

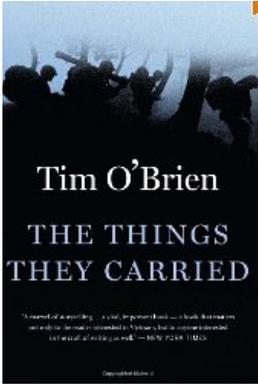


## English III (English 11) Summer Reading Requirement

All students entering English III within NHS or SHS in the 2014-2015 school year will have the following Summer Reading expectation, to be completed before the first day of the 2014-15 school year:

- Read *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien (Available for purchase at M & P Books, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, etc. and for loan from Willoughby-Eastlake Public Libraries)

### Summary: *The Things They Carried*

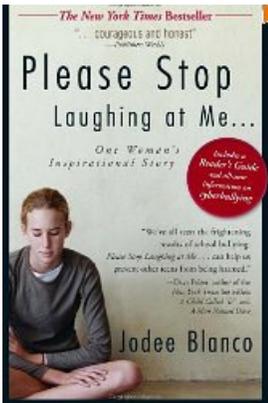


A finalist for both the 1990 Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award, *The Things They Carried* marks a subtle but definitive line of demarcation between Tim O'Brien's earlier works about Vietnam, the memoir *If I Die in a Combat Zone* and the fictional *Going After Cacciato*, and this sly, almost hallucinatory book that is neither memoir nor novel nor collection of short stories but rather an artful combination of all three. Vietnam is still O'Brien's theme, but in this book he seems less interested in the war itself than in the myriad different perspectives from which he depicts it. Whereas *Going After Cacciato* played with reality, *The Things They Carried* plays with truth. The narrator of most of these stories is "Tim"; yet O'Brien freely admits that many of the events he chronicles in this collection never really happened. He never killed a man as "Tim" does in "The Man I Killed," and unlike Tim in "Ambush," he has no daughter named Kathleen. But just because a thing never happened doesn't make it any less true. In "On the Rainy River," the character Tim O'Brien responds to his draft notice by driving north, to the Canadian border where he spends six days in a deserted lodge in the company of an old man named Elroy while he wrestles with the choice between dodging the draft or going to war. The real Tim O'Brien never drove north, never found himself in a fishing boat 20 yards off the Canadian shore with a decision to make. The real Tim O'Brien quietly boarded the bus to Sioux Falls and was inducted into the United States Army. But the truth of "On the Rainy River" lies not in facts but in the genuineness of the experience it depicts: both Tims went to a war they didn't believe in; both considered themselves cowards for doing so. Every story in *The Things They Carried* speaks another truth that Tim O'Brien learned in Vietnam; it is this blurred line between truth and reality, fact and fiction that makes his book unforgettable. --*Alix Wilber* (Amazon.com)

### OR

- Read *Please Stop Laughing at Me* by Jodee Blanco (Available for purchase at M & P Books, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, etc. and for loan from Willoughby-Eastlake Public Libraries)

### Summary: *Please Stop Laughing at Me*



From fifth grade through high school, Blanco was teased, shunned, and, at times, physically assaulted by her classmates because she was different. She befriended handicapped students, "ratted" on the activities of fellow 12-year-olds at her first boy/girl party, and could not bring herself to dissect a fetal pig. Her experiences with school bullies occurred in a variety of settings, including religious and private schools. At various points in this visceral memoir, Blanco fumes at the injustice of being subjected to psychiatric diagnosis and medication while her tormentors remained unbothered and oblivious, and states that "sticking up for people" and/or being different is a "social death warrant." While her loving parents were sympathetic and supportive, their well-meant admonitions to ignore her harassers and "rise above it all" sprang from adult logic; adolescents simply interpreted her indifference as weakness. The author's emotional torment was partly due to a breast deformity; corrective surgery performed prior to her senior year allowed her, finally, to begin viewing her future optimistically. Adults may consider some of Blanco's scenes as hyperbole, but teens will find them authentic and apt. Many will take comfort both in the universality of the experiences and in Blanco's transformation from an unhappy, embittered ugly duckling to a poised, accomplished swan. Others, if they are honest, just might recognize bullying tendencies in themselves and become sufficiently chagrined to reexamine their views and actions toward nonconformists of all stripes.--*Dori DeSpain, Fairfax County Public Library, VA* (From *School Library Journal*, Amazon.com)

