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Reflections:

A Student Response Journal for...

The Things They Carried

by Tim O'Brien

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The Things They Carried

T o T h e T e a c h e r

In order to allow the teacher maximum flexibility in his or her approach, we have grouped the prompts by sections. The teacher may, therefore, assign specific prompts or allow the students to select one or more prompts from each section

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Response Journal

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Class Record Sheet

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Section_____

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The Things They Carried

P r e - R e a d i n g

1. A large part of *The Things They Carried* takes place in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Free-write for five minutes on what you know of the war—what the fighting was about, how different Americans felt about it, who was drafted, the impact it has had on Vietnam veterans, and anything else your mind happens to land on.
2. Imagine that you're a soldier in the jungles of Vietnam. Like all soldiers, you carry at least twenty pounds of equipment with you as you trudge across the country; this does not include any personal items, such as photographs or chewing gum. Every personal thing you bring adds to the heavy weight on your shoulders.

Given that knowledge, describe five personal items you would carry with you to remind you of home, ease your nerves, and simply make your situation more bearable. Explain the significance each item holds for you.

The Things They Carried

3. Martha signs her letters to Lieutenant Cross "Love, Martha," but Cross understands that "Love" is only "a way of signing" and does not mean that Martha loves him romantically. Why do you think we automatically sign letters or e-mails "Love" when we don't necessarily mean that we deeply love the people to whom we are writing? Is it simply a meaningless convention? How do you sign *your* notes to friends? Address these questions in a detailed paragraph.

Response Journal

4. O'Brien tells us that the soldiers are called "legs or grunts" rather than men. Military speech is peppered with euphemisms—that is, terms and phrases that distance us from the fact that real, individual people with families and friends are being killed. "Collateral damage" is another example.

What do you think of this practice? Is it a helpful or harmful manipulation? Write a letter to a senator explaining your feelings on the subject.

5. Whenever Cross looks at his photograph of Martha, he thinks of "new things he should've done." He deeply regrets not taking the risk of making an open advance to Martha.

If you were shipped off to war today, immediately and without warning—and to a place where you might very well lose your life—what one risk would you regret not having taken back home? Describe it and explain why you haven't yet taken it.

6. In addition to all of the heavy equipment and personal effects the men carry, they also carry "unweighed fear."

Stretch your mind for a moment, and decide how much you think fear "weighs." Write a poem about the weight of fear.

7. Martha sends Cross a pebble, writing that it was the pebble's "separate-but-together" quality that reminded her of her and Cross's situation. Imagine that your closest friend has gone off to fight in a foreign war. What one, small thing would you send your friend to show that you are "separate-but-together"? Explain your decision in a descriptive paragraph.

8. Cross is entrusted with the lives of his men; he calls the shots—but he has trouble keeping his mind on anything but Martha. In a paragraph or two, describe a time when you were in a situation that required true presence of mind, but were unable to focus because a personal matter was occupying your every thought. What happened?

The Things They Carried

9. O'Brien tells us that Norman Bowker, "otherwise a very gentle person," carries a thumb with him that has been cut from a dead Vietnamese boy's body.

Such "war trophies" are not uncommon. If you were to fight in a war, do you think you would be interested in obtaining this kind of trophy? Do you think such trophies are barbaric, or simply par for the course? Address these questions in a paragraph, making sure to explain *why* you would or would not want such a trophy.

10. The Vietnam War comes across as highly disorganized in this story: the soldiers have "no sense of strategy or mission" and search villages "without knowing what to look for." How would you feel if you were a soldier thrust into this situation in a foreign country? How would it make you feel about your military—and its regard for your life? Elaborate.
11. After desperate firefights, the men struggle to play down their fears, "holding in the humiliation" of having been terrified for their lives. As O'Brien writes, they are "afraid of dying but...even more afraid to show it." They pass joints; they tell jokes.

More than simple embarrassment over their fear is at stake. How does acting like this after fights help the soldiers deal with their trauma? What do you think would happen if they were all open about their fears? Explain your answers in a paragraph or two.

12. O'Brien writes that the men carry "the soldier's greatest fear, which was the fear of blushing."

What, in general terms (specific to all, not just you), do you think is the high school student's greatest fear? Explain your answer in a detailed paragraph, or, if you prefer, write a poem explaining it.

