

Speech to the Second Virginia Convention

Patrick Henry

How does Henry disagree with respected opponents without weakening the force of his own position?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Opening through the freedom-or-slavery framing

TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

START	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.
END	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.
PASSAGE ID	sec-henry-virginia-01

THE MOVE

Analyze how concession can strengthen a disagreement

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Henry begins by granting patriotism and ability to speakers he opposes. That concession protects his credibility and separates disagreement from personal disrespect. He then increases the stakes dramatically, arguing that the issue is too important for ceremony or silence.

MARK

Underline the praise Henry gives his opponents. Circle words that signal contrast. Box the freedom-or-slavery framing. Draw an arrow from the concession to the stronger disagreement that follows.

NOTICE

- What does Henry concede before disagreeing?
- Why might he need to protect himself from appearing disrespectful?
- How does the freedom-or-slavery framing change the scale of the debate?

THINK

Answer provisionally: How does Henry disagree with respected opponents without weakening the force of his own position? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

STRONG ANSWER

Henry strengthens his disagreement by first acknowledging his opponents' patriotism and ability. That concession makes his opposition appear principled rather than personal, allowing him to argue more forcefully that the issue is too serious for politeness to suppress open debate.

EVIDENCE

Use the opening praise and the later freedom-or-slavery contrast.

WATCH FOR

Do not label the opening as mere flattery. Explain what rhetorical work the concession performs before Henry raises the stakes.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

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TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION	Opening through the freedom-or-slavery framing
PASSAGE ID	sec-henry-virginia-01

Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

START

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.

END

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.

READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** Underline the praise Henry gives his opponents. Circle words that signal contrast. Box the freedom-or-slavery framing. Draw an arrow from the concession to the stronger disagreement that follows.
2. **NOTICE** What does Henry concede before disagreeing? Why might he need to protect himself from appearing disrespectful? How does the freedom-or-slavery framing change the scale of the debate?
3. **THINK** Answer provisionally: How does Henry disagree with respected opponents without weakening the force of his own position?
4. **WRITE** Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. **CLOSE** Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.