

English 12 (AP) Summer Reading & Essay
Mr. Travis

Summer 2024

INTRODUCTION

Well, you finally made it. Seniors. At Last. This summer you will be expected to read Tim O’Brien’s *The Things They Carried* (The ISBN from the back of the book: 9780618706419; the ISBN on Amazon:

978-0544309760). O’Brien’s book is a loosely connected series of stories about the Vietnam War.

Annotate the book—mark key passages, words, ideas, etc. My suggestion is that you look over the given themes (see below) and as you read, note passages that deal with those themes.

THE NOVEL:

Some of the themes developed in *The Things They Carried* are

- Fear of shame as a motivation
- Truth being subject to storytelling
- Things carried—physical and emotional
- Pressure caused by feeling the need to adhere to some cultural or community standard of duty, courage, or patriotism
- War and love

- You will be given an objective quiz the first full day of the semester over the reading. Be sure you do the reading. If you do it, you should do well on the quiz.
- You will have an essay due the first day of school (see below) on one of these themes. Be sure you read and annotate your book so you can find support for your essay when you sit down to write it.

THE ESSAY:

Select a theme from the novel and write a two-page analysis of the theme.

Requirements:

- Compose a thesis about the theme (for example, “In O’Brien’s *The Things They Carried*, soldiers carry the tremendous burdens of the decisions they make and the actions they take.”)
- Write at least two “proof” paragraphs exploring/explaining/proving the claim you make in your thesis.
- Use at least three quotes from the novel.
- The essay should be at least 500 words long, but no more than two pages.
- Provide a works cited page. (This will be the third page of your essay.)
- Set your essay up using MLA formatting. See *The Brook Hill Writing Guide* if you need help or go to *The Owl at Purdue* (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>).

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Not enough to do this summer? Consider watching some of these movies (if your parents approve):

Avatar (PG-13)

Braveheart (R)

Edge of Tomorrow (PG-13)

The Avengers (PG-13)

The Lion King (G)

Hitch (PG-13)

Tommy Boy (PG-13)

Any Romantic Comedy