

# The Vietnam War - A Cold War Case Study

## U.S. History II

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Student Name

Pd. \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Complete the following phases during the Close Reading Activity of Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*.

**Essential Question:** How, and in what ways, does war define Americans?

	Step #1	Step #2
	Initial reading of "Spin" while annotating and recording <b>specific words and phrases associated with Vietnam and the Vietnam War</b>	Small group discussions of discoveries of Step #1. Record thoughts and ideas below.
	Step #3	Step #4
	Second reading of "Spin" recording <b>specific thoughts, ideas, and actions associated with soldiers as a result of their stories</b>	Small group discussions of discoveries of Step #3. Record thoughts and ideas below.

	Step #5	Step #6
	<p>Third and final reading of "Spin" recording the <b>specific soldier whose story best illustrates how and why the Vietnam War defined him as an American</b></p>	<p>Silent writing and reflection. Record thoughts and ideas below - share with small group.</p>

### Text-Dependent Questions

1. How does the author show that part of Azar's character is kind and loving.
2. How did the "old poppa-san" help the platoon? What was his special skill?
3. How does Norman Bowker's wish reflect his character and/or personality?
4. In what way does Kiowa's rain dance fail?
5. How is Azar's treatment of Ted Lavender's puppy an indicator of the trauma in Azar's life?
6. How is this story structured? What can you say about all these short sections?
7. Norman Bowker and Henry Dobbins played checkers almost every evening. It was a ritual that many of the soldiers would sometimes stop by to watch. According to "Spin," how was the Vietnam War NOT like this game of checkers?

8. By its own definition, war is not a time of peace or beauty or serenity; in fact, Walt Whitman stated, "The real war will never get in the books." O'Brien identifies a variety of moments of light-heartedness, humor, and levity in these few pages of "Spin." Recapture 2-3 of these moments utilizing key vocabulary and phrasing, and relate them to Whitman's quotation in a way which either endorses and supports or negates and conflicts .
9. The purpose of stories, according to O'Brien, is "That's what stories are for. Stories are for joining the past to the future. Stories are for those late hours in the night when you can't remember how you got from where you were to where you are. Stories are for eternity, when memory is erased, when there is nothing to remember except the story." What parts of "Spin" demonstrate O'Brien's understanding of the purpose of stories? Be specific in your answer.