



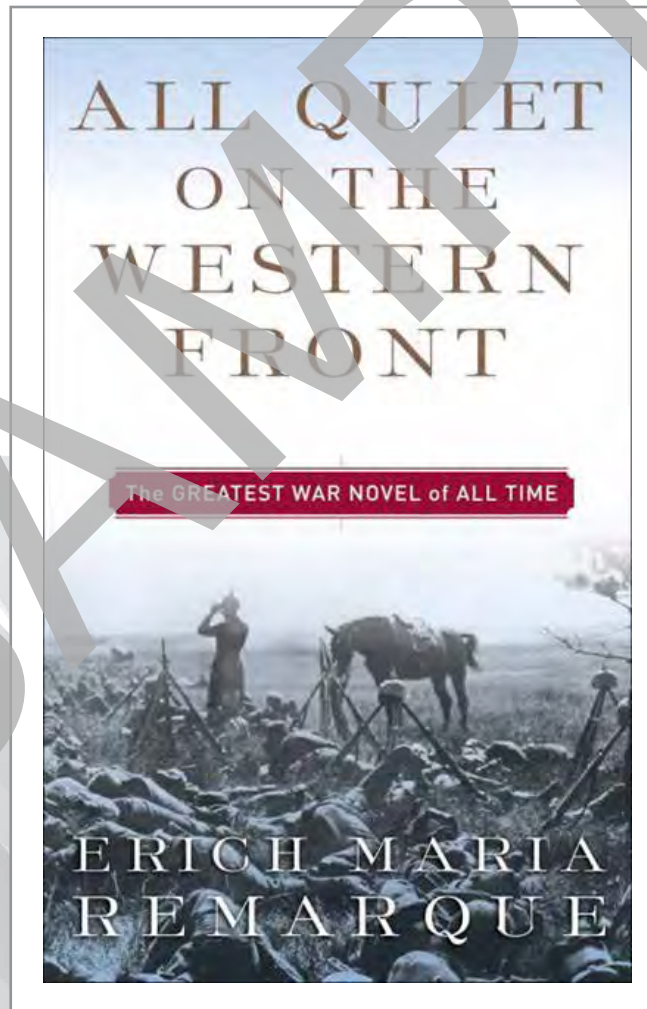
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

All Quiet on the Western Front

Erich Remarque



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

All Quiet on the Western Front

Erich Remarque

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

ISBN 978-1-50203-567-7

Copyright infringement is a violation of Federal Law.

© 2020 by Novel Units, Inc., St. Louis, MO. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from Novel Units, Inc.

Reproduction of any part of this publication for an entire school or for a school system, by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers, or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

Novel Units is a registered trademark of Conn Education.

Printed in the United States of America.

To order, contact your
local school supply store, or:

Toll-Free Fax: 877.716.7272

Phone: 888.650.4224

3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

sales@novelunits.com

novelunits.com

Table of Contents

Plot Summary	3
Background Information: World War I	4
Background on the Novelist	5
Initiating Activities	5
Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, Writing Ideas, Activities	
Chapters 1-2	8
Literary Analysis: Setting.....	10
Chapters 3-4	10
Literary Analysis: Theme	12
Chapter 5	12
Literary Analysis: Imagery	14
Chapter 6	14
Literary Analysis: Contrast	16
Chapter 7	16
Literary Analysis: Irony.....	18
Chapters 8-9	18
Literary Analysis: Point of View	20
Chapter 10	21
Literary Analysis: Satire	22
Chapters 11-12	22
Literary Analysis: Symbol	24
Post-Reading Extension Activities	25
Questions for Discussion or Writing	25
Suggested Further Reading.....	26
Writing	26
Listening/Speaking	27
Drama	28
Art	28
Music	28
Research	28

Plot Summary

Paul, a 19-year-old German soldier describes his experiences during World War I as they unfold. As the story begins, Paul's friend Josef Behm has already been killed. During a recent attack the English killed nearly half of the company, and as a result the survivors are enjoying extra food and cigarettes. Most of the friends Paul sketches in the first chapter die later: Müller, who still carries his textbooks; Leer, who enjoys visiting the officer's brothel; Tjaden, a skinny locksmith; Albert Kropp, clear-thinker; Haie Westhus, a hearty peat-digger; Detering, a peasant who misses his farm; Kaczinsky, the resourceful 40-year-old leader of the group; Kemmerich, who is at St. Joseph's with a thigh wound.

