

Summer 2022

Junior Honors Summer Reading - *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien

Happy summer! I'm so glad to have you in Junior Honors English this year. If you have any questions about these directions, please send me an email at [annatheresa.montague@wcs.edu](mailto:annatheresa.montague@wcs.edu).

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**Directions:** Please purchase a print copy of *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien. We'll be following along with the paperback edition from this link:

<http://www.amazon.com/Things-They-Carried-Tim-OBrien/dp/0618706410>

Please try to get this edition. It is the edition I will be using to guide our lessons and conversations. A different edition will mean a difference in page numbers; this could make staying on track during a lesson needlessly frustrating. Having the same edition will better facilitate your class discussion and collaboration experience. In addition, kindly purchase a print copy and not a digital copy. Since we will be annotating the novel, it's necessary to have a print copy to make physical notes on the page.

We all carry things: physical, emotional, and mental. Entering your junior year, you're probably carrying a lot. Perhaps you're carrying a heavy course load, high parental expectations, or hidden, emotional burdens. The author, Tim O'Brien, explores these things we all carry not through the eyes of a student but the lens of a soldier. Since junior year focuses on American literature, this book beautifully ties together American history and story and fits our purposes precisely. Through it, we'll begin a discussion of the things we bear and our expectations for the year ahead.

**Assignment:** In addition to reading the novel, you'll need to complete and begin the following work.

In class, you will answer this set of questions **twice**. It's a great idea to look over the questions and become familiar with them before the first day of class. You will format your responses in MLA format. Also, I hope it goes without saying that your responses must be written in complete sentences. See the model assignment for further guidance. First, you'll answer the set of questions about yourself.

ABOUT YOU:

1. What do you carry every day to school?
2. What do you carry every day in the summer?
3. What do you have to bring to work?
4. What things do you carry that are very visible to the world?
5. What things are more hidden?
6. What things that you carry are totally invisible, that is, abstract or symbolic?
7. What do others make you carry?
8. What things do you carry that you'd like to put down?

Second, during the summer you'll choose a soldier character from the novel and annotate for the following questions as that character. **You must highlight the quote and mark the quoted page with a sticky note that is labeled with the question number in the novel. Do this before the first day of school. Going back and trying to search out a quote will take a lot more time and effort, so do it in the moment.** Once you get to class, we will type our answers to the questions as that character using your annotations. Each answer must include a quotation to support your response. You will format your responses in MLA format with page numbers and proper punctuation for citations. Again, this is another reason that annotations are so crucial. Without annotations, you will be playing catch up. You will also need a works cited page. See the model assignment on the next page for further guidance.

ABOUT A CHARACTER OF YOUR CHOICE:

1. What does the character carry every day while in the war?
2. What does the character carry every day while living as a civilian?
3. What does the character have to carry to cope with work?
4. What things does the character carry that are very visible to the world?
5. What things are more hidden?
6. What things does the character carry that are totally invisible, that is, abstract or symbolic?
7. What do others make the character carry?
8. What things does the character carry that he'd like to put down?

I look forward to our discussion and analysis of this book! I recommend that you begin reading a month before the first day of school. Since I expect you to be prepared with the reading and annotations when you walk in the door, let's aim to start this year on a positive note. We don't want to carry unfinished work at the very beginning of the year. Try to pace yourself so that you are finishing the book the weekend before the first full week of school. And, don't forget to get in touch if you have any questions.

Have a great summer!

Ms. Montague