Essay 2: The Language of War

- proposal (1 page, 1 pt.) due Wednesday, September 11
- reading notes (2 pages, 2 pts.) Monday, September 16
- outline (2 pages, 1 pt.) due Wednesday, September 18
- rough works cited page (1 page, 1 pt.) Monday, September 23
- rough draft (4 pages, 2 pts.) due Wednesday, September 25
- meet with a tutor (or me) by Tuesday, October 1
- final draft (4+ pages, 15 pts.) due Wednesday, October 2

All of these must be typed using MLA format.

Topic

In the first chapter of *The Things They Carried*, Tim O’Brien comments that the characters “talked grunt lingo” (19); he also uses military slang and jargon throughout his book. In your life, you probably use a variety of slang, lingo, and jargon in various situations (with friends, at work, on a team, while texting, in conversations, etc.). The vocabulary of war is also used in common speech; for example, a struggle becomes an “uphill battle.”

In this essay (4+ pages, 8+ paragraphs), you will analyze how and why people use specialized language in different situations. Choose one of these three options:

1. Analyze how and why O’Brien incorporates the jargon, slang, and acronyms of the military into *The Things They Carried*. Explain his and the characters’ reasons for using such words and the effect on the reader. Categorize or compare the different kinds of jargon, slang, and acronyms in the book.

2. Analyze how and why you or the people around (friends, family, team, workplace, hobby, subculture) use slang, jargon, lingo, abbreviations, or bilingualism. Explain how such language includes or excludes others. Categorize that language, and compare it to the language of *The Things They Carried*.

3. Analyze how and why the rhetoric of war (“uphill battle,” “SNAFU,” “culture wars,” “class warfare,” etc.) is used in non-military situations (writing, conversations, journalism, television, politics, etc.). Explain the writers’ reasons for using such metaphors and the effect on the reader or viewer. Categorize that language, and compare it to the language of *The Things They Carried*.

Research Requirement

No matter which topic you choose, you must include and analyze supporting evidence/quotations from *The Things They Carried* (1-148) and at least 2 other sources, such as articles from magazines, newspapers, journals, or books. Use the library’s electronic databases to find articles (i.e., Academic Search Premier, Opposing Viewpoints, JSTOR, Lexis-Nexis, etc.). You may also use credible, academic internet websites (i.e., Google scholar or .edu).

Audience & Purpose

Imagine that your reader has read *The Things They Carried* but may not agree with your perspective on the book or the slang and jargon that you are analyzing. The purpose of your essay is to persuade your reader that your analysis is valid.

Required Reading Assignments

- *Understanding Rhetoric*: chapters 2, 3, 6
- *The Things They Carried* (1-148), especially (3) (5) (7) (19) (58) (87-89) (110) (139) (141)
Structure & Content Checklist

___ Write a creative, informative title for your essay; write an interesting, inventive hook as well.
___ Your introduction should identify the book and topic that your essay focuses on.
___ The thesis of your essay must state your position on the topic and preview your analysis specifically.
___ Use clear topic sentences and transitions to provide a structure for your essay.
___ Incorporate logical reasons, analysis of examples, and research to support your thesis.

___ **You must analyze at least one quotation from *The Things They Carried* in every supporting paragraph.**
___ You should include a quotation from research in almost every supporting paragraph.
___ Remember to ICE: introduce, cite, and explain each quotation, example, or paraphrase.
___ Write a strong conclusion that summarizes and wraps up the entire essay.
___ Use present-tense verbs to write about the book or other texts. It is acceptable to use first-person (“I,” “my”).
___ Edit and proofread your sentences so that they are as clear and correct as possible.
___ Include a properly formatted works cited page.
___ Format your paper properly: double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point font such as Times New Roman.

Do not plagiarize (copy, borrow, steal, or buy someone else’s writing); if you do, you will receive zero points for this assignment and possibly fail the course.

Process — You must complete and submit all of the following with the final draft (I will provide a folder):

___ typed final draft & works cited page
___ copies / printouts of all sources used in the paper [very important]
___ tutoring receipt or my comments**                      ___ typed rough draft(s)
___ peer review comments                                      ___ typed outline
___ typed rough works cited page                            ___ typed reading notes
___ typed proposal                                              ___ brainstorming, research notes, etc.

** If you are unable to see a tutor for this essay, you may visit my advice hours.

• Bring this assignment sheet, your notes, your drafts, *The Things They Carried*, and *Understanding Rhetoric* with you when you see a tutor at the Language Success Center.

• Please feel free to visit my advice hours (MTW 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & Th 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.) or email me (neil.watkins@chaffey.edu) at any point in your writing process.

Proposal Questions — 1 page, typed, due Wednesday, September 11

1. What do you plan to write about?
2. Why have you chosen that topic?
3. What do you want your reader to learn or understand from your essay?
4. What obstacles or challenges might you face as you write? How will you overcome those?
5. When & where will you write the essay?

Reading Notes — 2 pages, typed, due Monday, September 16

1. List as many possible examples as possible that might go into the essay.
2. Find 4 relevant quotations from *The Things They Carried*.

Type the quotations and analyze them in as much detail as possible.