

# Unit 08: The Things They Carried

Content Area: **Language Arts**  
Course(s): **English 3A**  
Time Period: **Semester 1 & 2**  
Length: **4 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Standards

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Please see list of standards for more details under the anchor standards. Please note that additional standards can be applied to any unit.

ELA.L	Language
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and place, and is sometimes contested.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.B	Observe hyphenation conventions.
ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.C	Recognize spelling conventions.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.A	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.B	Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.
ELA.L.KL.11–12.2.C	Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.C	Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.E	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings, including connotative meanings.
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.B	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.C	Analyze how the meaning of a key term or terms develops or is refined over the course of a text.
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.D	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

ELA.R	Reading
ELA.RL.CR.11–12.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to strongly support a comprehensive analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text; this may include determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
ELA.RL.CI.11–12.2	Determine two or more themes of a literary text and analyze how they are developed and refined over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account or analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
ELA.RL.IT.11–12.3	Analyze the impact of the author’s choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
ELA.RL.TS.11–12.4	Evaluate the author’s choices concerning the structure and the effectiveness of specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) and how they contribute to its overall structure and meaning, as well as its aesthetic impact.
ELA.RL.PP.11–12.5	Evaluate perspectives/lenses from two or more texts on related topics and justify the more cogent viewpoint (e.g., different accounts of the same event or issue, use of different media or formats).
ELA.RL.MF.11–12.6	Synthesize complex information across multiple sources and formats to develop ideas, resolve conflicting information, or develop an interpretation that goes beyond explicit text information (e.g., express a personal point of view, new interpretation of the author’s message).
ELA.RL.CT.11–12.8	Demonstrate knowledge of, analyze, and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
ELA.W	Writing
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.A	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.C	Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.D	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.E	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
ELA.W.WP.11–12.4	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
ELA.SL	Speaking and Listening

ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.3	Identify transferable career skills and design alternate career plans.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.4	Analyze how economic conditions and societal changes influence employment trends and future education.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.5	Research career opportunities in the United States and abroad that require knowledge of world languages and diverse cultures.
TECH.8.1.12.D.1	Demonstrate appropriate application of copyright, fair use and/or Creative Commons to an original work.
TECH.8.1.12.F	Critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making: Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.
TECH.8.1.12.F.CS1	Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.

## **Enduring Understandings**

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Students will understand the following:

Storytelling is a reflection of life and it draws on memory to connect the past and present.

Personal experiences from war can drive both fiction and nonfiction.

Heroism and courage are abstract in their nature within war literature.

Truth within fiction is subjective and can be manipulated by the author for his/her own creative purposes.

## **Additional Resources**

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Core Text: *The Things They Carried* - Tim O'Brien

Core Poem: "Facing It" - Yusef Komunyakaa

## Additional Resources:

"Song of Napalm" - Bruce Weigl

"Here, Bullet," - Brian Turner

"The Road Not Taken" - Robert Frost

"The Times They Are A-Changin'" - Bob Dylan

"Sonnet 27" - William Shakespeare

Poetry - "Camouflaging the Chimera," "The American Dream Sells Out," "Gettysburg, 1969," "Body Bags," "Inventory"

Poetry selections from Song of Napalm by Bruce Weigl

Documentary - Dear America: Letters from Vietnam

Songs - "What's Going On," "Fortunate Son," "Born in the USA," "The River" (live version with spoken introduction by Bruce Springsteen about the draft)

"Home Fires: Narrative and Memory at War" - The New York Times article by Roman Skaskiw

Against Forgetting - Poetry of Witness - Anthology of poetry by Carolyn Forché

"The Things They Carried, 20 Years On" - NPR interview with Tim O'Brien

"Why Would Anyone Miss War?" - Sebastian Junger, The New York Times

"The Warrior's Brain" - Andrew Bast, Newsweek

## **Essential Questions**

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How does Tim O'Brien define the art of storytelling?

Why is the soldier's story an important aspect of the American experience?

How do courage and cowardice corrupt the individual?

What is truth?

## **Knowledge and Skills**

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Through reading Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, students will study the theme of storytelling as a way to connect the past, specifically the experience of the Vietnam War, to the present.

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.

Students will explore the relationship between author, narrator, and character to uncover the role of stories and storytellers in society.

Students will write about their own experiences using the narrative power of storytelling.

Students will examine cultural mythologies, legend, or folklore to understand the deep human need to believe in stories.

Students will study the development of character throughout a novel.

Students will study the development of a story through flashback and lack of a traditional story structure (chronology).

Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The Things They Carried* as they relate to the author's theme development.

Students will examine the attitudes of America and Americans to returning veterans from the Vietnam War.

Students will study the basic causes of the Vietnam War and the effects on life in America.

## **Transfer Goals**

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Students will independently be able to understand the value of storytelling and apply that understanding as they write their own personal narratives.

Students will independently be able to evaluate the impact of the Vietnam War on soldiers and apply that understanding to those fighting in other conflicts.

## **Assessment**

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[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_w12qVbVV7OTThc9VW43HSpZm3Czh9kegRwYqjMm7fQ/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_w12qVbVV7OTThc9VW43HSpZm3Czh9kegRwYqjMm7fQ/edit?usp=sharing)

## **Modifications**

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<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17jJtNi1cFhRgM3667P67m3pGkj1sD-XarWejIWAANIg/edit?usp=sharing>