Response Journal

Love

13. Cross and the narrator are eventually able to laugh and reminisce about their time in Vietnam, although the terrible things remain with them. In a paragraph, describe a situation or time in your life that was almost unbearable that you are able to talk casually—or even with amusement—about now.
14. Martha is firm but vague when she talks with Cross at their college reunion. Neither Cross nor we really learn what is driving her. Given what she says to him in their brief conversations, invent a “back story” for Martha. What has happened to her? What did Cross mean to her when she was younger?

Write Martha’s “story” in at least one page.

15. The narrator promises Cross that he won’t mention Ted Lavender (or perhaps Martha) when he writes about Cross in the future. Obviously, he breaks his promise. Is this wrong of him, given that we still ultimately feel sympathy for Cross?

Write an e-mail to the narrator in which you express agreement or disagreement with his decision to include Martha and Ted in Cross’s story. Be sure to explain *why* you agree or disagree.

The Things They Carried

Spin

16. Norman and Henry's checkers game stands out in dark contrast to the war. As the narrator writes, "The playing field was laid out in a strict grid...the enemy was visible...[t]here were rules."

In general, do you prefer having your (non-school) days laid out for you, scheduled and neatly organized, perhaps with your own "To-Do" list ready, or do you prefer to "wing it," not knowing or planning what you're going to do on Saturday night until you get there? Explain your answer; then explain whether you think your preference would change if you were in a situation like that of the narrator and his fellow soldiers.

17. Respond to the following quote from the man who went AWOL and lived it up in Danang, only to rejoin his unit. Elaborate on what it means to you and how it relates to your own life.

All that peace, man, it felt so good it *hurt*. I want to hurt it *back*.

18. O'Brien writes,

Stories are for those late hours in the night when you can't remember how you got from where you were to where you are. Stories are for eternity, when memory is erased, when there is nothing to remember except the story.

Do the stories of your life—the ones you share with your friends, for example—perform the same function for you as they do for the narrator? If so, explain how they do; if not, describe what *does* perform that function for you. (Home movies? Photographs? Music mixes?)

19. The narrator is forty-three years old, and his daughter is surprised that his memories of Vietnam continue to obsess him. What *one* memory or story from your own life at your current age do you think you will still review on a regular basis twenty years from now? Describe it, and explain why you expect it will still be so significant to a much-older you.

On the Rainy River

20. *The Things They Carried* is intentionally classified as a work of fiction. Most “chapters” or stories are told in the first-person, by a narrator named Tim O’Brien who once fought in Vietnam and is now a writer. The author of *The Things They Carried* is named Tim O’Brien; he once fought in Vietnam and is now a writer.

Why do you think O’Brien decided to bill this book as “fiction” instead of autobiography—and to create a character named O’Brien who seems to resemble the author in every way? Do you find it confusing? Does it seem like a meaningless distinction, or does it have a definite effect on the way you feel as you read the book?

Write a letter to Tim O’Brien—the author, not the character—in which you explain your answers to the above questions to him, and ask him a few of your own questions.

21. As a college student, O’Brien was against the Vietnam War and engaged in a few mild forms of protest: writing editorials, ringing doorbells. If a war that you are profoundly opposed to occurs during your lifetime, how willing do you think you will be to protest it? Will you keep your mouth shut, write a few letters, take place in or organize a protest march, or go even further? Explain your answer in a thoughtful paragraph, including whether you think it is a person’s responsibility to stand up and be counted if she or he thinks a war is being fought for the wrong reasons.
22. O’Brien is ashamed to admit that, on first being drafted, his immediate reaction is that he is “too good for [the] war.” He considers himself “too smart, too compassionate, too everything”—after all, he was student body president at his college and he has a full scholarship to Harvard for grad school.

What if Vietnam was now and you were drafted? Would you think—even for just a second—that you were “too good” to be shipped off to this war? Is there such a thing as being “too good” for a war? Elaborate on your answers in a paragraph.

The Things They Carried

23. Upon being drafted, it occurs to O'Brien that there should be a law requiring those who support a war to go fight it—not send others who *don't* support it off to fight for them. If you support the war, he might say to the president, send your own sons there—or go there yourself.

