*The Things They Carried*  - Essay Assignment

Consider an idea that Tim O’Brien explores directly and indirectly in *The Things They Carried*. Choose one idea of interest to you as a basis for a five paragraph analytical essay.

In order to create your thesis, answer the following question:

In what ways is the idea of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ developed throughout the novel?

Ideas to consider include, but are not limited to:

* truth
* grief
* boredom
* loyalty
* friendship
* death
* anger
* embarrassment

**Assignment**

You must use a minimum of three stories that you think help to develop this idea as support for your thesis. Use of direct quotations is required. Use the check-list below, which provides the grading criteria, as a guideline for your paper.

**Checklist**

* A solid introduction that not only introduces the book but presents the specific idea you will discuss
* A clearly written thesis statement that answers the required question
* Smooth transitions between paragraphs
* Strong support from at least three different stories
* Well chosen quotations that are woven into your own sentences and cited
* A conclusion that broadens your topic to the universal (why is this idea interesting or important?)
* Flawless grammar and spelling
* Typed, double-spaced, and formatted according to MLA standards
* Gracefully written, thoughtfully constructed, and is clear and cohesive to the reader

**Timeline**

Tuesday: Use your book and your notes to plan your essay. Write a one-page proposal for your paper that includes your thesis, questions or concerns about your thesis, a plan for organizing your essay, and a broad discussion of the evidence that you will use to support your thesis. Make sure to consider whether the thesis is complex enough to drive an interesting paper. The proposal should not be a mini-draft or an outline. Use this assignment to think through and get used to speaking about these ideas. Use this class period to think about and start writing your proposal, which is due at the start of class on Tuesday, 12/6.

Wednesday: Share your proposal with a classmate. Ask for suggestions and have a brief brainstorming session together. Do your best to offer constructive criticism and suggestions to your classmates, and listen carefully to his or her ideas about your essay, but remember – at the end of the day – it is your essay, and you are the one who should be making the important choices. When you are done with this exercise, start writing the actual paper.

Thursday: Work on essays in class.

Friday: Work on essays in class. If you are ready to do peer editing at this point, find a partner with whom to exchange papers and provide feedback. If not, find someone to share your paper with over the weekend.

Monday, December 12 at 2:30 PM on turnitin.com – final paper is due