

The Things They Carried

Vietnam Era

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Grade Level	11th Grade	**Time Frame**	90-120 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	2-3 class periods
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

How does does war affect a community?

Summary

In this lesson, students begin by considering what items are essential for soldiers to bring with them to war. Students then compare what they read from the novel, "The Things They Carried" by Tim O'Brien, with information about the Vietnam War using an H-Chart. To extend their learning, students research a U.S. veteran who served in the Vietnam War to learn more about that person's life and experiences in the military. Upon completing their research, students create a brief presentation to demonstrate what they have learned and share it with their peers. Finally, students reflect on how war has affected communities.

Snapshot

Engage

Students receive a card with the information of a veteran who fought in the Vietnam war and brainstorm what might have been essential items for their veteran to carry into war.

Explore

Students spend time looking through the POW/MIA database and reflect on what they are feeling as they see all of the names.

Explain

Students use an H-Chart graphic organizer to organize notes as they read a variety of resources and historical documents pertaining to the Vietnam War.

Extend

Students research the veteran whose card they received at the start of the lesson and create a poster with the information they learn.

Evaluate

Students complete an Exit Ticket answering the question, "How does war affect a community?"

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States History (9th through 12th grade))

USH.6.3: Analyze the series of events and long term foreign and domestic consequences of the United States' military involvement in Vietnam including the Domino Theory, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the Tet Offensive, the presidential election of 1968, university student protests led by the counterculture movement, expanded television coverage of the war, the War Powers Resolution Act, and the 26th Amendment.

Attachments

- Excerpt—The Things They Carried - Spanish.docx
- Excerpt—The Things They Carried - Spanish.pdf
- Excerpt—The Things They Carried.docx
- Excerpt—The Things They Carried.pdf
- H-Chart—The Things They Carried - Spanish.docx
- H-Chart—The Things They Carried - Spanish.pdf
- H-Chart—The Things They Carried.docx
- H-Chart—The Things They Carried.pdf
- Lesson Slides—The Things They Carried.pptx
- Veteran Cards—The Things They Carried.docx
- Veteran Cards—The Things They Carried.pdf
- Vietnam Era Project Rubric—The Things They Carried - Spanish.docx
- Vietnam Era Project Rubric—The Things They Carried - Spanish.pdf
- Vietnam Era Project Rubric—The Things They Carried.docx
- Vietnam Era Project Rubric—The Things They Carried.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Veteran Cards (attached; one card per student)
- Paired Text H-Chart (attached; one per student)
- Excerpt from *The Things They Carried* (attached; one per student)
- Wakelet (linked)
- Vietnam Era Project Rubric (attached; one per student)
- Sticky notes
- Pens or pencils
- Notebook/notebook paper
- Student personal devices or laptops to research and create Research Posters
- Poster or butcher paper (if students prefer to complete their posters by hand)
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- Internet access/Wi-Fi

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparation

Prior to teaching the lesson, make sure you have all handouts printed and materials ready. You may want to print the **Veteran Cards** on a thicker paper and laminate them, as students will be using them throughout the entire lesson.

As students enter the classroom, hand them one of the attached **Veteran Cards**. Let students know that they will carry this card with them through the duration of the lesson, coming back to it and reflecting on the person, their job, and their sacrifices. Introduce the lesson using **slide 2** of the attached **Lesson Slides**. **Slides 3–5** contain the title, essential question, and learning objectives for this lesson. Display these slides as needed for students.

Go to **slide 6**. Students will use the Round Robin instructional strategy to brainstorm a list of five items that they would "carry" in a backpack if they had to go on a trip where they would not be returning home for an extended period of time. Ask them what five things they would carry with them in their packs?

Go to **slide 7.** As Elbow Partners, ask students to compare their lists and explain why they chose specific items. Discuss as a class what items might be "essential." Allow students an opportunity to justify their choices. Next, introduce the idea of soldiers going to war and ask student pairs to consider what might be essential items for soldiers to carry. Ask students to think about what their person might take with them based on what they have discussed thus far and about the information on the card about that individual.

Explore

Go to **slide 8.** Use this description to define "POW" to students. Repeat this process on **slide 9** with the "MIA" acronym.

Move to **slide 10.** Guide students to the POW/MIA Veteran Database provided with this lesson. Students can access it by typing the link or scanning a QR code on the slide. Give students time to look through the website and process the impact of this war. Proceed to **slide 11.** Use the How Am I Feeling? What Am I Thinking? strategy to help students reflect on what they found while exploring this website. Ask students to consider how their person would feel after looking at this information as well.