A letter has come from the friends' former schoolmaster, Kantorek, who had urged his students to enlist. As the group reminisces about Kantorek, Paul reflects on how men like him glorify war and send off the young to fight and die. When Paul and the others visit Kemmerich, whose leg has been amputated, it is clear that he is dying. Müller asks for his boots, but Kemmerich refuses. Later, as Kemmerich weeps, Paul thinks of having to tell Kemmerich's mother. Kemmerich dies, and Paul takes his boots to Müller.

Within three weeks of joining the army, Paul and the others discovered how demeaning the training regimen is—and how abusive their superiors can be. The friends particularly dislike Himmelstoss, a former postmaster who is now a corporal and who took a dislike to Paul and his friends during training. One night they waited to ambush him with a bedsheet, covered him so that he could not see his attackers, and got their revenge by whipping him.

Paul and the others were sent to the front and discovered weeks later that Himmelstoss is arriving at the front, too. Now that he is expected to fight side by side with these men, he tries to befriend them, but Tjaden, Kropp and the others remember past injustices and rebuff him with insults. The unit, which has been given the assignment to put up barbed wire, is bombarded. The men escape into a cemetery, with coffins bursting open around them. Several wounded horses scream in pain. A young recruit is badly injured and Kat and Paul consider shooting him to end his misery. Kat manages to kill a goose while Paul fends off a dog, and the two share a feast with Kropp and Tjaden.

The unit is sent to the front and there is a bloody offensive. Hungry and demoralized, the unit lies in the trenches; one young recruit has a fit; Paul and Kat beat him to prevent him from running out from cover. Paul has disquieting memories of peaceful times, but realizes that "quietness [is] unobtainable for us now." Someone cries in pain for days, but the others cannot find him. Paul finds Himmelstoss cowering in a dug-out and orders him to fight. Haie Westhus is mortally wounded in the back; only 32 men from the Second Company remain alive.

Now that summer is past, the unit is sent to the rear to rest. Paul, Leer, and Kropp arrange a rendezvous with some young women. When Paul goes home on a 17-day leave, he is depressed to find that his mother's health is failing—and that he himself has changed. He no longer belongs at home; his dreams for the future have been shattered.

Background Information: Erich Maria Remarque

Born in Osnabruck, Germany, in 1898, Remarque was wounded five times during combat in World War I. Afterward, he worked as a teacher, a stonecutter, and an assistant editor. Then he attained wealth and international fame with publication of his war novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Successful as it was, some German critics assailed the novel for promoting pacifism and others leveled the opposite charge—that the book was a piece of romantic propaganda for war.

Most of his subsequent nine novels also depict the destruction of youth by war. *The Road Back* describes how difficult it is for the veteran to reintegrate into the civilian world. *Three Comrades* is about three veterans who struggle to readjust in politically ravaged post-war Germany. *Flotsam* and *Arch of Triumph* chronicle the pitiable fate of refugees from Hitler's Germany. *The Black Obelisk* is set during the inflation years after World War I. *Heaven Has No Favorites* is about a girl with TB who falls in love with a race car driver.

In 1929 Remarque moved to Switzerland. When he persisted in criticizing the Nazi party, his books were burned and his movies were banned in Germany. He visited the U.S. in 1939 and moved there eight years later. Although he had become an American citizen, he moved back to Switzerland after World War II. He died in 1970 at age 72.

Initiating Activities

Choose one or more of the following activities to establish an appropriate mind set for the story students are about to read:

1. **Anticipation Guide** (See *Novel Units Student Packet*, Activity #1): Students discuss their opinions of statements which tap themes they will meet in the story. For example:
 - a) Suffering builds a man's character.
 - b) It is wrong to kill another human being.
 - c) Any war could have been prevented.
 - d) Power corrupts.
 - e) Revenge is sweet.
2. **Video:** Two film versions of the novel were made: the Academy Award winning black and white version with Lew Ayres (directed by Lewis Milestone, 1930) and the more recent color version (directed by Delbert Mann, 1979) with Ernest Borgnine.

