

# [1) theme, not only on lives and](https://assignbuster.com/1-theme-not-only-on-lives-and/)

1) The Destructiveness of WarA major theme, not only on lives and property, but also on the humanspirit.

Men are subject to physical torment-eyes are blinded, limbs areblown off, blood flows everywhere, and innocent men die in agony. Whensoldiers take shelter in the graveyard, bombs explode all around them, the living hide in coffins and the dead are thrown from their graves. The destructive power is so great that even the fundamental differencesbetween life and death become blurred.

The impact of war on the spiritis subtle. They find themselves less able to returrn to civilian life-friends die all around them. 2) The Lost GenerationThis theme is an offshoot of the destructiveness of war. Paul’sgeneration grew up too fast, its perceptins of life grossly distorted bythe horror or war. The youthful idealism that might someday haveblossomed into constructive maturity has been nipped in the bud. Unlikeearlier generations, Paul can never again hope to find comfort andinspiration in the hollow rhetoric of politicians and generals. The warhas shattered their illusions.

Their innocence is gone, and only inaimless skepticism is left to fill the void. 3) ComraderieThe theme of comraderie occurs constantly in the novel. The comraderiethat exists in Paul’s company keeps them from being driven insane by thehorrors all around them. In a sense, the comraderie among Paul’sfriends can be seen as a last desperate clinging to the innocence ofyouth.

These young men were transported almost directly to thebattlefield from the schoolyard. The adolescent pranks of Paul and hisclassmates can be seen in their “ adult” behavior, as in their attack onHimmelstoss. If the social responses of Paul adn his friends seem attime childish, it is essential to remember that these are young menwhose experience of life took them directly to the barracks from theclassroom. If they seem immature, it may be because they weren’t giventhe chance to grow up normally. The best example of this theme os whenKat and Paul shared their roasted goose with Kropp and Tjaden. Theywere taking care of each other.

4) AlienationThe theme of alienation develops as the novel progresses. At first, Paul and his friends still behave as if their lives will someday returnto normal. In the middle of the book, Paul goes home on leave, only todiscover that his real home is now with his friends on the front. Bythe time Kat dies, Paul feels that his own life no longer has meaning. The process of alienation is now complete. 5) Shared HumanityThe theme of shared humanity takes the eheme of comraderie one hugestep forward.

Just as Paul comes to look upon his comrades almost asbrothers, he also comes to recognize that all men are brothers under theskin. The irony of war is that brothers are forced to kill oneanother. Paul’s compassion for the captured Russian soldiers and theFrench soldier he kills in the trench are examples of this theme. English