

## Summer Reading Packet: Eleventh Grade English

We look forward to a productive and challenging year together. Between now and the beginning of school in September, please read the following novel: *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien. Although you may talk to your classmates about the readings, this is not a collaborative assignment. All work is to be original. All written work/projects are due on the first day of school.

We all carry things with us. These may be tangible, emotional, or imaginary. This novel, set in the Vietnam War era, examines the baggage of several soldiers of Alpha Company. This is a great summer reading assignment because the book is a series of short stories.

Please complete the following for our class discussion:

1. Visit the website <http://www.vietnampix.com>. By viewing these pictures, you will be able to see pictures of real soldiers, the conditions that they endured, and most of all, the things they carried. This will be a visual preparation for the book that you will read.
2. Read the book.
3. After you have read the book, rent a film based on the Vietnam War. Get together with some eleventh grade friends to view the film or watch it with your family. (All eleventh graders have been assigned this novel for summer reading.) Discuss the film after viewing. Be aware of the film's rating. Do not cross over the lines drawn by your family. Remember that *Forrest Gump* is as good a choice as those with "R" ratings. Here are some websites with film titles:

<http://www.vietnamwar.net/vwfilms/vwfilms>

<http://www.geocities.com/warmoviedatabase/mvietnam.html>

4. Write a one-page, double-spaced (#12 Times New Roman font) review of the movie, comparing the portrayal of the war in the film to its portrayal in the novel. Discuss three specific examples. Some guidelines for a film review can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.afi.edu/teachers/resources/critfilmrevguide.pdf>

5. As a humanitarian gesture, "carry" items from home that can be used by our soldiers who are serving in Iraq. We will collect these items, and they will be forwarded to a local reserve unit. A list of suggested items can be found on the back of this sheet. "CARRY" THESE ITEMS TO CLASS ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS WILL FOLLOW, SO PLEASE BE PREPARED FOR THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS. START THE SCHOOL YEAR RIGHT!

## Tips, Ideas, Suggestions For Assignment Number 5 for *The Things They Carried*

Soldiers appreciate letters if students wrote them. It doesn't even matter if they know the person. Just knowing that there is someone back home in the states that is thinking about them and the job they are doing is great encouragement and brightens their day. You can find pretty funny/cute greeting cards for less than a dollar in most card shops and those are nice to send.

### Food Items:

- \*Instant Coffee
- \*Powdered Gatorade
- \*Powdered hot chocolate
- \*Kool-Aid (pre-sweetened)
- \*Tea bags
- \*Slim Jims
- \*Crackers and Easy Cheese (Triscuits and Ritz Crackers)
- \*Lance snack crackers
- \*Candy (M&M's, anything that won't melt)
- \*Single servings of bagged chips/pretzels
- \*Little Debbie snack cakes
- \*Bubble Gum
- \*Rice Krispie Treats
- \*Kraft Easy Mac
- \*Microwave popcorn
- \*Beef Jerky
- \*Granola bars
- \*Power/Energy bars
- \*Granola bars
- \*Chex Mix
- \*Canned Soup
- \*Tuna
- \*Oatmeal
- \*Dried Fruit
- \*Instant Soup

### Practical Items:

- \*Clorox Wipes
- \*Baby Wipes
- \*Razors
- \*Shampoo
- \*After Shave Lotion
- \*Soap or body wash
- \*Mouth wash
- \*Deodorant
- \*Feminine products
- \*T-shirts, underwear, socks (T-Shirts must be Brown for Army, Green for Marines, Black or Brown for Air Force and White for the Navy.)
- \*Contact lens cleaner
- \*Towels
- \*Eye drops (especially for those in the desert areas)

- \*Chapstick
- \*Lotion
- \*Dental Floss
- \*Baby Powder
- \*Foot Powder
- \*Cotton Balls
- \*Liquid Hand Sanitizer(Purell)
- \*Breath Mints
- \*Nail Files

### More things for females:

- \*Hair bands
- \*Hair clips
- \*Nail polish/remover (very conservative colors... light pink or clear)
- \*Nail clippers
- \*Q-tips
- \*Small mirrors
- \*Body sprays
- \*Candles
- \*Hair spray (pump, non aerosol)
- \*Hair gel
- \*Perfume
- \*Charmin to go packs of toilet paper... (works for men and females)

Note: Some of the toiletries can be picked up in the discount bins at CVS, Target etc.

### Just For Fun:

- \*Batteries
- \*A stress ball
- \*Stamps, paper and envelopes with a nice writing pen to encourage letters home
- \*Disposable Cameras
- \*Puzzles
- \*Film
- \*Journals
- \*Frisbees
- \*Hackie sacks
- \*Mini Fans
- \*Jokes and comics
- \*Balloons
- \*Foam footballs and basketballs (miniature size)
- \*Magazines

Extra Notes:

Calling cards: Extremely useful, but you have to be careful here because the minute rate on some cards decreases considerably when calls are made home from overseas. For example, a 120-unit world wide AT&T calling card is 6 minutes of talk time. The AAFES 100 unit calling card gets 20 minutes of talk time. AAFES cards can be purchased from <http://www.aafes.com/>

Beanie Babies and other little toys: Sounds silly but the soldiers are the best ambassador for our country and end up giving them to the kids. Same goes for the big bags of variety candy you see a lot of at Halloween. Some soldiers tell stories about throwing candy to the children that would crowd around their vehicles as their convoy passed by. It works as a great way to show friendliness.

Sunscreen/Insect Spray: The combination sunscreen/insect spray is apparently a favorite as it takes up less space in their packs. Can be purchased from <http://www.smartshield.com/any-soldier.asp>

Do Not Send:

\*Pressurized items

\*Chocolate that will melt

\*Anything homemade (Items must be factory sealed. For their safety, soldiers are instructed to throw away anything that is not sealed.) Homemade items can be sent to family members only.