There is some logic in O'Brien's proposal. Do you agree or disagree? Write a newspaper editorial—one that you know in advance the highest officials in the country will read—that argues for or against such a war policy.

24. On what occasions do you think a nation is justified in using military force against another nation? List them, giving an explanation for each.
25. O'Brien partly wants to avoid the draft by fleeing to Canada, but he hates to think of losing the life he has built in America. He fears losing not only his parents' nearby presence, but his parents' respect.

Put yourself in O'Brien's place. The war is now. You need to flee tonight for Canada, into the unknown, perhaps losing your family and friends forever—or be shipped out in the morning to Vietnam, where conditions are horrific and you know you may easily lose your life. What will you, personally (not as O'Brien), do? In a detailed paragraph, describe your decision and explain what made you arrive at it.

26. Of Americans that were for the Vietnam War at the time, O'Brien writes:

They didn't know Bao Dai from the man in the moon. They didn't know history. They didn't know the first thing about Diem's tyranny, or the nature of Vietnamese nationalism, or the long colonialism of the French—this was all too damned complicated, it required some reading—but no matter, it was a war to stop the Communists, plain and simple, which was how they liked things...

Do you think that many Americans tend to simplify what wars are about—for example, to reduce the Vietnam War to being “a war on Communism” or the war in Iraq to being a “war on terror”—without bothering to learn the details or history leading up to the conflict? Explain your answer in a paragraph or two, using at least one example from your experience.

Response Journal

27. At the Tip Top Lodge, O'Brien's anxiety and grief affect him physically:

I was wired and jittery. My skin felt too tight. After supper one evening I vomited and went back to my cabin and lay down for a few moments and then vomited again, another time, in the middle of the afternoon, I began sweating and couldn't shut it off. I went through whole days feeling dizzy with sorrow.

Write a poem about your most physical experience of grief or anxiety.

28. O'Brien finally makes the decision to go to Vietnam, but not out of any moral or patriotic convictions. He goes out of shame—"[h]ot, stupid shame." He'd rather risk his life than face his family's and neighbors' judgment.

In a paragraph or two, describe a time when you did something you didn't want to do out of shame and concern over others' opinions. Do you regret having done it?

Enemies

29. After Strunk returns to camp, Jensen becomes extremely paranoid. As Jensen, write a journal entry that covers your feelings about the incident with Strunk and his return. Try to write the entry in the voice and style of a paranoid, skittish man.

Friends

30. Strunk and Jensen make a pact: if one of them gets a wound so serious that it will leave him in a wheelchair, the other will quickly and quietly end the wounded man's life.

If you were fighting in a war, would you enter into such a pact? How extreme would a wound have to be for you to want to die rather than live with it? Explore the topic in a paragraph or two.

How to Tell a True War Story

31. O'Brien writes, "In many cases a true war story cannot be believed...[o]ften the crazy stuff is true and the normal stuff isn't."

In a page or so, tell the craziest, most unbelievable true story from your own life.

32. Mitchell Sanders tells a story about a platoon camped out on a listening mission in the mountains. They begin to hear eerie music, but must remain silent themselves. As Sanders puts it, "[W]hat makes it extra bad...is that the poor dudes can't horse around like normal. Can't joke it away."

Sometimes making a joke, even when it seems the least appropriate thing to do, is the only thing that can get us through a frightening or depressing situation. We just "joke it away," if only for one moment of relief. In a paragraph, describe a time when you or someone you were with used humor to get through a difficult time.

33. After Lemon's death, Rat Kiley brutally kills a baby water buffalo, inflicting as much pain on the animal as possible. Imagine that the incident has come to the attention of some higher-ups in the military. There is talk of discharging Kiley immediately and without honor.

Write a letter to the military officials in which you either argue for or against discharging Kiley, grounded in how you felt after "seeing" Kiley kill the buffalo.

34. Do you feel cheated at the end of the story, when O'Brien suggests that none of it is true? Explain your answer and describe how the ending affected you in a short note to the author.

