

## SAT Practice Paragraph

**Directions:** Read the directions in the box below. Annotate evidence of these different rhetorical elements in the passage from Patrick Henry's, "Speech to the Virginia Convention."

As you read the passage below, consider how Patrick Henry uses

- Evidence, such as facts or examples to support claims
- Reasoning to develop ideas and to connect claims and evidence
- Stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion to add power to expressed ideas

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 every house? Shall 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 we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who 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 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<sup>2</sup> and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

Write a paragraph in which you explain how Patrick Henry builds an argument to persuade fellow Virginians that the colonists need to bear arms against the King of England. In your paragraph, analyze how Henry uses the features listed in the box above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your paragraph should not explain whether you agree with Henry's claims, but rather explain how Henry builds an argument to persuade his audience.