

Engagement and Prediction: Reading Difficult Texts and Having Critical Conversations

War Opinionnaire

(1) Working individually, to the left of each statement, mark “agree” or “disagree.” (2) As you complete the opinionnaire, jot down facts about war on the sheet of paper on the table. (3) Compare your results from the opinionnaire with other participants. Discuss your thinking. (4) Look over the facts written on the sheet of paper. Share your thoughts with the whole group about these facts. (5) Retake the opinionnaire, marking up the right side. (6) Consider if your opinion has changed. Why?

Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree
		1. “The only heroes in war are the dead ones.”		
		2. “My country right or wrong” is not just a slogan – it is every citizen’s patriotic duty.		
		3. No cause, political or otherwise, is worth dying for.		
		4. United States soldiers participate in acts of brutality and torture.		
		5. “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.”		
		6. It is never right to kill another person.		
		7. Soldiers are patriotic.		
		8. Women have very little to do with war; they do not fight and suffer very little.		
		9. War movies accurately detail the lives of combatants.		
		10. “The soldier, above all other people, prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war.”		
		11. Wars in the late 20 th and 21 st centuries are guerrilla wars; therefore, it is understandable that civilians suffer as a result of US military actions.		
		12. People should never compromise their ideals or beliefs.		
		13. For soldiers who served in Vietnam, the Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq, the difference between death and survival often means not worrying about potential harm to innocent civilians or doing the right or moral thing.		
		14. When veterans return from war, people in the United States treat them as returning heroes.		
		15. It is more courageous to avoid military service at all costs than to serve in a war you oppose.		
		16. If it weren’t for the media, people in the United States would not know the truth about their wars.		

Adapted from:

Johannessen, Larry R. *Illumination Rounds: Teaching the Literature of the Vietnam War (Theory and Research into Practice)*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1992.
 Pasternak, Donna L. “Combat Ready: Teaching Young Adult and Classic Literature about War.” *SIGNAL: The Journal of the International Reading Association’s Special Interest Group – Network on Adolescent Literature*. 34 (1), Fall 2010/Winter 2011, 34-43.
 Pasternak, Donna L. “Learning Tolerant Practice in Appalachia.” *MLA’s Profession* 2003. NY: MLA, 94-104.

Probable Passage

Directions: (1) Review the words under “Words” and think about their meaning. (2) Write each word under the category you think is most appropriate to its meaning. If a word does not seem to fit or you do not know its meaning, circle it and do not categorize it. (3) After you have categorized the words you know, write a “gist” statement (a summary of what you think the reading selection may be about). (4) What questions do you have about the text? What do you want to know more about before reading the text? Write those in the appropriate box. (5) Share your results, “gist” statement, and questions with another participant. Do your predictions vary? Do you want to know more about the same topics? (6) Read the text. (7) Rewrite your gist statement and respond to your questions about the text. (8) Let’s share our observations.

Title of Selection: “Letter to a Young Enlistee.” In *War Is . . .* edited by Marc Aronson & Patty Campbell

Author: Christian Bauman

Character/Who	Setting/ Where/When	Conflict/Problem /What/Why	Resolution/Solution/Outcomes/How

Gist Statement or Prediction: _____

Words	To Discover/Questions About the Text																
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Advice</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Battlefields</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Paratrooper</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Military</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Validate</td> <td>Pussy</td> <td>Soldier</td> <td>Unconsciously</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ghosts</td> <td>9/11</td> <td>Iraq</td> <td>Wavering</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Truth</td> <td>Freedom</td> <td>Vietnam</td> <td>Decision</td> </tr> </table>	Advice	Battlefields	Paratrooper	Military	Validate	Pussy	Soldier	Unconsciously	Ghosts	9/11	Iraq	Wavering	Truth	Freedom	Vietnam	Decision	
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Adapted from:

Beers, Kylene. *When Kids Can’t Read, What Teachers Can Do: A Guide for Teachers 6-12*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003.

Pasternak, Donna L. “Combat Ready: Teaching Young Adult and Classic Literature about War.” *SIGNAL: The Journal of the International Reading Association’s Special Interest Group – Network on Adolescent Literature*. 34 (1), Fall 2010/Winter 2011, 34-43.