The Dentist

35. Lemon is the kind of person who loves to pull off crazy stunts, but ruins the effect of them by bragging ceaselessly afterwards. He does things mainly so that he can boast about them later.

When we're proud of pulling off something, it's hard not to brag—or, at the very least, want to tell everyone about it. In a paragraph or two, describe a time when you did something you couldn't help bragging about. If you prefer, write about a time when you or someone you know did something for the sole purpose of being able to brag about it later.

36. Lemon is so afraid of being viewed as weak after passing out in front of the dentist that he gets a perfectly healthy tooth pulled out. Suppose that the day after the dentist leaves, a psychiatrist comes in to talk individually to the soldiers. She gets wind of Lemon's behavior the day before, and asks him about it. Write the dialogue that might occur between Lemon and the psychiatrist. Go for at least a page. A possible start:

Psychiatrist: I hear you got a tooth pulled yesterday. It was a healthy one, wasn't it?

Lemon: The extraction didn't hurt, if that's what you mean. I didn't even wince...

Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong

37. If you had been fighting in a dangerous, overseas war for months, would you want your significant other to come visit you—knowing that it posed a serious risk to his or her life? Explain your answer.
38. As Mary Anne, write a journal entry after your first night on ambush. How has the experience changed things for you? Has it affected your feelings about your future, your home, Mark, or something else? Go for a page.
39. Your significant other (or best friend, if you prefer) is fighting in an overseas war and you go there to visit. Do you think it possible that the experience might affect you the way visiting Vietnam affects Mary Anne? Describe what you think your visit would be like—what you would do, what you would see, and how you would feel about both.
40. Do you find the story's final image comic, tragic, or a bit of both? Explain your answer in a paragraph.

Stockings

41. O'Brien likens America to a certain kind of person:

...big and strong, full of good intentions, a roll of fat jiggling at his belly, slow of foot but always plodding along, always there when you needed him, a believer in the virtues of simplicity and directness and hard labor...drawn toward sentimentality.

Write your own description of America or your home town as a person. You may choose to write it as a lengthy paragraph or as a poem; either way, include good, strong details.

42. Even after she breaks up with him, Dobbins wears his girlfriend's pantyhose around his neck as a good-luck charm. Describe something you do when you feel you need good luck—whether it be wearing or carrying a certain thing, performing a ritual, or something else. How reassuring is it?

Church

43. Dobbins says, “I believed in God and all that, but it wasn’t the religious part that interested me.”

What do you think the difference is between believing in God (or Allah, or Krishna) and being religious? Is there one? Explain your answer in a paragraph.

44. Kiowa condemns the platoon’s use of the pagoda as a base, believing that churches should not be intruded upon by a war. It’s an issue that remains hot today: should those at war respect their adversaries’ religious houses and holidays? Write a persuasive letter to the editor in which you argue for or against doing so.

The Man I Killed

45. Do you think that the death of a gentle, peace-loving man who is forced to fight in a war against his better judgment is more tragic than the death of a muscle-bound, violent man who is happily fighting in the same war? Defend your answer in a paragraph.
46. O’Brien imagines that the young man he has killed is only fighting out of a strong Vietnamese sense of “patriotic duty.” How much of a sense of “patriotic duty” do you feel to your own country? Would you be willing to die for it? Explain.
47. Suppose that the man O’Brien has killed was exactly how O’Brien pictures him: scholarly, reluctant to fight, gentle, and loving. Now, imagine that the dead man can send O’Brien a letter from beyond the grave. Does he forgive O’Brien? Will he ever forgive O’Brien? What advice might he have for the young American? You decide. In a page or so, write the dead man’s letter to O’Brien, just as you imagine he would write it if he could.

The Things They Carried

A m b u s h

48. At first, O'Brien is reluctant to tell his daughter that he killed a man during the war. What do you think you would do in a similar situation? Would you think it important for your child (or mother or significant other) to know that you had killed? Do you think it would jeopardize your relationship? Address these questions in a paragraph.

S t y l e

49. Imagine that you are the girl dancing in the burning hamlet. Free-write for three minutes on what is going through your head as you dance.
50. Suppose you are part of Azar's platoon and are present when he begins mocking the dancing girl and imitating her movements. This time, however, Dobbins doesn't step in to stop Azar. Would you speak up against Azar's actions yourself, or mind your own business and pretend nothing was happening? Explain your answer in a paragraph.

