

Responding

All Quiet on the Western Front Chapters 6–8

Personal Response

Paul says that “every soldier believes in Chance and trusts his luck.” If you were a soldier in combat, do you think you would find yourself trusting chance or trusting something else instead? Do you feel differently about chance as it relates to your everyday life? Explain.

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. Why are Paul and his company moving back to the front? How does the battle progress over the two weeks the company spends at the front?

2. When Paul tells Kemmerich’s mother about her son’s death, why is he surprised at her grief?

3. At the training camp, what sights seem to soothe Paul’s mind? What thoughts does Paul have as he observes the Russian prisoners of war?

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Analyzing Literature (*continued*)

Evaluate and Connect

4. Were you surprised that the three young French women were willing to spend the evening with Paul, Kropp, and Leer? Why or why not?

5. How does Paul's classmate Mittelstaedt taunt and humiliate Kantorek? Do you think this treatment of Kantorek is justified? Explain.

Literature and Writing

Lost in Thought

In Chapter 6, Paul daydreams about his home. What specific things does he recall in his daydream? How do his memories affect him? Why does he say of himself and his friends, "I believe we are lost"? Reread Paul's reflections in Chapter 6. Then write a *paraphrase* of the passage; that is, restate Paul's ideas in your own words. In your paraphrase, use the third person ("he" and "they," rather than "I" and "we"). In your concluding sentence, explain the significance of Paul's daydream.

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups

Review the section in Chapter 7 in which Paul returns home. How does he act when he is there? How does he feel? Why does he make the statement he does at the very end of the chapter? Then recall the discussion you had as part of the **Focus Activity** for this section of the novel. Does Paul's homecoming experience affect your opinion of whether talking about traumatic experiences is a good idea? Why or why not?

Psychology Connection

When people are under severe stress or dealing with strong negative emotions, they often fall back on certain coping strategies. Also called defense mechanisms, these strategies may temporarily protect a person from painful situations or thoughts, but they usually do not work as long-term solutions. Common coping strategies include *denial*, or refusing to recognize an emotion or problem; *compensation*, or making up for a weakness in one area by excelling in another; *daydreaming*, or inventing situations to escape unpleasant facts; *displacement*, or transferring emotions from the true source to some other thing or person; *rationalization*, or making excuses for one's actions or feelings; and *regression*, or returning to immature behavior to express emotions. Find examples of these strategies as used by Paul or other characters in the novel. What other strategies do the soldiers in the novel use to cope with the unbearable stress of war?



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