

***Going After Cacciato* by Tim O'Brien (Published by Broadway Books)**

Approved for use in Advanced Placement Communication Arts IV and Communication Arts IV

Summary

Going After Cacciato is a novel about the Vietnam War, memory, and the imagination. The novel develops three distinct yet interwoven strands. The first is the story, told mostly in flashback, of Paul Berlin's experiences in the U.S. Army in 1968, the height of the Vietnam War. The second strand consists of ten chapters, each entitled "The Observation Post." In these chapters, Paul Berlin is on night watch at Quang Ngai. The third strand is concerned with an imaginary journey from Vietnam to Paris in pursuit of Cacciato, a soldier who is absent without leave (AWOL). Paul constructs this journey as he stands watch.

Connection to the Curriculum

Going After Cacciato gives students an opportunity to examine the art of sequencing, use of point of view, development of tone, and the effect of an author's style in a contemporary piece. Its setting of the Vietnam War invites comparison of current events to historical events. Its reflective perspective engages students as they form inferences about the various soldiers' perspectives. The complex narrative allows students the opportunity to explore an author's message and purpose for writing. The topic also inspires research of historical and current events.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Literature: 2.1- The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

Writing: 3.1- The students use writing as a tool for learning throughout the curriculum.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.3.2- The student determines meaning of words or phrases using context clues from sentences or paragraphs.

1.4.8- The student understands the purpose of text features and uses such features to locate information in and to gain meaning from appropriate-level texts.

Literature:

2.1.2- The student analyzes the historical, social, and cultural contextual aspects of the setting and their influence on characters and events in the story of literary text.

2.1.5- The student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the use of literary devices (foreshadowing, flashback, irony, figurative language, imagery, symbolism, satire, allusion, paradox, dialogue, point of view, overstatement) in a text.

Writing:

3.1.1- The student uses the writing process in various formats.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The novel depicts the life of a soldier during the Vietnam War. The book contains profanity (including use of the "f" word) and violence as it relates to war.

AP Connections

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon