

## Passage Analysis Assignment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

When I ask you to do a passage analysis, I'd like you to find a significant passage from the chapter(s) assigned and analyze it in depth.

### Choosing a passage:

- choose a passage that has rich, connotative language, imagery, diction
- passage should be about 3-8 sentences long (include only the part of the passage that you will analyze)
- you may include an ellipsis (...) to indicate omitted text

### Analysis:

- think of your analysis as an *extreme* close reading of the passage
- pick apart the passage; comment on every word, image, style element, literary device, pattern, connection, connotation, etc. that you can find
- also, address larger issues such as:
  - why the passage is significant
  - how it relates to the action of the plot or the state of mind of a character
  - its connection to the themes of the novel

### Tips:

When you analyze a passage, consider the following

- Are there any **patterns**?
- Are there any **contrasts**?
- Which **images** are particularly vivid, unusual or significant?
- What **word choices** are unusual, poignant, or telling?
- Is there anything notable about the **writing style**? **tone**? **mood**?

### Rubric:

<b>6 (A+)</b>	-Unique, insightful, rich analysis shows perception of text's nuances -Sensitivity to language, imagery, diction, literary devices -Addresses all parts of the passage thoroughly and connects to larger themes
<b>5 (A-)</b>	-Thoughtful, deep analysis; includes some solid interpretations and connections -Some careful close reading examines language, diction, imagery, & other literary devices -Addresses all parts of the passage thoroughly
<b>4 (B)</b>	-Makes analytical observations, but some may be obvious or general -Clear understanding and interpretation of passage, but less thoughtful, original, and/or thorough than 5 or 6 -May include more paraphrase than analysis -Addresses all parts of the passage
<b>3 (C)</b>	-Some analysis, but may be mostly general -Recognizes aspects of basic literary techniques -More paraphrase or summary than analysis -Addresses passage superficially OR missed some parts of passage
<b>2 (D)</b>	-Very little analysis -Summarizes or paraphrases rather than analyzes/interprets passage -Undeveloped ideas; superficial comprehension of the passage/text -Does not address details or themes of passage

## Examples

Please note: I didn't format these passage analyses properly in order to save room. Be sure that your passage analysis is **double spaced** and includes the usual **MLA heading** and **punctuation** requirements. It should look something like this

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### Passage #1:

"To no man does the earth mean so much as to the soldier...when he buries his face and his limbs deep in her from the fear of death by shell-fire, then she is his only friend, his brother, his mother; she shelters him and releases him for ten seconds to live, to run, ten seconds of life; receives him again and often for ever....Earth with thy folds, and hollows, and holes, into which a man may fling himself and crouch...O Earth, thou grantest us the great resisting surge of new-won life" (55-56).

### Analysis of passage #1:

In this passage, Remarque illustrates the soldiers' intimate and ironic relationship to the earth during trench warfare. Men must bury themselves in order to stay alive during battle and dig the protective trenches that ironically might become their graves. The soldier develops a relationship with the earth that here is described as even more multi-dimensional than what he has with his fellow soldiers. The earth is "friend," "brother" and "mother" -- representing all of the important relationships a young man may have had in his life. This complex relationship is described with a mixture of gratitude, reverence and awe. The use of "thy" and "thou" suggests a tone of prayer, a respect for the almost holy power of the earth. This power grants life and redemption through protection and shelter. Then, the soldier is released from "mother earth" in a kind of birth into "new-won life," only to be swallowed again, perhaps permanently. A further irony that Remarque suggests is that just as the earth protects the soldier, the earth is likewise protected by the soldier. He bravely guards the small piece of no-man's land from enemy occupation. Remarque implies that when the battle is over, some men will own the earth that protected them, but many will be enveloped in the earth for which they fought.

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### Passage #2:

"Albert expresses it: 'The war has ruined us for everything.'

"He is right. We are not youth any longer. We don't want to take the world by storm. We are fleeing. We fly from ourselves. From our life. We were eighteen and had begun to love life and the world; and we had to shoot it to pieces. The first bomb, the first explosion, burst in our hearts. We are cut off from activity, from striving, from progress. We believe in such things no longer, we believe in the war." (87-88)

### Analysis of passage #2:

This passage is a very gloomy portrayal of this generation's loss of humanity and meaning. Albert's concise conclusion that they are "ruined" sums up what these young men must have felt. It's interesting that at this point in the war Albert does not blame leaders or politicians or even the enemy for this ruin -- he blames the war. The war is personified as the beast responsible for their ruin.

The short, choppy sentences reflect the men's lack of interest in moving forward in their lives. There is a sense that there is not enough energy to spare. These men see no reason for "striving" or "progress[ing]" towards something because everything they had been looking forward to has been "[shot] to pieces." Paul implies that this destruction of their hope was inevitable -- they "had to shoot it to pieces." The use of "we" at the beginning of seven of the eleven sentences emphasizes the shared experience of emptiness. They are in this desolate condition together.

The diagram shows a page layout for an MLA heading and passage analysis. On the left, the heading information is listed: "Debbi Hill", "Hill", "English 3-4, Class 1", and "February 3, 2005". Below this is the "Passage:" section, which contains a quote from Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front" (55-56). Below the passage is the "Analysis:" section, which provides a detailed analysis of the passage. On the right side, there are three vertical labels with arrows pointing to the corresponding sections: "MLA heading (of course!)" points to the heading information, "passage (3-8 sentences)" points to the passage text, and "thorough, detailed analysis of passage" points to the analysis text.