

Closely read the passage below. Then select the best answer to each

Patrick Henry's Speech

Speech of Patrick Henry, delivered in the House of Delegates of Virginia, in support of his motion to put the colony in a state of defense against the encroachments¹ of Great Britain, March, 1775.

5 ...Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We [American colonists] are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that syren [siren], till she seduces our judgments. Is it 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 our temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it might cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it. 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
10 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 insidious² 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, comports³ with those warlike preparations which cover
15 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 subjugation⁴—the last arguments to which kings resort. 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 motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this
20 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 purpose—they are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains, which the British ministry have been so long forging. 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 any thing new to offer upon 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?⁵ What terms shall we find, which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done every thing that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have
30 petitioned—we have remonstrated⁶ we have supplicated—we have prostrated⁷ 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.

35 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 inviolate 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
40 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!

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 our House? Shall
45 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
50 we possess; are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us.

Sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God, who presides over the

55 Sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God, who presides over the destinies of nations, and 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 now 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!!!

60 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!

—Patrick Henry

excerpted and adapted from *The Mental Guide, Being a Compend of the First Principles of Metaphysics, and a System of Attaining an Easy and Correct Mode of Thought and Style in Composition by Transcription; Predicated on the Analysis of the Human Mind*, 1828
Marsh & Capen, and Richardson & Lord

¹encroachments — aggressions

²insidious — slyly deceitful

³comports — agrees

⁴subjugation — oppression

⁵supplication — begging

⁶remonstrated — pleaded in protest

⁷prostrated — laid down in a humble manner

15 Lines 1 through 3 help to frame the speaker's argument by

- ① addressing human frailties
- ② exposing outside criticisms
- ③ explaining common misconceptions
- ④ proposing certain compromises

16 Lines 6 and 7 help to express the speaker's desire to

- ① locate the necessary resources
- ② rely on outside assistance
- ③ insist on short-term solutions
- ④ confront the unpleasant reality

17 The major effect of the figurative language used in lines 22 and 23 ("they are sent . . . so long forging") is to emphasize which two points?

- loyalty of subjects
- threat of attack
- respect for authority
- penalty for treason
- loss of freedom

20 Which phrase clarifies the speaker's view of Britain's intentions for the colonies?

- ① "gracious reception" (line 14)
- ② "war and subjugation" (line 18)
- ③ "inestimable privileges" (line 37)
- ④ "irresolution and inaction" (line 45)

21 The purpose of the rhetorical questions in lines 43 through 47 is to emphasize the consequence of

22 What is the main message delivered by the speaker to his audience in lines 47 through 50?

- ① If we fight together we will win.
- ② The state will supply us with arms.
- ③ The enemy is weaker than first thought.
- ④ We must outlaw slavery forever.

23 As used in line 54, the word "election" most nearly means the same as which two words?

- choice
- support

- 18 The overall purpose of the first paragraph (lines 1 through 34) is to
- ① explain the role of government
 - ② question the importance of reason
 - ③ analyze the existing situation
 - ④ expose the failings of law
- 19 In the context of the speech, the purpose of the statement, “They tell us, sir, that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary” (line 42) is to
- ① introduce a counterclaim
 - ② address a financial crisis
 - ③ explain a confusing concept
 - ④ defend a known fact

- enemies
- alternative
- politics

24 The speaker’s overall tone may best be described as

