All Quiet on the Western Front is a book that narrates the experiences of young soldiers who participate in the First World War Paul Baumer is used to explain the reason why he together with his friends, like the world, asks why? Paul and his friends are denied a chance to enjoy their lives while they were still young.

 In chapter 2 (11) Paul explains how his generation differs from that of the older soldiers or even his parents in that Paul’s generation never had a life before the war as opposed to the others who had a chance to feel secure and comfortable before the war. In chapter 10 (126) Paul says “Our Knowledge of life is limited to death” at the beginning of the story, all that Paul has been exposed to is hopelessness, fear, horror, suffering and death. Paul and his classmates are only twenty and nineteen years old. Their experiences cause them to see no possibility in a future for themselves. Albert, Paul’s friend whose leg is amputated in the hospital, becomes aware of the destruction the war has caused them. He realizes that two years of bombs and shells will not be peeled away. They had just begun to live their lives as adults when they were eighteen but the war cut them short. In chapter 5 (42), Paul sees everything being “confused and hopeless” and they cannot imagine their own future. The war changes them and their relationships completely. When Paul goes back home while on leave in chapter 7 (71), he regrets the effect to him. He realizes the existence of a huge gap between his past and his present and between his parents and himself. In chapter 6 he believes that he, together with his generation, are lost and his life cannot go back to the way it used to be. He realizes that he can never be the person that he was because the events that have taken place have caused him not to believe in human beings or compassion. When Paul views the dying and desperate in a hospital near the end of the story, he knows that his generation shares what he feels and is experiencing the same things. Through the war, Paul and his friends feel betrayed. They feel betrayed by their parents who view young people who will not join the war as cowards. Paul feels that parents have let them down and their parents’ generation is no longer trustworthy. He realizes in chapter 1 how alone his generation is and it does not share the traditional values of his parents’ generation. Paul also blames Kantorek, his school teacher, for Joseph Behm’s death since Kantorek encouraged Behm to join the war. Paul knows many teachers all over Germany are goading their students to practice patriotism. They all feel betrayed by their teachers. Inhumanity and cruelty become the order of the day since Paul together with his friends become accustomed to horror and death every day. Chapter 6 (50) describes the scenes that Paul and his men come across where soldiers have their noses cut off and their eyes removed using their own weapons. They see this constantly and they are hardened to death so they fight like animals. In chapter 12 (139), Paul thinks about his future just before his death: “Let the months and years come, they can take nothing from me, they can take nothing anymore. I am so alone and so without hope, I can confront them without fear” this shows how he had no fear of death.

In conclusion, the lives of these young soldiers are completely changed by the war and the numerous deaths that take place result in a lost generation which is destroyed by the war and cannot be recovered.