



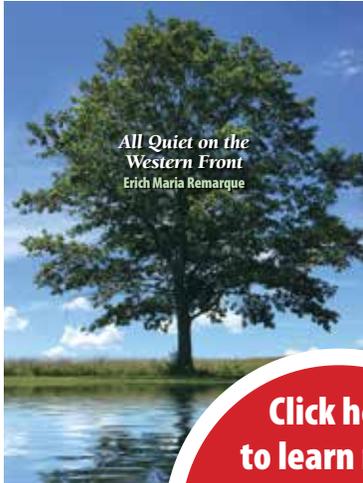
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# Sample

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**Response Journal**

Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*All Quiet on the  
Western Front*  
Erich Maria Remarque

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*All Quiet on the  
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## *Response Journal*

### **To The Student**

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

## Chapter 1

1. As a prologue to *All Quiet on the Western Front*, author Erich Maria Remarque writes, “This book is to be neither an accusation nor a confession, and least of all an adventure, for death is not an adventure to those who stand face to face with it. It will try simply to tell of a generation of men who, even though they may have escaped shells, were destroyed by the war.” As you read these words, how do you feel about the book as it begins? Write down your thoughts based on these first words from the author.
2. *All Quiet on the Western Front* focuses on a group of German soldiers who are fighting in World War I. Research and write down the general main causes of World War I. Imagine you are a German official who is a proponent of the war. Write a speech you will deliver to top administration officials giving your reasons for joining the war.
3. All four of Paul’s friends who enlisted in the war from the same class did so as volunteers. Look up the word *volunteer* in the dictionary and write down the different definitions. Then, describe any situations in which you have been a volunteer. In your description, be sure to include your motivation for volunteering as well as the emotions you experienced during your service.
4. Throughout *All Quiet on the Western Front*, you will meet many characters with whom Paul comes in contact during his time spent as a soldier. Keep a running list of all the characters you meet, and next to each character’s name, write that person’s relationship to Paul and his feelings toward that person. As you read the book, write down how, if at all, the characters change as a result of the war.

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*All Quiet on the Western Front*

27. Himmelstoss has been transferred to the front because he has reportedly been too hard on recruits. This action gives Tjaden the courage to tell Himmelstoss exactly how he feels about him; however, Himmelstoss reports the insubordination to the officials. Tjaden is given a fair hearing, and the men have a chance to give testimony about Himmelstoss and his treatment of them.

Imagine this trial has gone to a larger court after the war is over, and you are the prosecuting attorney. Write an outline of your opening argument for the trial.

28. At the end of the chapter, Paul and Kat catch a goose and cook it for dinner. During this time, Paul reflects on how close the two of them are, calling themselves “brothers” and describing their “complete communion.” Do you have someone who is not a family member but for whom you feel such communion? Describe this person and your relationship.

## **Chapter 12**

52. In this chapter there is a hint of peace and the end of war. However, Paul feels that, in some ways, he and the rest of the soldiers are “weary, broken, burnt out, rootless, and without hope.” However, he also does not completely rule out a somewhat meaningful life once the war ends.

You are one of Paul’s friends in his hometown. Write a letter of encouragement to Paul, reminding him of all the things at home he enjoys during peacetime.

53. Paul believes that no generation besides his own would ever understand the soldiers’ plight of war as well as the difficulty in returning to a post-war world. You are a newspaper reporter. Research the trauma that many veterans face upon returning home after war and write a newspaper article that includes your findings.
54. At the end of the book, Paul dies, and “his face had an expression of calm, as though almost glad the end had come.” Do you think this is an appropriate ending to the book? Support your answer with details from the book.

## **Wrap Up**

55. Paul and all of his closet friends die in combat at some point in the book. Choose two of these men and write obituaries for them. You may need to look at the obituary page in your newspaper.
56. A novel about a war is depressing but also enlightening as it sheds much light on the realities of death and destruction. What are your impressions of the book? What emotions did the book evoke as you read it? Write a book review for a magazine which shares your opinions.
57. Imagine that Paul did not die in the war and is still alive today. Make a list of questions you would ask him.