

Why you should read A Farewell to Arms...

1. It is considered one of the best war novels ever written, yet is predominately a romance.
2. Hemingway's style is unlike anything that had come before and has been often imitated but never captured.
3. His journalistic style is quick and easy to read.
4. Many sections of the novel are taut with suspense.

Why you may struggle with A Farewell to Arms ...

1. Hemingway's "tip of the iceberg" style requires reading between the lines; the reader is expected to infer a lot.
2. Hemingway's use of dialog is existential at times; i.e., it is difficult to ascertain who is speaking without backtracking.
3. A pervasive sense of doom – regarding the war and the romance – colors the narrative.
4. The novel is set primarily in Italy, and Hemingway uses the Italian language without specifying the English meaning.

Still interested? A few suggestions before you begin...

- **The narrator is called "Tenente" initially, which is "lieutenant" in Italian**
- **"Maggiori" = major**
- **Grappa = after dinner drink**
- **Strega = herbal liqueur**
- **Bersaglieri = Italian infantry unit**
- **Granatieri = Italian guard infantry unit**
- **Carabinier = Italian cavalry unit**
- **Grenadiers = Specialized assault officers**
- **Croyant = a believer**