Speaking of Courage

51. Bowker thinks of the lake as the hub of his hometown, “the town’s first cause for existence.” What do you consider the hub of your own hometown? Describe the place or feature in detail, explaining why it seems so central to the life of your town.
52. Back from Vietnam, Bowker observes two young boys “with knapsacks and rifles and canteens” as he drives aimlessly around town. It’s likely that you yourself or someone you know played war games as a child—if not with toy guns, then on a computer screen.

Some feel that playing war games is unhealthy for children and that it teaches kids to be violent; others see war games as harmless fun. Which side do you agree with? In a few paragraphs, write an editorial for a parenting magazine in which you try to persuade others of your way of thinking on the issue. Be sure to include at least one supporting example from your own experience.

53. What do you think of war medals in general? Are they meaningful, or mere tokens? Do they exist to honor brave conduct, or to spur soldiers on to brave conduct in the hopes that they’ll win medals for it? Would it be important to you to receive a medal if you fought in a war? Explore these questions in a paragraph or two.
54. Imagine that you’re on the other side of the fast food intercom and Bowker decides to tell you his story. What do you say to him when he’s done? Write it down in a paragraph.

Notes

55. In a paragraph, describe how it feels to learn what becomes of Bowker in “Notes” after just having read “Speaking of Courage.”

The Things They Carried

In the Field

56. Although he has been trained to think of his soldiers as units, Lieutenant Cross prefers to think of them as human beings. Below, list three advantages to each approach. Then state which approach you think you would take if you were a lieutenant and explain the reasoning behind your choice.

ADVANTAGES OF THINKING
OF SOLDIERS AS UNITS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

ADVANTAGES OF THINKING
OF SOLDIERS AS HUMAN
BEINGS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

57. If someone you cared about died in a war, would you feel differently if it was an accidental death, like Kiowa's, than you would if the death resulted directly from combat? Explain your answer in a paragraph.
58. Kiowa had few personal possessions, but, in addition to those, he had—like all of us—the beliefs and knowledge acquired by an individual over a lifetime. Write Kiowa's will for him. Decide who he would have wanted his bible to go to; then decide what advice he would bequeath to other individuals in his platoon.

Good Form

59. In two paragraphs, describe any incident in your life: first in the "happening-truth," then in the "story-truth."

Field Trip

60. Twenty years after Kiowa's death, O'Brien revisits the field in which it took place. He finds no trace of what had happened there two decades ago; the place looks peaceful.

Choose any spot in your town that interests you. In a page, describe an incident that might have taken place there twenty years ago—one of which there is now no longer a visible trace.

61. If you fought in an overseas war like Vietnam, do you think you would want to revisit the spot later in life? Write a paragraph in which you elaborate on your answer.

The Ghost Soldiers

62. As Bobby Jorgenson, write a journal entry about your first firefight, including your failure to properly care for O'Brien.
63. Do you sympathize with O'Brien's desire for revenge against Jorgenson, or feel, like Mitchell Sanders, that it's "sick" and out-of-place? Explain your answer.
64. In a paragraph, describe a time when you felt as isolated and cut off from your friends as O'Brien does from Alpha Company because they had shared some experience you missed out on. What did it take in order for you to feel like "part of the group" again?
65. What kind of guy do you think Azar was in high school? What clubs or cliques would he have belonged to, if any? In a detailed paragraph, write a character sketch of Azar-the-highschooler.

The Things They Carried

Night Life

66. As Rat Kiley, write a journal entry describing what's going through your mind just before you shoot yourself in the foot.

The Lives of the Dead

67. Free-write for a few minutes on this chapter's title, "The Lives of the Dead." What images and feelings does the strange phrase conjure up for you? Go for a page, wherever the topic takes you. Alternative: Write a poem called "The Lives of the Dead."
68. O'Brien keeps insisting that, although he and Linda were only nine, they were "in love...real love." Describe your earliest experience of being (or feeling like you were) in love. How old were you? Does it still seem like love in retrospect?
69. In a paragraph or two, describe your first or most memorable experience of death—the first time the concept of dying "hit home" for you. It needn't be the death of someone close to you; it could be just *hearing* that someone you didn't really know had passed away. How did it make you feel? What, if anything, did you envision the person (or animal) doing after his or her death?
70. How do you feel about the way *The Things They Carried* ends? Would you change or add anything? If not, explain why you think the ending is a perfect, fitting conclusion to the book. If so, write about which changes you would make and why you think the book would be stronger for them.

