earnest attempt has been made to give a thorough answer to all questions, and it is obvious that student has read the text, up to 6 answers miss the mark, reflecting an inaccurate reading of parts of the essay.

To get a 5: Reserved for cheating, plagiarism, or incomplete lesson (with administrative approval).

Assignment:

Do not submit text that you have copied from sources, including websites. All of your work should be in your own words. Using copied text would be considered plagiarism. For more information, review our page on [Plagiarism and Citation](#)

Part A: Read the text at the link provided below. You may wish to read it more than once in order to understand it fully. Once you have understood it, you are to provide a summary of the work. Remember that summarizing is to briefly restate the main points of the content of the passage provided. Summarize the text in only five or fewer sentence:

["Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death"](#)

Part B: Once you have read and summarized Henry's work, answer the questions below in complete sentences, and explain your answers:

1. What did you think of Henry's speech?
2. What is the central idea of Henry's speech?
3. For the answer to the last question, where does the central idea become clear in the speech? Be sure to support your answer with evidence from the text.
4. How is the speech organized, and how does the organization affect the speech?
5. Why, in the third paragraph, does Henry say, "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience"? What point is he trying to make to his audience? Use the text to determine your answer.
6. In that same paragraph, Henry says, "They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging."

What is the image that Henry is trying to make for his audience about why the British military is gathering "fleets and armies" in America?

7. What does he mean when he says the phrase, "martial array," just before the quote above?

8. In the very first paragraph, Henry states, "But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope 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." What was Henry trying to accomplish with this sentence? What is it that others see in "different lights" specifically?

9. How well do you think Henry made his point, and how did his use of rhetoric persuade you?

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