

Formatting Synthesis Essay 2:

Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*

Like your first paper, the second should be a minimum 750 words in the body of your text. There should be a works cited page at the end of your paper; it should include all of the sources you are using in the paper. There should be at least three total sources: *The Things They Carried* and two or more articles culled from research via the library's available databases. The articles should help support your efforts to address the topic: how war affects the people (both fictional and real) in the sources that you are using. Choose two characters from O'Brien's book and one each from your outside research.

The following is a general structural breakdown of what should go into the paper.

- Introduction: Establish the general topic of your essay. Introduce the title of the main source for this assignment (O'Brien's book) along with the book's author. Next, make some general comments about the main point(s) O'Brien is making in his book. After that, move into your thesis, which is your argument and reasons for how war affects the people (both fictional and real) you will be discussing in your paper.
- Body Paragraph 1: Explain the effect of war on your O'Brien character #1. Use **your own reasoning** and **understanding** of the book, along with some short quotes or paraphrases from the book for support to argue how war affected this person. (You can also introduce the name of the specific story from the book if you so desire.)
- Body Paragraph 2: The same as previous, but with O'Brien character #2.

Note: If during or after Body Paragraph 2 you wish to start comparing and contrasting the effect of war on the people as they are mentioned in your paper, do so. However, if you find that making comparisons between your subjects is awkward or difficult to do at this stage in your paper, you can also save comparing and contrasting for your later paragraphs.

- Body Paragraph 3: Same as previous paragraphs except using Outside Source #1.

Note 2: At this point, you can begin comparing and contrasting the effects of war on your people if you haven't started already.

- Body Paragraph 4: Same as previous except using Outside Source #2.
- Body Paragraphs 5, 6, and 7: If you haven't already done so, start considering the similarities and differences among the people you have discussed in this paper in the way that war affected their lives. Once again, use short quotes or paraphrases from O'Brien's book and your outside sources as you see fit to support the argument stated in your thesis.
- Concluding Paragraph: Reemphasize and expand your thesis, summarize your main points (including the people mentioned in the paper) along with the comparisons you made throughout your paper or in the later paragraphs, and finish with a suggestion, call to action, recommendation, or insight into the struggles these people suffer.

Final Note: Since this essay has a minimum number of words as its basic requirement (along

with proper MLA format, which should be a given) the total number of paragraphs in your essay might be more or less than the number I have listed here.