the universality of the experiences and in Blanco's transformation from an unhappy, embittered ugly duckling to a poised, accomplished swan. Others, if they are honest, just might recognize bullying tendencies in themselves and become sufficiently chagrined to reexamine their views and actions toward nonconformists of all stripes.--*Dori DeSpain, Fairfax County Public Library, VA* (From *School Library Journal*, Amazon.com)

**The assignment that goes with your selection is on the next page.**

Should you have any questions about the reading or assignment, please contact:

[annette.misconin@weschools.org](mailto:annette.misconin@weschools.org) (North) or [michelle.johnson@weschools.org](mailto:michelle.johnson@weschools.org) (South)

## English III Summer Reading Assignment: Reader Response Journal

**Directions:** Respond in complete sentences to **three** of the ten prompts listed below. Each response should be on a separate page; therefore, you will have at least 3 typed pages. Proper MLA format and length requirements\* must be followed including: a proper MLA heading, a title that tells the corresponding number of the prompt, 1” margins, and the acceptable font of 12 pt. Times New Roman. For each response, you must **underline** the key sentence that illustrates the idea for that particular response. This assignment is worth 60 points. **Although you will be quizzed on your chosen novel on the first day of school, this assignment is due on Tuesday, September 2, 2014.** Write down any questions that you have while reading the book for class discussions during the first week of school.

- 1. Theme:** State the theme of the book you are reading, and then give two examples that illustrate this theme and explain *how* they illustrate it. Include the page number for each example. (½-1 page typed)
- 2. Setting:** Write a statement about the impact of the setting on the story. Give two reasons that illustrate the impact of the setting on the story. (Think: How do the place and time shape the characters/ the plot/ the themes/ the conflicts?) (½ -1 page typed)
- 3. Character:** Choose a character in the book. Then explain the character’s motivations that led to his/her actions in two different instances. (½ page for **each** instance and motivation=1 page total typed)
- 4. Point of View:** Identify the point of view from which the novel is written (first person, second person, third person limited, or third person omniscient). Copy **two** passages, of 3-4 sentences in length, that illustrate point of view, and tell why you think the author chose to tell the story from that point of view. (Why – ½ page explanation typed)
- 5. Criticism:** Interpret and critique the end of the book. Give **two** reasons that you believe this was or was not a believable ending; if it was not believable, tell how the ending was artistically justified. (½ -1 page typed)
- 6. Symbolism:** Name two symbols that were used in the book, and tell what each symbol represents. (½ -1 page typed)
- 7. Irony:** Explain two examples of irony that were used in the book, and tell what you think the author was trying to accomplish by using irony in each. Include the page number for each example. (½ -1 page typed)
- 8. Conflict:** Explain two conflicts that occur in the book and what each helps you to understand/ learn. Remember to discuss conflict in terms of internal/external. (½ -1 page typed)
- 9. Antagonist:** Choose one antagonist from the novel. Discuss the character traits of the antagonist. In addition, discuss how the antagonist influences and affects the protagonist. (½ -1 page typed)
- 10. Climax:** Write a statement about the climax or highest point of the tension. Explain how this changes the outcome of the novel. (½ -1 page typed)

Last Name 1 (page number)

Your First and Last Name

Your Teacher’s Name

Class Name (*such as* English III)

2 September 2014

Title (*such as* Prompt 1: Theme)

\*Additional MLA format information can be found at “The Purdue Online Writing Lab”: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>