

Elizabeth I Armada Speech

What can you learn from Elizabeth I's Armada speech?

King Philip II of Spain launched an invasion on England in July 1588. England fought back and was triumphant against the Armada fleet.

Read the following Elizabeth I Armada speech written in modern day English.

My loving people,

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit our selves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust.

I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm: to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge and rewarder of everyone of your virtues in the field.

I know, already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and we do assure you in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time, my lieutenant general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.

Elizabeth I

Activity One

You will need three different colours.

1. Colour 1: Underline or highlight words or phrases that show Elizabeth I inspire her men.
2. Colour 2: Underline or highlight words or phrases that show Elizabeth I to be a fighter.
3. Colour 3: Underline or highlight words or phrases that show how they will claim victory.

Activity Two Extension

Read Queen Elizabeth I speech and answer the following questions.

1. Write down three words that you think describe Queen Elizabeth I's speech.

2. What does the speech tell you about Queen Elizabeth I? Use full sentences.

3. How useful is this source in understanding how serious the Armada threat was to England?

