

Senior English

All Quiet on the Western Front

Chapter 4: "This is the front, now we are within its embrace."

Context: When this chapter opens, Paul and the other soldiers are back on duty on the front. Though they are now in the rear laying out barbed wire, they begin to grow more concerned as the British weaponry blasts nearby throughout the night. Paul describes the experience of being in a warzone and how it affects the young men, emotionally, physically and mentally. As they come upon a cemetery, a bombardment begins, followed by a gas attack, leading to both injuries and deaths before the end of the night.

Pre-reading Activity: Evaluate the ["Ready to Fight" \(pages 20-21\) from *Eyewitness World War I*](#). Then describe at least two artifacts that reveal details of life on the Western Front. Describe the object/image and explain what it shows about the soldiers' lives on the front.

Close Reading Questions: For each question, respond in two to three full sentences. Be clear and specific, *smoothly incorporating supporting quotes* to back up your interpretation.

- 1) Re-read pages 53-55. How do the young men respond differently to Kat's warning of bombardment now that they are back on the front? Why?
- 2) Review pages 55-56. How does Paul personify the earth as a woman? What does that reveal about the experiences of the young men on the front?
- 3) Review pages 56-59. Describe the juxtaposition (contrast) of images of beauty and violence in this scene.
- 4) Review pages 60-62. Describe the parent-child imagery used in this scene—first between Kat and Paul, and then between Paul and the young recruit.
- 5) Review pages 62-64. Why are the men so affected by the sounds of the horses?
- 6) Review pages 66-69. How do Paul and his fellow soldiers try to stay safe during the bombardment? How is the protection they use ironic (least expected)?
- 7) Review pages 71-73. Describe Paul and Kat's episode with the injured recruit. Explain why they consider killing him and how it is resolved.