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# The Things They Carried Paper Topics

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## A Novel Penguin

A classic work of American literature that has not stopped changing minds and lives since it burst onto the literary scene, *The Things They Carried* is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. *The Things They Carried* depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and the character Tim O'Brien, who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three. Taught everywhere—from high school classrooms to graduate seminars in creative writing—it has become required reading for any American and continues to challenge readers in their perceptions of fact and fiction, war and peace, courage and fear and longing. *The Things They Carried* won France's prestigious Prix du

Meilleur Livre Etranger and the Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize; it was also a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

*The Surprising Science of Women, Hormones, and the Law of Unintended Consequences*  
Penguin

This did not happen is a common refrain throughout the stories in *The Things They Carried*. Tim O'Brien's account of the Vietnam War purposely blurs the line between fact and fiction to get closer to the truth of what soldiers actually experienced. This compelling

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volume explores the life of Tim O'Brien and his attempts to wrestle with the trauma and shame of war in *The Things They Carried*. A collection of related essays explore topics such as the moral complexity of war, writing as a path to spiritual redemption, and the novel's portrayal of gender. Contemporary perspectives on war, such as the need to help soldiers suffering from PTSD and not repeating the mistakes of Vietnam, are also presented.

[The Sorrow of War](#) Mariner Books  
A classic from the New York Times

bestselling author of *The Things They Carried* "One of the best, most disturbing, and most powerful books about the shame that was / is Vietnam." —*Minneapolis Star and Tribune* Before writing his award-winning *Going After Cacciato*, Tim O'Brien gave us this intensely personal account of his year as a foot soldier in Vietnam. The author takes us with him to experience combat from behind an infantryman's rifle, to walk the minefields of My Lai, to crawl into the ghostly tunnels, and to explore the ambiguities of manhood and morality in a war gone terribly wrong. Beautifully written and searingly heartfelt, *If I Die in a Combat Zone* is a masterwork of its genre. Now with Extra Libris material,

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including a reader's guide and bonus content.

### **The Dramatic Story of 1,000 World War II Refugees and How They Came to America Casemate**

The million-copy bestseller, which is a groundbreaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling.

#### **The Chosen Few Crown**

Award-winning journalist Ruth Gruber's powerful account of a top-secret mission to rescue one thousand European refugees in the midst of World War II In 1943, nearly one thousand European Jewish refugees from eighteen different countries were chosen by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration to receive asylum in the United States. All they had to do was get there. Ruth Gruber, with the support of Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, volunteered to escort them on

their secret route across the Atlantic from a port in Italy to a "safe haven" camp in Oswego, New York. The dangerous endeavor carried the threat of Nazi capture with each passing day. While on the ship, Gruber recorded the refugees' emotional stories and recounts them here in vivid detail, along with the aftermath of their arrival in the US, which involved a fight for their right to stay after the war ended. The result is a poignant and engrossing true story of suffering under Nazi persecution and incredible courage in the face of overwhelming circumstances.

#### **Tomcat in Love Simon and Schuster**

From beloved author Lois Duncan comes a frightening novel about a group of students who set out to teach their malicious teacher a lesson -- only to learn that one of them could be a killer. Mr. Griffin is the strictest teacher at Del Norte High, with a penchant for endless projects and humiliating students. Even straight-A student Susan can't believe how mean he is

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to her crush, Dave, and to the charismatic Mark Kinney. So when Dave asks Susan to help a group of students teach Mr. Griffin a lesson of their own, she goes along with them. After all, it's a harmless prank, right? But things don't go according to plan. When one "accident" leads to another and people begin to die, Susan and her friends must face the awful truth: one of them is a killer.

*In Retrospect Image*

Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein show that, contrary to previous explanations, this transformation was driven not by anti-Jewish persecution and legal restrictions, but rather by changes within Judaism itself after 70 CE--most importantly, the rise of a new norm that required every Jewish male to read and study the Torah and to send his sons to school. Over the next six centuries, those Jews who

found the norms of Judaism too costly to obey converted to other religions, making world Jewry shrink. Later, when urbanization and commercial expansion in the newly established Muslim Caliphates increased the demand for occupations in which literacy was an advantage, the Jews found themselves literate in a world of almost universal illiteracy. From then forward, almost all Jews entered crafts and trade, and many of them began moving in search of business opportunities, creating a worldwide Diaspora in the process.

