

Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death

by Patrick Henry

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: arduous, avert, extenuate, indulge, insidious, reconciliation, solace, subjugation, supplication, vigilant

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Vocabulary Preview 2

Answer Key — Preview 3

Caution: share only if self-checking

OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context 4

Answer Key — In Context 5

Caution: do not share with students

About the Pre-Reading Activity (open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade):

Students preview 10 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz (use after reading, or skip):

Same words, now in real excerpts from the text, with questions that build reading and analytical skills.



More Short Works

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Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

1. At last, they won their long and **arduous** fight for independence.
 - A. difficult
 - B. rewarding
 - C. profitable
2. Leaders met to discuss how to **avert** a crisis.
 - A. explain
 - B. predict
 - C. prevent
3. He tried to **extenuate** his crime by saying he had no choice.
 - A. explain in great detail
 - B. make seem less serious
 - C. make seem more urgent
4. I **indulge** in sweets more than is good for me.
 - A. complain about
 - B. give in to
 - C. stay away from
5. The increasing debt is an **insidious** problem.
 - A. temporary and minor
 - B. obvious and severe
 - C. harmful in a hidden way
6. After the war, **reconciliation** between the two nations took years.
 - A. restoring friendly relations
 - B. gaining military advantage
 - C. achieving total independence
7. She offered words of **solace** and he felt better.
 - A. offense
 - B. comfort
 - C. oversight
8. The essay discusses that era's **subjugation** of women in a male-dominated world.
 - A. separating people from the rest of society
 - B. forcing people to submit to another's control
 - C. encouraging people to cooperate
9. She knelt in **supplication** before the king.
 - A. quiet, dignified silence
 - B. humble, earnest pleading
 - C. defiant, angry protest
10. A good guard remains **vigilant** at all times.
 - A. hidden and unseen
 - B. calm and relaxed
 - C. watchful and alert

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

temporal salvation — earthly well-being, not spiritual salvation

betrayed with a kiss — a reference to the Bible story in which Judas identified Jesus to his enemies with a kiss; it suggests being deceived by what looks friendly

comports — is consistent with

we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves — we have protested, begged, and humbled ourselves

spurned with contempt — rejected disrespectfully

so formidable an adversary — so powerful and intimidating an enemy

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	A
2	C
3	B
4	B
5	C
6	A
7	B
8	B
9	B
10	C

Vocabulary in Context

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 “Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope.”

In context, the word “indulge” emphasizes...

- A. the speaker’s approval of remaining hopeful
- B. a weakness for comforting but false beliefs
- C. a careful examination of the available evidence

2 “Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty?”

The speaker most likely includes the word “arduous” in order to...

- A. praise the delegates for their patience and endurance
- B. suggest the colonists should abandon a fight they cannot win
- C. stress that the struggle’s difficulty demands clear-eyed action

3 “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?”

Which choice best describes the speaker’s attitude toward the gentlemen who “solace” themselves with hope?

- A. sympathetic, understanding their need for reassurance
- B. critical, viewing their comfort as self-deception
- C. indifferent, showing no concern for their beliefs

4 “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.”

It can reasonably be inferred that the speaker views the British response to the petition as...

- A. an honest attempt at compromise
- B. a deceptive show of friendliness
- C. an openly hostile rejection

5 “Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation?”

The information in this excerpt primarily functions to...

- A. remind the delegates that peace comes through strength
- B. acknowledge Britain’s genuine desire for peaceful relations
- C. reveal that military preparations contradict claims of peace

6 “These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort.”

According to the speaker, the British fleets and armies are intended to...

- A. force the colonists into submission
- B. protect the colonists from foreign threats
- C. demonstrate the king’s respect for the colonies

7 “We have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on.”

The passage most strongly suggests that...

- A. peaceful efforts to prevent conflict have been exhausted
- B. the colonists have not yet tried every option for peace
- C. the approaching storm will delay military preparations

8 “Our supplications have been disregarded.”

Which statement is best supported by this excerpt?

- A. The colonists have refused to communicate with Britain
- B. The colonists’ formal protests were carefully considered
- C. The colonists’ earnest pleas have been ignored

9 “The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave.”

Which choice best describes how this sentence functions in the text as a whole?

- A. It admits that the colonists lack the strength to fight
- B. It reassures the colonists that determination can overcome superior force
- C. It warns the colonists that their enemies are more watchful

10 “The war is inevitable... It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter.”

As it is used in this excerpt, the word “extenuate” most nearly suggests that it does not help to...

- A. panic and default to a fight-or-flight response
- B. further worsen an already tense situation
- C. downplay the seriousness of the situation

ANSWER KEY
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#	KEY	TEACHER NOTE
1	B	
2	C	
3	B	
4	B	
5	C	
6	A	
7	A	
8	C	
9	B	
10	C	