Wrap-Up

71. Imagine that a movie version of *The Things They Carried* is in the works and that you are in charge of the casting. For each of the below roles, choose the Hollywood actor that you think would be best for the part and include a line or two about why you think he or she would be perfect.

O'Brien –

Kiowa –

Bobby Jorgenson –

Azar –

Norman Bowker –

Lieutenant Cross –

Elroy Berdahl –

Linda –

72. You're still at work on the film, but now you're the sound coordinator and in charge of picking the songs for the *The Things They Carried* soundtrack. Name at least three songs you would include, and explain the reasoning behind each of your choices.
73. If your school were to do a theatrical production of *The Things They Carried*, which character would you most like to play? You don't have to choose a role that suits your look or personality, as you did with the actors in prompt 71—just pick the one you think you would have the most fun with or that you would most enjoy sinking into. Explain your answer in a paragraph. (NOTE: Females, assume that you may play male roles—after all, males played female roles in Shakespeare for ages.)

The Things They Carried

Test

1. The soldier who wears his girlfriend's pantyhose around his neck for luck is
 - A. Henry Dobbins.
 - B. Norman Bowker.
 - C. Azar.
 - D. Rat Kiley.
2. O'Brien makes a distinction between the
 - A. "real truth" and the "actual truth."
 - B. "truth of yesterday" and the "truth of today."
 - C. "happening-truth" and the "story-truth."
 - D. "whole truth" and "nothing but the truth."
3. "Song Tra Bong" is the
 - A. Green Berets' nickname for Mary Anne after she goes out on ambush.
 - B. name of the field in which Kiowa dies.
 - C. name of a river in Vietnam.
 - D. name of the dancing girl in the burning hamlet.
4. Twenty years after Kiowa's death, O'Brien returns to the field with
 - A. Rat Kiley.
 - B. his daughter.
 - C. Kiowa's father.
 - D. Norman Bowker.
5. Just before reporting for war duty, O'Brien runs off towards Canada and stays
 - A. in a tent on a river bank.
 - B. at a Motel 6.
 - C. in an abandoned bus.
 - D. at the Tip Top Lodge.

Response Journal

6. O'Brien is separated from Alpha Company and taken to rear guard duty after
 - A. being shot in the buttocks.
 - B. having an anxiety attack over Kiowa's death.
 - C. being shot in the side.
 - D. brutally killing a water buffalo.
 7. Who do the soldiers refer to as the "ghosts"?
 - A. the Viet Cong
 - B. the military higher-ups who call the shots but do not fight on the ground
 - C. the Vietnamese civilians
 - D. the soldiers in their company who have died but whose presence they continue to feel
 8. Jimmy Cross's obsession is with a girl named
 - A. Nancy.
 - B. Lelia.
 - C. Martha.
 - D. Katherine.
 - E. Linda.
 9. Through the death of Ted Lavender, Jimmy learns
 - A. how to bury a soldier.
 - B. which path to take up the mountain.
 - C. that he must give up his obsession with a girl.
 - D. he doesn't really want to be a soldier.
 - E. war is dangerous.
 10. What are Freedom Birds?
 - A. birds of peace
 - B. awards given to brave soldiers
 - C. local bird the soldiers hunt for dinner
 - D. airplanes
 - E. toys for the Vietnamese children
-

