

# bio.

CLASSROOM



## **Bio4Kids: Patrick Henry (1736–1799)**

### Brief Outline

When Patrick Henry talked, people listened. Remember the famous phrase “Give me liberty or give me death”? Well, Henry said this during one of his speeches. Henry was a famous politician, lawyer, and speaker. He was born in Hanover County, Virginia, on May 29, 1736.

Henry had little schooling, but learned a lot from his father John. The elder Henry was well educated and served as a colonel in the military and a justice in the Hanover County Court. At first, Patrick Henry tried being a farmer and a storekeeper but wasn't successful. He studied law and passed the bar in 1760. He was an excellent lawyer and soon had lots of clients. He became known as a clever and talented public speaker.

Even though Patrick Henry was a member of the House of Burgesses, which was part of the colonial government, he spoke out for the rights of the colonists. Henry thought the colonies should have the right to make their own laws. He went on to play an important role in the Revolutionary War. Henry was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1774 and 1775. He served as the governor of Virginia from 1776 to 1779 and again from 1784 to 1786. As governor, he also provided support to General George Washington during the war.

Henry was involved in the political debate over two important documents. He was against the United States Constitution in 1787. He thought it didn't support the rights of individuals and states strongly enough. He did, however, help get another important document accepted. In 1788, he helped pass the Bill of Rights in Virginia. The Bill of Rights consists of the first 10 amendments, or additions to, the U.S. Constitution. Henry died on June 6, 1799, at his home Red Hill in Virginia.

### Related Websites

Visit Patrick Henry's home

<http://www.redhill.org/>