*The Wounded Healer* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

A prize-winning poet and Vietnam veteran presents a poetic record of Vietnam that embraces the country's beauty, the repulsiveness of war, unheated battle scars, and extraordinary experiences of ordinary people

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## Surviving Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division HarperCollins

An eye-opening book that reveals crucial information every woman taking hormonal birth control should know. This groundbreaking book sheds light on how hormonal birth control affects women--and the world around them--in ways we are just now beginning to understand. By allowing women to control their fertility, the birth control pill has revolutionized women's lives. Women are going to college, graduating, and entering the workforce in greater numbers than ever before, and there's good reason to believe that the birth control pill has a lot to do with this. But there's a lot more to the pill than meets the eye. Although women go on the pill for a small handful of targeted effects (pregnancy prevention and clearer skin, yay!), sex hormones can't work that way. Sex

hormones impact the activities of billions of cells in the body at once, many of which are in the brain. There, they play a role in influencing attraction, sexual motivation, stress, hunger, eating patterns, emotion regulation, friendships, aggression, mood, learning, and more. This means that being on the birth control pill makes women a different version of themselves than when they are off of it. And this is a big deal. For instance, women on the pill have a dampened cortisol spike in response to stress. While this might sound great (no stress!), it can have negative implications for learning, memory, and mood. Additionally, because the pill influences who women are attracted to, being on the pill may inadvertently influence who women choose as partners, which can have important implications for their relationships once they go off it. Sometimes these changes

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are for the better . . . but other times, they're for the worse. By changing what women's brains do, the pill also has the ability to have cascading effects on everything and everyone that a woman encounters. This means that the reach of the pill extends far beyond women's own bodies, having a major impact on society and the world. This paradigm-shattering book provides an even-handed, science-based understanding of who women are, both on and off the pill. It will change the way that women think about their hormones and how they view themselves. It also serves as a rallying cry for women to demand more information from science about how their bodies and brains work and to advocate for better research. This book will help women make more informed decisions about their health, whether they're on the pill or off of it.

## **An Introduction to Reading and Writing**

Crown

**FASHIONING A FAIRY TALE** The night of the fashion show for Tsukimi and Kuranosuke's Jelly Fish brand has finally arrived. They pulled out all the stops to make Amamizu-kan into an enchanting wonderland—even Mayaya has transformed into a chic model! The show brings some much-needed attention to the retro building, but will the exposure be enough to save the Amars and their home? When their fashion line becomes a hit success, the girls scramble to satisfy their customers. With the help of their new colleague Nisha, a savvy Indian expat who knows all about the textile industry, they just might make it work!...But is Tsukimi ready to leave her

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quiet life behind for good?

## **This Is Your Brain on Birth Control**

Open Road + Grove/Atlantic

Two bestselling novels from "one of his generation's most deservedly acclaimed authors." (Chicago Tribune)

**The Girl with Ghost Eyes** Simon and Schuster  
Joseph Campbell, arguably the greatest mythologist of our time, was certainly one of our greatest storytellers. This new cloth edition of *The Hero's Journey*, published to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Campbell's birth, recounts his own quest and conveys the excitement of his lifelong exploration of our mythic traditions, what he called "the one great story of mankind."

**A Novel** *The Things They Carried*

10:00 tonight at the water tower. Tell no one.

-Chaos Club When Max receives a mysterious

invite from the untraceable, epic prank-pulling Chaos Club, he has to ask: why him? After all, he's Mr. 2.5 GPA, Mr. No Social Life. He's Just Max. And his favorite heist movies have taught him this situation calls for Rule #4: Be suspicious. But it's also his one shot to leave Just Max in the dust...

Yeah, not so much. Max and four fellow students—who also received invites—are standing on the newly defaced water tower when campus security "catches" them. Definitely a setup. And this time, Max has had enough. It's time for Rule #7: Always get payback. Let the prank war begin. Oceans 11 meets *The Breakfast Club* in this entertaining, fast-paced debut filled with pranks and cons that will keep readers on their toes, never sure who's pulling the strings or what's coming next.

Joseph Campbell on His Life and Work Houghton Mifflin

A CLASSIC FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES  
BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE THINGS*

*THEY CARRIED* "To call *Going After Cacciato* a



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novel about war is like calling Moby-Dick a novel about whales." So wrote The New York Times of Tim O'Brien's now classic novel of Vietnam. Winner of the 1979 National Book Award, *Going After Cacciato* captures the peculiar mixture of horror and hallucination that marked this strangest of wars. In a blend of reality and fantasy, this novel tells the story of a young soldier who one day lays down his rifle and sets off on a quixotic journey from the jungles of Indochina to the streets of Paris. In its memorable evocation of men both fleeing from and meeting the demands of battle, *Going After Cacciato* stands as much more than just a great war novel. Ultimately it's about the forces of fear and heroism that do battle in the hearts of us all. Now with Extra Libris material, including a reader's guide and bonus content

Dad's Maybe Book Crown Publishing Group (NY)  
Seminar paper from the year 2011 in the subject  
American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,7,  
University of Mannheim (Anglistisches Seminar),

course: In Times of Crisis. Representations of War in American Literature and Film from the Civil War to Iraq, language: English, abstract: In the book "The things they carried" by Tim O'Brien the narrator says that a good war story is never true. He admits that nearly everything in the book is made up, after saying that it is true before. However, the reader learns that not until the 7th chapter, in which O'Brien, the narrator, tells the reader that everything up to now has been invented. Similarly, he leaves open if some things are true or not. Even the narrator, who is named like the author himself, is made up and has no or little similarity to the author, e.g the author O'Brien does not have a daughter, whereas the narrator O'Brien does. Reading "The things they carried", a question keeps coming up again and again: Why does he do that? Why does Tim O'Brien, the narrator, constantly tell the reader that everything is made up? It does not make any sense. The reader just gets confused. In addition to this question, I found myself wondering if there was

