

COURSE TITLE Contemporary Literature (**Grade 12**)

REQUIRED TEXT *The Things They Carried*

AUTHOR Tim O'Brien

GENRE Historical Fiction

SUMMARY

War veteran Tim O'Brien's innovative novel *The Things They Carried* is a fictional account of Vietnam and its impact on the individual from multiple perspectives. Each chapter focuses on a soldier and the metaphorical burdens he carries with him during and after the war. At one point in the story in true post-modernist style, the reader is taken along the journey with O'Brien the character when he receives his draft notice. By conveying the attitudes and frustrations of his characters, O'Brien evokes empathy from the reader.

REQUIRED STUDENT RESPONSE (Due the first day of class)

While reading the required novel *The Things They Carried*, students will identify essential conflicts and themes in the story by completing the [graphic organizer](#).

Students will focus on the following:

- a) three characters (one must be Tim O'Brien)
- b) the conflicts they face
- c) the themes that arise as a result

In the story, Tim O'Brien appears as one of the characters. Students are required to address Tim O'Brien as a character on their graphic organizer. Students are given the freedom to choose the remaining two characters on which they wish to focus.