

English SLO Pre-assessment 2 Questions:

"Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death!"

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Introduction:

To avoid interference from Lieutenant-Governor Dunmore and his Royal Marines, the Second Virginia Convention met March 20, 1775 inland at Richmond--in what is now called St. John's Church--instead of the Capitol in Williamsburg. Delegate Patrick Henry presented resolutions to raise a militia, and to put Virginia in a posture of defense. Henry's opponents urged caution and patience until the crown replied to Congress' latest petition for reconciliation.

On the 23rd, Henry presented a proposal to organize a volunteer company of cavalry or infantry in every Virginia county. By custom, Henry addressed himself to the Convention's president, Peyton Randolph of Williamsburg. Henry's words were not transcribed, but no one who heard them forgot their eloquence, or Henry's closing words: "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

Henry's first biographer, William Wirt of Maryland, was three-years-old in 1775. An assistant federal prosecutor in Aaron Burr's trial for treason at Richmond in 1807, and later attorney general of the United States, Wirt began to collect materials for the biography in 1808, nine years after Henry's death. From the recollections of men like Thomas Jefferson, Wirt reconstructed an account of Henry's life, including the remarks presented below.

Excerpt:

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? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those 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. 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 inevitable² and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace² 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!

<http://www.history.org/almanack/life/politics/giveme.cfm>

Argument Writing:

Compose a well-written five-paragraph essay, using information from the text, addressing the following prompt:

Every citizen should have to serve in the military for a minimum of one year.

Refer to the attached rubric.

Points Earned: _____/65

I Can Standard	Teacher Evaluation	Points Possible	Points Earned
I can write the assigned paper length.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can format my paper using MLA format including correct use of header, font, margins, title etc.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can write a clear introduction including a hook sentence.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can write a claim(s) and support it with valid reasons and enough evidence to build an argument that analyzes a topic or a text.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can write clear and well-founded claim(s) and distinguish the claim(s) from different or opposing claims.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can organize claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence in a logical sequence.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can provide specific evidence that supports both the claim(s) and the counterclaim(s) and identifies the pros and cons of each.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can provide evidence in a way that anticipates what the audience knows and believes about the issue.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can structure and vary words, phrases, and clauses in sentences to unify the text.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can use formal words and language to write about an issue or topic.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can conclude my writing with a statement that backs claims in my argument.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can follow spelling and grammar conventions in my paper.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
I can develop and strengthen my writing by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting.	1 Emerging Mastery 3 Progressing Mastery 5 Mastery	5	
	TOTAL POINTS	65	