

Name:

Date:

Class/Period:

Battles of the Texas Revolution: Victory or Death Letter

Instructions: Think - Pair - Share Exercise. On the second day, the Alamo defenders make their stand against the invading army of Santa Anna. William B. Travis writes a letter calling for reinforcements.

Background: On February 24, 1836, Travis wrote his Letter from the Alamo, also known as the Victory or Death letter, which is one of Texas' best-known documents. The letter calling for reinforcements was carried by Captain Albert Martin of Gonzales. Martin actually adds to Travis' letter saying "When I left there was but 150 determined to do or die tomorrow I leave for Bejar with what men I can raise & will be there Monday [a?] at all events."

To the People of Texas & All Americans in the World-

Fellow Citizens & compatriots-

"I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna - I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man - The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken. I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls"

"I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch.

...VICTORY OR DEATH."

William Barret Travis.
Lt. Col.comdt

Analysis Questions:

1. What does Travis mean when writes “The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken.” support your response with evidence.
2. Based on the information in the second paragraph, what is Travis willing to do?
3. What was Travis’ overall tone in this letter?