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Literature
Teaching Unit

Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



All Quiet on the
Western Front

by Erich Maria Remarque

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. provide specific incidents from the text that support the main theme of the story, which is that the lives of the young men are destroyed by war even if they survive the combat.
2. identify the following literary devices as they appear in the story:
 - flashback
 - foreshadowing
 - symbolism
3. recognize the difference between first- and third-person narration, identify when the point of view changes, and discuss the reliability of each type of narrator.
4. cite examples from the novel that illustrate the following stylistic techniques:
 - the use of contrasting scenes to make a point (juxtaposition)
 - the use of sensory language
 - the use of apostrophe
5. explain the relationship between the horses and the young recruits.
6. define irony and cite examples of it in the text.
7. explain the significance and irony of the title of the novel.
8. define stereotyping and illustrate, by citing examples from the text, how the author uses it to ridicule teachers, doctors, and political leaders.
9. define the term “foil” and explain how it can be used to contrast characters.
10. explain why the main character’s conflict with authority figures is central to the plot and theme of this novel.
11. explain the impact of the author’s life on the actions and attitudes of the characters.
12. discuss the main character’s relationship with nature and cite examples that demonstrate how the narrator’s descriptions illustrate that life continues in spite of the destructive acts of man.
13. discuss the coping techniques the soldiers use to keep themselves sane in an insane situation.

Questions for Discussion and Essay

1. After researching the terms “romanticism” and “realism,” identify elements of both that are present in this story.
2. Discuss the opinions of several characters regarding ways to solve conflicts between countries without involving young men in war.
3. Paul feels alone when he goes home for a visit. Do you think this is a result of his war experiences, or is it a natural emotion as part of growing up?
4. Discuss the influence of teachers on the life choices of young men and women. Do you think teachers have the same impact today as Paul’s did in 1917?
5. What do you think of Paul’s father’s obvious pride in his soldier son? How would your family react if you were in the service and called to serve in an armed conflict?
6. By citing references from the novel, support or refute the following statement: The soldiers live or die by pure chance.
7. Define symbolism. Make reference to and explain the meaning and significance of three to five symbols used in the story.
8. Review the idea that conflict is central to any plot. Describe the major conflicts in this novel and identify their types.
9. Discuss the author’s use of apostrophe and sensory language to convey emotion.
10. Citing incidents from the novel, support or refute the following statement: Food and comradeship are the two most important parts of a soldier’s life.
11. Explain the following literary devices and cite an example of each:
 - irony
 - symbolism
 - foreshadowing
 - stereotyping
 - foil

All Quiet on the Western Front

Chapter One

VOCABULARY

billets – lodgings, quarters
blighty – slang for a self-inflicted wound
disconcerted – upset, dismayed
dollop – a blob
haricot bean – a dried white bean
helter-skelter – haphazardly; chaotically
jostle – to jiggle; shove
martinets – strict disciplinarians; disciplined officers
misère ouverte – a card term, used to end a game
morphia – a strong pain medicine (morphine)
ostracized – excluded; cast out
palatial – grand; luxurious
pithily – briefly
queue – a line (of people)
quids – pieces of chewing tobacco
trundles – rolls; pushes
voracity – greediness
wan – pale; gray

1. In the first chapter, several soldiers are introduced. Briefly identify the following characters:

Albert Kropp: _____

Müller: _____

Leer: _____

Paul Bäumer: _____

Tjaden: _____

Haie Westhus: _____

Detering: _____

Stanislaus Katczinsky: _____

- 3. Support the following statement: Paul describes the natural beauty of Klosterberg because he thinks of the beauty of nature whenever he tries to hold onto life.

- 4. Find a passage in this chapter that illustrates why Paul must distance himself emotionally from the death of his friend or be lost himself.

- 5. Explain how the boots are a symbol of expendability of the young soldiers at the front.

- 2. Cite an example of apostrophe in this chapter. Why does Paul believe “To no man does the earth mean so much as to the soldier”?

- 3. Cite a quotation in this chapter that is an example of the following statement: Nature continues as usual despite the destruction of war.

- 4. Support the following statement: Kat is an authority figure Paul still respects because he has the wisdom and insight necessary to survive the war.

- 5. Support the following statement: The horses are used as a symbol for the innocent young men sent to the front lines. Do you think the suffering horses affect the men more profoundly than the suffering young soldier who burrows into Paul for safety does?

Chapter Seven

VOCABULARY

affably – pleasantly; cordially
apoplexy – strokes
askance – disapprovingly
contemptuously – scornfully; disdainfully
flanked – bordered
foraging – hunting; scavenging
Froggies – slang for French soldiers
laudable – praiseworthy
ludicrous – ridiculous, absurd
menacing – intimidating; frightening
precipitously – steeply
quixotic – benevolent; brave
schnapps – a type of strong liquor
sluices – channels
tremulous – trembling; fearful
upbraid – to scold, reproach
writhes – twists

1. What does Himmelstoss do to get on good terms with Paul and his friends?

2. How does Paul explain the fact that the soldiers are almost happy at the field depot?

3. Support the following statement: The poster of the young girl makes Paul want to be young and happy again, but his encounter with the young brunette shows that Paul will never be young and happy again.