25 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Wakelet

Here is the link to the Wakelet that students will be using in this lesson: https://wakelet.com/wake/-OtvlHQ13rVk_RYxsJ_WL. There is a QR code in the slides for students to scan that will also take them to this page.

Each student will receive a copy of the **H-Chart** graphic organizer. Advance to **slide 12,** share the instructional strategy Paired Texts H-Chart, and pass out the attached handout. Using the Web Link provided, or the QR Code for the Wakelet, instruct students to review the information about the Vietnam War. Have them record important events, ideas, places, or information in the first "leg" of the "H."

Next, pass out the attached **Excerpt** from *The Things They Carried*. Instruct students to read the excerpt first, then discuss it with a partner. Student pairs should work together to write the main ideas that they took away from the reading in the second "leg" of the "H." Next, have the class share out what they included in their charts, explaining why they chose the main points that they did. Discuss how the two sources of information are similar or different. Have student pairs work together to determine how the excerpt from the story combined with historical data contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the Vietnam Era.

Go to **slide 13.** The students should answer the following questions in the center of the H-Chart:

- How do these information sources help to give you a clearer viewpoint of the Vietnam War?
- How does your new perspective enhance your understanding of how war impacts communities?

After exploring those ideas about the Vietnam War, you should ask students to consider whether or not war is still affecting the United States today. This could be an opportunity to give examples of how war is influencing society abroad as well.

Extend

Go to **slide 14**. Pass out the attached Vietnam Era Project Rubric for the Research Poster activity. Review the rubric with students to make sure they understand what is expected of them for this project. Instruct students to explore the life of the Vietnam War veteran on the card they received at the beginning of the class. Have them use the information they gather and read to create a brief presentation using a poster board, large piece of paper, or a computer to honor the service of Vietnam veterans. Remind students to refer to the rubric as a guide while they are creating their presentation. Student projects are presented and assessed according to the rubric.

Veteran Cards: James T. Boddie Jr., Bud Day, John Kerry, Sharon Ann Lane, John McCain, Pascal Poolaw, Colin Powell

Move to **slide 15** and share the instructional strategy TAG Me! with students. Instruct them to pay close attention as their peers share their research about the selected veteran they have. Once a student has shared their work/presented their project, have students write down (tell) something they like about the project, a question they have about the work, and give one suggestion they have for the work. You can have them do this on a sticky note, a sheet of paper, or verbally, depending on the class structure and how students best give and receive peer feedback. Ask a few students to share something that they learned from one of their classmates at the end of this activity.

Teacher's Note: Group Presentations

Consider having students work in small groups on their research, each being responsible for a certain aspect of their person so that presentations do not become repetitive or redundant.

Evaluate

At the end of the lesson, advance to **slide 16** and have students respond to the following Exit Ticket question on a sticky note, a sheet of paper, or verbally.

How does war affect a community? Consider social and environmental factors.

Teacher's Note: Trigger Warning

This question could potentially be an emotional trigger for any students that have experienced loss or trauma in their life as a result of war. Be sure to approach this topic respectfully and thoughtfully. Students may have family members that are still suffering from physical injuries or mental illness as a result of participating in a war.

Resources

- A&E Television Network. (n.d.). Vietnam War: Dates and timeline | History. Retrieved February 17, 2023, from https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war
- POW Network. (n.d.) Biographies on prisoners of war and missing in action. Retrieved April 4, 2023, from https://www.pownetwork.org/bios.htm#:~:text=The%20list%20of%20ALL%20those%20declared%20POW%2FMIA%20during,and%20returnees%20-%20includes%20civilians%20and%20foreign%20nationals.
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
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- K20 Center. (n.d.). Paired texts h-chart. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/132
- K20 Center. (n.d.). QR codes. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2449
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- K20 Center. (n.d.). Round robin. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/2183
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- The Library of Congress. (n.d.). Search results from veteran's history project collection. Retrieved February 17, 2023, from https://www.loc.gov/collections/veterans-history-project-collection
- The Library of Congress. (n.d.). Serving our voices: Veterans history project collection. Digital collections. The Library of Congress. Retrieved February 17, 2023, from https://www.loc.gov/collections/veterans-history-project-collection/serving-our-voices/
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- The Vietnam War. (n.d.). The history place - Vietnam war. Retrieved February 17, 2023, from http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/vietnam/
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. (n.d.). The virtual wall. Retrieved February 17, 2023, from http://www.virtualwall.org/