



The Things They Carried Mapping Stories

Use this worksheet to help you understand how each story in *The Things They Carried* contributes to the whole text.

In column 2: Identify the story's topic or focus.

In column 3: Identify the story's theme.

In column 4: Briefly explain how the story contributes to the overall picture O'Brien paints of the Vietnam War.

Story	Topic or Focus	Theme	How the Story Contributes to O'Brien's Picture of the Vietnam War
The Things They Carried	<i>what the soldiers carry physically, mentally, and emotionally</i>	<i>physical and emotional burdens</i>	<i>This story provides specifics that show who these young soldiers were and all they were dealing with. It demonstrates the heavy burden of war.</i>
Love			
Spin			

On the Rainy River			
Enemies			
Friends			
How to Tell a True War Story			

The Dentist			
Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong			
Stockings			
Church			

The Man I Killed			
Ambush			
Style			
Speaking of Courage			

Notes			
In the Field			
Good Form			
Field Trip			

The Ghost Soldiers			
Night Life			
The Lives of the Dead			

RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.