

Individual Learning Packet

**Teaching Unit**

**The Sun Also Rises**

by Ernest Hemingway

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## Notes

First published in 1926, *The Sun Also Rises* is Hemingway's first novel. Central to the book's focus is that many of the young men who left to fight WWI went to war with idealistic views and visions of glory, but returned disillusioned by the death and destruction they had witnessed. Because life had become empty to them, they tried to fill their lives with sensual pleasures and, thereby, avoid the death they knew was inevitable.

Many critics believe Hemingway includes a character in each of his novels who possesses certain heroic qualities. These characters are courageous men of action, who try to avoid death, but are not afraid of it. The code of behavior these men live by requires them to be courageous, skillful, self-disciplined, and loyal to their friends. The "Hemingway code hero," as he is referred to by literary critics, exhibits grace under pressure.

All references come from the Scribner Paperback Fiction edition of *The Sun Also Rises*, copyright 1926.

## Objectives

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

1. cite and discuss the difficulties the expatriates of WWI faced after the war, specifically, their loss of values, spirituality, and direction in their lives.
2. contrast Jake's realistic approach to life with Cohn's idealistic approach; consider both men's:
  - views of sports
  - definitions of love
  - abilities to fit in socially
  - abilities to accept disappointment
3. discuss the protagonist's opinion of organized religion regarding:
  - love of the Church's rituals and atmosphere
  - his problems praying
  - the inability of the church to help him restructure his life
4. comment on the expatriates' view of death as it relates to both the enjoyment of life and the inevitability of death; discuss bullfighting as it relates to living and dying.
5. state the significance of the novel's title as it relates to:
  - Belmonte being replaced by Romero as the greatest bull fighter
  - the possibility of the expatriates returning to normal lives
6. discuss what you believe would be in the author's definition of friendship.
7. cite and discuss the characters who possess the maturity and ability to control emotions in social situations, and their ability to accept the flaws of others.
8. discuss the author's use of the following literary devices:
  - satire
  - anecdote
  - humor
  - sarcasm
9. point out the author's use of irony as it relates to Brett's love for Jake, and Jake's criticism of Cohn's idealism.
10. identify three incidents in the story where water of some sort helps the protagonist experience renewal.

### Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Write a character sketch of Brett. Why do the men in the story find her so appealing? What are her chances of finding happiness? Does she truly love Jake?
2. In what ways does Cohn allow others to direct his life?
3. How does Jake's war injury affect his relationship with Brett, Bill, and Cohn?
4. Why does Montoya reject Jake at the end of the fiesta?
5. Briefly describe the qualities Romero possesses that make him an exceptional bullfighter
6. Define realism. What evidence is there in the story that Jake is a realist? Contrast Jake's view of life with Cohn's view.
7. Find a passage in the novel where the narrator breaks away from simple first-person narration to speak directly to the reader in order to confide some piece of special information.
8. Why is Brett's first appearance in the story on the arm of a homosexual disturbing to Jake? How is her love for him an example of irony?
9. What does Bill mean when he says, "Let us rejoice in our blessings. Let us utilize the fowls of the air. Let us utilize the product of the vine. Will you utilize a little, brother?"
10. How do the jokes about stuffed dogs tie in with the concept of realism?
11. Why, according to Hemingway, do the Europeans look down on American tourists?
12. If the story about the steers is a metaphor, which of the lives of the characters in the story does it try to illustrate?
13. Find three instances in this novel in which Jake is in or surrounded by water. If water represents rebirth, what kind of rebirth is Jake experiencing in each case?
14. What evidence is there that Jake respects the Catholic Church? Why does he have difficulty praying? For what reasons does Brett feel uncomfortable trying to pray for Romero in church?
15. Define anti-Semitism. How does Cohn's Jewish heritage affect his relationship with the other characters?

# The Sun Also Rises

## BOOK I

### Chapter I

#### VOCABULARY

evidently—apparently  
exploitation—misuse  
frank—candid  
hence—therefore  
inferiority—a sense of being lower in quality or importance  
kiosque—salesperson’s cart of wares

1. Why does Cohn learn to box? What evidence is there in this chapter that the narrator, Jake, does not approve of Cohn’s attitude toward the sport?

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2. List three incidents from this chapter that illustrate Cohn’s willingness to let others direct his life.

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3. What does the last line in this chapter (“I rather liked him and evidently she led him quite a life.”) reveal about the narrator’s opinion of Cohn? In what way can this statement be considered sarcastic?

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4. Hemingway’s writing style is characterized by short, simple sentences. Find a passage in this chapter illustrating this style.

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**Chapter V**

VOCABULARY

**diplomat**—ambassadorial representative  
**dysentery**—diarrhea  
**manipulated**—rearranged  
**obligations**—responsibilities  
**spectacles**—reading glasses

1. Hemingway does not directly tell us anything about how Jake feels when he is talking to the two newspaper men. It is typical of his style to let the reader interpret his meaning from their conversations. What evidence is there in their dialogue that Jake does not consider these men his friends? How are their lives different from Jake’s?

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2. What “facts” does Jake bluntly tell Cohn about Brett? Why does Cohn not believe Jake?

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**Chapter XVI**

VOCABULARY

**braggartly**—boastful  
**careened**—lurched  
**concourse**—gathering  
**inquiringly**—with questions  
**luminous**—bright  
**plain**—rolling country  
**silhouetted**—surrounded by light  
**torero**—bullfighter

1. Why does Jake suggest that Montoya should not give Romero the message from the American ambassador?

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2. What does Jake do that makes Montoya unhappy?

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3. Why do you think Jake decides to help Brett find Romero?

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4. Why might some people consider Jake a traitor for helping Brett form a relationship with Romero?

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