

**11TH GRADE ENGLISH REQUIRED SUMMER READING**  
Accelerated

***The Things They Carried*, by Tim O'Brien [Note: Please get the physical book, not the electronic version, and bring it to class.]**

Please read this book over the summer and write a 1-2 page typed, double-spaced response to the following prompt. This is not a thesis essay, but a beginning consideration of American idealism. You must include at least two quotes from your story for support.

Raoul De Roussey De Sales explored the idea of "What Makes an American?" in his 1939 essay for *The Atlantic*. He explained that most Americans believed that "in establishing a democratic government they determined forever the course of political perfection, and that whoever followed another course was on the road to damnation." This picture of the American ideal is questioned by Tim O'Brien in his book, *The Things They Carried*. Choose one of the stories from his book, and describe how O'Brien questions this ideal.

Recommended:

*The Fire Next Time*, James Baldwin  
*Green Grass, Running Water*, Thomas King  
*Beloved*, Toni Morrison  
*American Pastoral*, Philip Roth  
*Ceremony*, Leslie Marmon Silko  
*Unfamiliar Fishes*, Sarah Vowell