The Things They Carried

11. Why does young Tim O'Brien decide to go to war rather than flee to Canada?
 - A. He wants to meet girls there.
 - B. He has no education and thinks the army can provide one for him.
 - C. His parents threaten to turn him into the authorities.
 - D. He knows it is his duty and is embarrassed to let his family down.
 - E. Elroy Berdahl threatens to turn him into the authorities.
12. Why do the men talk to the dead bodies and play games with them?
 - A. They talk to the bodies in order to lighten up the situation and make death seem less real.
 - B. They enjoyed the blood and gore of war.
 - C. They are ordered to do so by Lt. Cross.
 - D. They are young and do not know any better.
 - E. None of the above.
13. The medic in Alpha Company is a man named
 - A. Mitchell Sanders.
 - B. Jimmy Cross.
 - C. Rat Kiley.
 - D. Mark Fossie.
 - E. Ted Lavender.
14. Rat Kiley overcomes the grief of Curt Lemon's death by
 - A. killing a water buffalo.
 - B. drinking all night long.
 - C. finding a girl in the village.
 - D. killing himself.
 - E. abandoning his company and going AWOL.
15. Why does Curt Lemon have a healthy tooth pulled out?
 - A. He'd lost a bet
 - B. To prove he is not afraid of the dentist.
 - C. He wants to send it home.
 - D. He wants to play a joke on some of the guys with it.
 - E. The dentist does not like him and wants to torture him.

Response Journal

16. Who tells Kiowa he wanted to be a minister when he was younger?
 - A. Mitchell Sanders
 - B. Norman Bowker
 - C. Henry Dobbins
 - D. Lee Strunk
 - E. Dave Jensen

 17. Why does Henry Dobbins pick Azar up and threaten to throw him in a well?
 - A. Dobbins stole Azar's knife.
 - B. Azar is making fun of the way a village girl danced.
 - C. Dobbins is tired of Azar's attitude.
 - D. Azar is responsible for Kiowa's death.
 - E. Dobbins has finally gone crazy and is sent home.

 18. Why does young Tim O'Brien cry in the boat with Elroy Berdahl?
 - A. He does not want to go to Vietnam.
 - B. He cannot decide if he will go to Vietnam.
 - C. He is crying for his freedom because he has decided to go to Vietnam.
 - D. He is embarrassed.
 - E. He misses his parents.

 19. What is important about the story of Mary Anne?
 - A. The story shows that war changes everyone.
 - B. The story is about love lost.
 - C. It is an example of a true war story.
 - D. It shows the struggle of women in war.
 - E. It proves that 'Greenies' corrupt everyone.

 20. According to the author, what is important about telling stories?
 - A. Telling a story helps to forget about the experience.
 - B. Stories are good for writing books in order to make a good living.
 - C. Stories make things present, help the teller to feel again.
 - D. Stories help your children understand who you are.
 - E. Stories preserve memories and experiences.
-

The Things They Carried

Test
Student Answer Sheet

Name: _____

1. _____

11. _____

2. _____

12. _____

3. _____

13. _____

4. _____

14. _____

5. _____

15. _____

6. _____

16. _____

7. _____

17. _____

8. _____

18. _____

9. _____

19. _____

10. _____

20. _____

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The Things They Carried

Test
Answer Key

1. __A__

11. __D__

2. __C__

12. __A__

3. __C__

13. __C__

4. __B__

14. __A__

5. __D__

15. __B__

6. __A__

16. __C__

7. __A__

17. __B__

8. __C__

18. __C__

9. __C__

19. __A__

10. __D__

20. __C__

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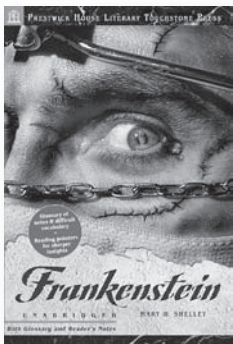
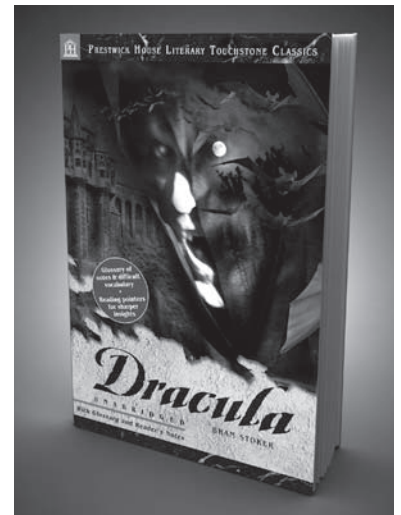
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