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a clear difference between truth and fiction in the book, namely if you could say this is true and this is untrue and this is certain and this is uncertain. And if yes, was it O'Brien's intention to draw this clear line, or did it just happen by accident? Of course, one cannot know everything for certain and no one can look into O'Brien's brain, but you can make assumptions based on the knowledge you have. In my paper I will focus mainly on the aspect why the principle of truth and fiction is used in *The Things They Carried* and which effects come out of that. I think this is very interesting, because, in my opinion, this is the main aspect of the whole book. Someone who reads it will not be able to stop themselves from asking questions in their head. The main process while reading is that you just keep asking yourself these questions again and again and you cannot find any answer to them. My goal, however, is not to find any answers, but to try to explain this aspect truth and fiction as a whole and to examine what it might contribute to describe the Vietnam war.

*Ministry in Contemporary Society* Vintage  
NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD  
WINNER • NATIONAL BESTSELLER • With this book, the acclaimed author created an entirely new form—an exhilarating blend of autobiography and mythology, of world and self, of hot rage and cool analysis. First published in 1976, it has become a classic in its innovative portrayal of multiple and intersecting identities—immigrant, female, Chinese, American. “A classic, for a reason” – Celeste Ng via Twitter As a girl, Kingston lives in two confounding worlds: the California to which her parents have immigrated and the China of her mother’s “talk stories.” The fierce and wily women warriors of her mother’s tales clash jarringly with the harsh reality of female oppression out of which they come. Kingston’s sense of self emerges in the mystifying gaps in these stories, which she learns to fill with stories of her own. A warrior of words, she forges fractured

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myths and memories into an incandescent whole, achieving a new understanding of her family's past and her own present.

**Box Me Up and Ship Me Home** Knopf  
A CLASSIC FROM THE NEW YORK  
TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
THE THINGS THEY CARRIED In this  
wildly funny, brilliantly inventive novel,  
Tim O'Brien has created the ultimate  
character for our times. Thomas Chippering,  
a 6'6" professor of linguistics, is a man torn  
between two obsessions: the desperate need  
to win back his former wife, the faithless  
Lorna Sue, and a craving to test his erotic  
charms on every woman he meets. But there  
are complications, including Lorna Sue's  
brother, Herbie, with whom she has an all-  
too-close relationship, and the considerable

charms of Chippering's new love, the  
attractive, and of course already married,  
Mrs. Robert Kooshof, who may at last  
satisfy Chippering's longing for intimacy. In  
*Tomcat in Love*, Tim O'Brien takes on the  
battle of the sexes with astonishing results.  
By turns hilarious, outrageous, romantic,  
and deeply moving, this is one of the most  
talked about novels in years: a novel for this  
and every age.

*If I Die in a Combat Zone* Vintage

A candid memoir of being sent to Vietnam at  
age nineteen, witnessing the carnage of  
Hamburger Hill, and returning to an America in  
turmoil. Arthur Wiknik was a teenager from  
New England when he was drafted into the US  
Army in 1968, shipping out to Vietnam early  
the following year. Shortly after his arrival on

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the far side of the world, he was assigned to Camp Evans near the northern village of Phong Dien, only thirty miles from Laos and North Vietnam. On his first jungle patrol, his squad killed a female Viet Cong who turned out to have been the local prostitute. It was the first dead person he had ever seen. Wiknik's account of life and death in Vietnam includes everything from heavy combat to faking insanity to get some R & R. He was the first in his unit to reach the top of Hamburger Hill, and between sporadic episodes of combat, he mingled with the locals; tricked unwitting US suppliers into providing his platoon with hard-to-get food; defied a superior and was punished with a dangerous mission; and struggled with himself and his fellow soldiers as the antiwar movement began to affect them. Written with honesty and sharp wit by a soldier who was featured on a

recent History Channel documentary about Vietnam, Nam Sense spares nothing and no one in its attempt to convey what really transpired for the combat soldier during this unpopular war. It is not about glory, mental breakdowns, flashbacks, or self-pity. The GIs Wiknik lived and fought with during his yearlong tour were not drug addicts or war criminals or gung-ho killers. They were there to do their duty as they were trained, support their comrades—and get home alive. Recipient of an Honorable Mention from the Military Writers Society of America. *Truth and Fiction in Tim O'Brien's "The Things They Carried"* Simon and Schuster

In O'Brien's dynamic first novel, a Vietnam vet and his brother vie for the same gal, a native of their dwindling Minnesota hometown. Culminating in a disastrous road trip which ends with the men skiing home

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through the wilderness, "Northern Lights" spawned themes that would become the author's hallmarks for future works.

The Romance of the Forest Atlantic Monthly Press

This riveting novel of love and mystery from the author of *The Things They Carried* examines the lasting impact of the twentieth century's legacy of violence and warfare, both at home and abroad. When long-hidden secrets about the atrocities he committed in Vietnam come to light, a candidate for the U.S. Senate retreats with his wife to a lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota. Within days of their arrival, his wife mysteriously vanishes into the watery wilderness.