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**Patrick Henry: “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death”**  
**March 23, 1775**

**S:** The nation’s struggle for independence, specifically in Virginia where British forces are planning to station their barracks and potentially situate unless “we”, the American citizens, raise our guard.

**O:** Patrick Henry gave this speech on March 23, 1775 in St. John’s Church, Richmond, VA. The speech was a rallying cry to gain supporters for a war against Britain, which would begin less than a month later with the battles of Lexington and Concord. The speech was in response to many acts that the British parliament had passed that angered the colonists and was given in support for a Revolutionary war against the British.

**A:** Virginia delegates and eventually the nation after it is published. “sir” refers to the President of the Convention.

**P:** To provoke the organization a voluntary militia in every Virginia county in defense of the British military and encourage the preexisting anti-British attitude of the Revolutionary Era.

**S:** Patrick Henry’s style of persuasion uses no positive imagery or diction. His statements are invective and fierce especially when speaking of the British in order to emphasize their hostility. He answers his own rhetorical questions with short, concise ideas and thoughts to present a logical resolution.

**Tone:** The tone is passionate, confident, upset, dramatic, and persuasive. Henry speaks somewhat provocatively when asking rhetorical questions to his audience and is stern when addressing what he feels “we” have to do.

**Exigence:** Patrick Henry gave this speech mainly out of his strong desire for the Colonies to become independent. He felt that the British had already set the precedent for war and that it is our only option left in successfully breaking off from British rule.

**Syllogism:** “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 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” (2).

- Major Premise - The only way to judge the future is by looking at the past.
- Minor Premise - By judging the past actions of the British ministry, Patrick Henry and

other members of Congress can predict what they will do to America in the future.

- Conclusion - Based on the past ways the British have treated the Americans, it can be predicted that the British will continue to oppress the Americans and war with them is needed.

**Enthymeme:** “The millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty...which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us.”

- Major Premise - It is assumed that the cause of liberty renders invincibility; presumably under God.
- Minor Premise - Americans have a cause which is just and libertarian. “armed in the holy cause of liberty...which we possess,”
- Conclusion - By the righteousness of our cause, “we” are invincible under God.