

All Quiet on the Western Front: Final Discussion
English 2H

Review the ancillary texts provided throughout the unit:

- *St. Crispian's Day Speech*
- *The Third of May*
- *Charge of the Light Brigade*
- *300 Speech*
- *Dulce et Decorum Est*
- *The Hero*
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Finding your own source:

- Find your own source (painting, poem, speech, political cartoon) which presents a perspective on the essential questions addressed in this unit.
- **Bring a printed copy of the source to the discussion**
 - Make sure you cite the author or creator
 - Annotate the source
 - Relate it to one of the essential questions:
 - **Write a brief analysis explaining the perspective presented through the source**

AQWF Passages:

Identify 4 compelling passages from the reading which are relevant to your discussion of the essential questions.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Write your own questions:

What are you still wondering about in regards to the novel? To the essential questions? Write 2 of your own open-ended questions which can be used during the discussion.

- 1.
- 2.

Possible Questions for Discussion:

- “We don’t get it. We truly can’t imagine what it was like. We can’t imagine how dreadful, how terrifying war is; and how normal it becomes. Can’t understand, can’t imagine. That’s what every soldier, and every journalist and aid worker and independent observer who has put time under fire, and has had the luck to elude the death that struck down others nearby, stubbornly feels. And they are right”
--Susan Sontag
 - Discuss to what extent Sontag’s statement is true. Use the core novel and resources provided throughout this unit as support.
- Consider this statement from Chris Hedges: “The enduring attraction to war is this: Even with destruction and carnage it can give us what we long for in life. It can give us purpose, meaning, a reason for living. Only when we are in the midst of conflict does the shallowness and vapidness of much of our lives become apparent. Trivia dominates our conversations and increasingly our airwaves. And war is an enticing elixir. It gives us resolve, a cause. It allows us to be noble.”
 - How does this view compare/contrast with the views expressed in the texts we have studied throughout this unit?
- Discuss how the following thematic ideas are addressed in the final few chapters of the novel:
 - Post WWI sense of disillusionment
 - The dehumanizing effects of war
 - Loss of innocence and the Lost Generation
- What does it mean to be heroic?
- How does a country engender patriotism in its people? What is the difference between patriotism and nationalism? To what extent can either be dangerous?
- Why does war seem to elicit such grandiose descriptions - the heroes more valiant, the sacrifice more worthy, the battles more bloody?
- When do we stop celebrating the soldiers - who becomes our nation's heroes? What causes bring us together despite our various beliefs and ideologies?
- What is it in human nature that is satisfied by what war provides—not only to the warrior but to the citizens who send the warrior to fight?
- What does it mean to find peace at the end of war? While governments can end a war with the stroke of a pen, what of the soldiers, and those left behind when a soldier falls?
- To what extent do the atrocities of war outweigh its glories?