Writing Idea

Suppose that you are a young cousin of Paul's. You receive a post-card from Paul. Design the post-card with an illustration of a scene from the story on one side. Design a stamp that shows something of the story's setting. Write a brief sentence about the scene in the space where such a description usually appears on a postcard (left-hand corner). Write the message. Don't forget the postmark (time/place). Separate the message from the address by writing the title and author vertically between the two.

Literary Analysis: Imagery

Imagery means the use of details that appeal to the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Reread the section describing how Kat and Paul catch and cook the goose (pages 92-97). Consider how the passage helps readers imagine that they can see, hear, taste, and feel what is being described. List images that appeal to each of the senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch). What feelings are conveyed by the description?

Chapter 6

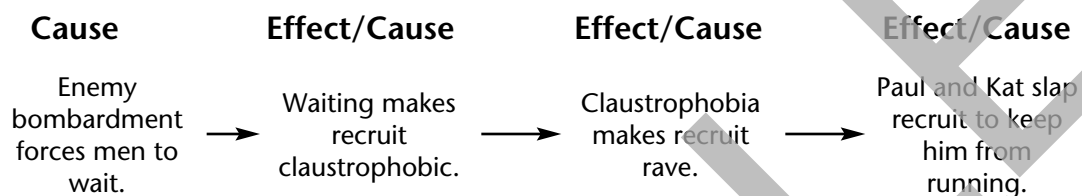
Vocabulary

offensive 99	surpasses 100	unscathed 101	repulsive 102
spades 104	parapet 106	convulsion 106	disabuse 107
glowering 109	claustrophobia 109	impinges 114	automata 115
debauched 115	stupor 115	cowers 116	provisions 118
benediction 118	cloister 119	apparitions 120	allurement 120
inapprehensible 121	solace 123	trenches 124	scrutinize 125
chloroform 126	putrefaction 126	equanimity 127	shrapnel 128
reinforcements 129	hemorrhages 131	cur 132	barrage 132
docile 134	pallid 135		

Discussion Questions

1. What do you "see" as the soldiers march to the front? Why do they joke about the rows of coffins? (They realize that the coffins are meant for them.)
2. Why are Paul and the others in low spirits? How have they been affected by "friendly fire"? (German shells are falling in the trenches, wounding German soldiers, because the barrels are worn out.) Is "friendly fire" still a problem in modern warfare? (yes)

-
- Why does Paul say that “the front is a cage”? (page 101) (The soldiers feel trapped, waiting helplessly for whatever happens.) Why does Paul believe in Chance? (Many times he was saved when he might have been hit.) Do you?
 - How—and why—do the men “make war on the rats”? (The rats are gnawing on the men’s food, so the soldiers hunt the rats by putting bait in the center of the room and waiting with flashlights.)
 - What causes the young recruit to begin to “crack”? What chain of events does this set in motion?



What do you think would have happened if Paul and Kat had ignored his raving? Why do you think some soldiers suffer mental collapse during battle and others do not?

- What does Paul mean, “We do not fight, we defend ourselves against annihilation” (page 113)? (The men are not fighting for a cause; they are instinctively striking out for survival.) Does he regret killing men like the one with the pointed beard? (At the time, he kills madly, without much reflection.)
- As horrible as warfare is, and as exhausted as Paul and the others are, why don’t they just drop and lie where they fall? (They are angry, conditioned to fight, and know they have to do their part, as their friends are doing.)
- Which soldiers are being fed better—the Germans or their enemies? What does this say about the Germans’ prospects for winning the war? [Their enemies have better food, more supplies; the Germans are weakening. Historically (such as in the U. S. Civil War) troops with better provisions are the more successful.]
- What memories from childhood sweep over Paul? (He suddenly remembers a summer evening in the cathedral garden; sitting by the poplars that line a stream, as a boy.) Why do you suppose these memories are always so “quiet” and calm? Why is quietness unattainable at the front (page 121)? What is the significance of the contrast between that observation and the title phrase?
- Why do the soldiers hunt for copper driving-bands and silk parachutes? (souvenirs; presents for women) Does this remind you of anything from more recent wars (such as the Gulf War)?