

Liberty Tree

Thomas Paine

How does Paine turn an abstract political idea into something readers are asked to defend physically?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Poem - complete poem

TEACHER SETUP

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

START	In a chariot of light, from the regions of day,
END	In defense of our Liberty Tree.
PASSAGE ID	sec-paine-liberty-01

THE MOVE

Analyze how an extended metaphor moves from ideal to obligation

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Liberty begins as a celestial gift, becomes a rooted tree that nourishes a community, and ends as something tyrannical powers seek to cut down. The metaphor therefore converts political principle into a living shared object whose survival requires action.

MARK

Underline details that make Liberty seem heavenly or ideal. Circle details that make the tree practical or communal. Box the threat to the tree and the final call to defend it.

NOTICE

- Why does the poem begin with Liberty arriving from above?
- How does the tree become part of ordinary communal life?
- What changes when rulers are described as trying to cut it down?

THINK

Answer provisionally: How does Paine turn an abstract political idea into something readers are asked to defend physically? 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

Paine makes liberty defensible by giving it a physical life cycle. It arrives as an ideal, takes root among ordinary people, supports their community, and then faces destruction, so the final political call feels like the defense of something living and shared.

EVIDENCE

Use one image from the trees arrival or growth and one from the final threat or call to arms.

WATCH FOR

Do not stop at saying the tree symbolizes liberty. Explain how the metaphor changes across the poem and creates an obligation to act.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 12 · LESSON 321

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WORK	Liberty Tree
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TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION	Poem - complete poem
PASSAGE ID	sec-paine-liberty-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

In a chariot of light, from the regions of day,

END

In defense of our Liberty Tree.

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 details that make Liberty seem heavenly or ideal. Circle details that make the tree practical or communal. Box the threat to the tree and the final call to defend it.
2. NOTICE Why does the poem begin with Liberty arriving from above? How does the tree become part of ordinary communal life? What changes when rulers are described as trying to cut it down?
3. THINK Answer provisionally: How does Paine turn an abstract political idea into something readers are asked to defend physically?
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.