

**SUMMER READING REQUIREMENT**  
**Matanzas High School**  
**Advanced Placement English Language & Composition**

Students enrolling in **AP English Language & Composition** must read **The Things They Carried** by Tim O'Brien and **Slaughterhouse Five** by Kurt Vonnegut, and respond to the essay question. (The books are available in the public library, at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), Books -A-Million and at other online and retail locations.)

**Essay:**

The protagonists of The Things They Carried and Slaughterhouse Five both inject themselves into their narratives, blurring the line between fact and fiction for readers. Vonnegut begins his novel with the statement, "*All this happened, more or less,*" but then includes an unbelievable account of interstellar time travel by a character named Billy Pilgrim; O'Brien, on the other hand, calls his book "a work of fiction," yet gives the narrator of the story his own name: 'Tim O'Brien.'

Keeping in mind both the fiction and non-fiction components of each book, write an essay in which you analyze each protagonist's internal conflict, by describing how each character dealt with his own war-time situation. Your essay should also examine the effects of war on each man, and explain how their writing (both the fiction and non-fiction elements of the books) helped them deal with the terrifying memories of their war experiences.

**Note: This is a multi-part question. Be sure your essay response addresses all the required elements.**

Submit the essay in class on **September 18, 2009**. No late work will be accepted. Although you will be turning in a print copy of the essay, you will also need to submit the essay through the website [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), a plagiarism detection site utilized by Matanzas High School. I will provide instructions for logging in and utilizing this site during the first week or two of class. Directions will also be placed on my website in September.

The essay must be in MLA format: it should be doubled-spaced, Times New Roman font, plain text, 12 point type, with one-inch margins on all sides. Create a "header" at the top of the page which includes your name, period and date, and a "footer" at the bottom to number the pages of your response. (For MLA format; see link on my class website or: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> )

In order to answer the question fully, the suggested length of the essay is approximately three-to- five typed pages, or about 1,000-1,500 words. The essay will be evaluated using the rubric on the reverse side of this sheet. Essays will not be graded and/or returned until the end of the first marking period, after the instructor has had time to become acquainted with each student's writing style and ability.

**Questions?**

**E-mail Mrs. Jo Ann Nahirny at: [nahirnyj@flaglerschools.com](mailto:nahirnyj@flaglerschools.com)**