

### **Teacher's Rationale**

School: Arrowhead High School

Teacher: English 9 Teachers

Title: All Quiet on The Western Front

Grade or Course: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English

Approximate date(s) a book will be used:

Semester 1

Semester 2

This book will be (check one or more):

studied by the whole class.

studied by small groups.

placed on a reading list.

placed in a classroom library.

recommended to individual students.

part of a larger study of (explain):

other (explain):

### **Ways in which the book is especially appropriate for students in this class:**

Today's 9<sup>th</sup> grader seeks more realism in literature than ever before. Aside from the German names, All Quiet on the Western Front is a novel that portrays war with a sense of realism in a simplistic and direct format. When historical background information is provided, students begin to learn how brutal the war was from a German foot soldier during World War I. Most importantly, the students learn to make a connection to the timeless message that the author, Erich Maria Remarque, wanted to share with the world. Remarque begins his novel with the following statement that summarizes his true intentions:

“This book is to be neither an accusation nor a confession, and least of all an adventure, for death is not an adventure to those who stand face to face with it. It will try simply to tell of a generation of men who, even though they may have escaped shells, were destroyed by the war.”

### **Ways in which the book is especially pertinent to the objectives of this course or unit:**

All Quiet on the Western Front, allows students to apply elements of literature that were taught from previous units. What makes the novel so unique is the point of view the story is being told. Since the students learn that the author was an actual German soldier during World War I, they begin to question whether the main character, Paul Baumer, is actually Erich Maria Remarque. Besides analyzing how the story was written, students begin to make a connection to the universal topics that still apply to this present day: loyalty, friendship, leadership, traditional values, and social conventions. From these topics, students begin to develop themes stemming from what they read in the novel. If taught properly, students will begin to make connections between an autobiography and biography, analyze how the story is being narrated, and develop and support a theme which are all critical learning experiences.

**Special problems that might arise in relation to the book and some planned activities that handle this problem:**

Since a German author wrote the book and the story is told from a German point of view, the names and some of the terminology may appear intimidating.

There are some moments, throughout the book, when the main character, Paul Baumer, has flashbacks that may cause some confusion.

With the aid of a study guide and historical background information, students should be able to follow the storyline.

**Some other appropriate books an individual student might read in place of this book:**

Fallen Angels

The Red Badge of Courage

Animal Farm

**Summary of the book:**

“This a testament of Paul Baumer, who enlists with his classmates in the German army of World War I. They become soldiers with youthful enthusiasm. But the world of work, duty, culture, and progress they had been taught breaks into pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches.”

“Through years of vivid horror, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the principle of hate that meaninglessly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against each other, if only he can come out of the war alive.”

---All Quiet on the Western Front

Reviews and/or awards of the book or author:

\*\*\*Was published in 1929

\*\*\*Sold over 1 million copies in Germany in a year

\*\*\*Translated in 23 languages

\*\*\*Erich Maria Remarque was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature

\*\*\*The book was made into an academy ward winning movie in 1930

\*\*\* “The world has a great writer in Erich Maria Remarque. He is a craftsman of unquestionably first rank, a man who can bend language to his will. Whether he writes of men or of inanimate nature, his touch is sensitive, firm, and sure.”

—The New York Times Book Review