

Question 2

Suggested time—40 minutes.

(This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

The passage that follows is an excerpt from Emmeline Pankhurst's "Freedom or Death" speech, delivered in Hartford, Connecticut on November 13, 1913. Pankhurst was a British political activist and leader of the women's suffrage movement in Britain who was widely criticized for her militancy. The following speech addresses her critics and defends the tactics of the suffragettes. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-developed essay, analyze the rhetorical strategies Pankhurst uses to convey her message.

Tonight I am not here to advocate woman suffrage.

American suffragists can do that very well for themselves.

I am here as a soldier who has temporarily left the field
 Line of battle in order to explain—it seems strange it should have
 5 to be explained—what civil war is like when civil war is
 waged by women....Since I am a woman it is necessary to
 explain why women have adopted revolutionary methods in
 order to win the rights of citizenship. We women, in trying
 to make our case clear, always have to make as part of our
 10 argument, and urge upon men in our audience the fact—a
 very simple fact—that women are human beings.

Suppose the men of Hartford had a grievance, and they
 laid that grievance before their legislature, and the legislature
 obstinately refused to listen to them, or to remove their
 15 grievance, what would be the proper and the constitutional
 and the practical way of getting their grievance removed?
 Well, it is perfectly obvious at the next general election the
 men of Hartford would turn out that legislature and elect a
 new one.

But let the men of Hartford imagine that they were
 not in the position of being voters at all, that they were
 governed without their consent being obtained, that the
 legislature turned an absolutely deaf ear to their demands,
 what would the men of Hartford do then? They couldn't vote
 25 the legislature out. They would have to choose; they would
 have to make a choice of two evils: they would either have to
 submit indefinitely to an unjust state of affairs, or they would
 have to rise up and adopt some of the antiquated means by
 which men in the past got their grievances remedied.

Your forefathers decided that they must have
 representation for taxation, many, many years ago. When
 they felt they couldn't wait any longer, when they laid all the
 arguments before an obstinate British government that they
 could think of, and when their arguments were absolutely
 35 disregarded, when every other means had failed, they began
 by the tea party at Boston, and they went on until they had
 won the independence of the United States of America.

It is about eight years since the word *militant* was first
 used to describe what we were doing. It was not militant at
 all, except that it provoked militancy on the part of those who
 40 were opposed to it. When women asked questions in political
 meetings and failed to get answers, they were not doing
 anything militant. In Great Britain it is a custom, a time-

honored one, to ask questions of candidates for parliament
 45 and ask questions of members of the government. No man
 was ever put out of a public meeting for asking a question.
 The first people who were put out of a political meeting for
 asking questions were women; they were brutally ill-used;
 they found themselves in jail before 24 hours had expired.

We were called militant, and we were quite willing to
 50 accept the name. We were determined to press this question
 of the enfranchisement of women to the point where we were
 no longer to be ignored by the politicians.

You have two babies very hungry and wanting to be fed.
 55 One baby is a patient baby, and waits indefinitely until its
 mother is ready to feed it. The other baby is an impatient
 baby and cries lustily, screams and kicks and makes
 everybody unpleasant until it is fed. Well, we know perfectly
 well which baby is attended to first. That is the whole history
 60 of politics. You have to make more noise than anybody else,
 you have to make yourself more obtrusive than anybody else,
 you have to fill all the papers more than anybody else, in
 fact you have to be there all the time and see that they do not
 snout you under.

When you have warfare things happen; people suffer;
 the noncombatants suffer as well as the combatants. And
 so it happens in civil war. When your forefathers threw
 the tea into Boston Harbor, a good many women had
 to go without their tea. It has always seemed to me an
 70 extraordinary thing that you did not follow it up by throwing
 the whiskey overboard; you sacrificed the women; and there
 is a good deal of warfare for which men take a great deal
 of glorification which has involved more practical sacrifice
 on women than it has on any man. It always has been so.
 75 The grievances of those who have got power, the influence
 of those who have got power commands a great deal of
 attention; but the wrongs and the grievances of those people
 who have no power at all are apt to be absolutely ignored.
 That is the history of humanity right from the beginning.

Well, in our civil war people have suffered, but you cannot
 make omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot have civil
 war without damage to something. The great thing is to see
 that no more damage is done than is absolutely necessary,
 that you do just as much as will arouse enough feeling to
 85 bring about peace, to bring about an honorable peace for the
 combatants; and that is what we have been doing.

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We entirely prevented stockbrokers in London from telegraphing to stockbrokers in Glasgow and vice versa: for one whole day telegraphic communication was entirely
90 stopped. I am not going to tell you how it was done. I am not going to tell you how the women got to the mains and cut the wires; but it was done. It was done, and it was proved to the authorities that weak women, suffrage women, as we are supposed to be, had enough ingenuity to create a situation
95 of that kind. Now, I ask you, if women can do that, is there any limit to what we can do except the limit we put upon ourselves?

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