

- Read this excerpt from “The Things They Carried” & relate it to “On the Rainy River”
- Respond in a paragraph. Include embedded direct quotes from each passage.

They carried all the emotional baggage of men who might die. Grief, terror, love, longing -these were intangibles, but the intangibles had their own mass and specific gravity, they had tangible weight. They carried shameful memories. They carried the common secret of cowardice barely restrained, the instinct to run or freeze or hide, and in many respects this was the heaviest burden of all, for it could never be put down, it required perfect balance and perfect posture. They carried their reputations. They carried the soldier's greatest fear, which was the fear of blushing. Men killed, and died, because they were embarrassed not to. It was what had brought them to the war in the first place, nothing positive, no dreams of glory or honor, just to avoid the blush of dishonor. They died so as not to die of embarrassment. They crawled into tunnels and walked point and advanced under fire. Each morning, despite the unknowns, they made their legs move. They endured. They kept humping. They did not submit to the obvious alternative, which was simply to close the eyes and fall. So easy, really. Go limp and tumble to the ground and let the muscles unwind and not speak and not budge until your buddies picked you up and lifted you into the chopper that would roar and dip its nose and carry you off to the world. A mere matter of falling, yet no one ever fell. It was not courage, exactly; the object was not valor. Rather, they were too frightened to be cowards.

- Read this excerpt from “On the Rainy River” (pages 41-42). Read “Fortunate Son” by Creedence Clearwater Revival. Relate them.
- Respond in a paragraph. Include embedded direct quotes from each passage.

The draft notice arrived on June 17, 1968.... I remember a sound in my head. It wasn't thinking, just a silent howl.... I was a *liberal*, for Christ sake: If they needed fresh bodies, why not draft some back-to-the-stone-age hawk? Or some dumb jingo¹ in his hard hat and Bomb Hanoi² button, or one of LBJ's³ pretty daughters, or Westmoreland's⁴ whole handsome family – nephews and nieces and baby grandson. There should be a law, I thought. If you support a war, if you think it's worth the price, that's fine, but you have to put your own precious fluids on the line. You have to head for the front and hook up with an infantry unit and help spill the blood. And you have to bring along your wife, or your kids, or your lover. A *law*, I thought.

“Fortunate Son” by Creedence Clearwater Revival

Some folks are born to wave the flag,
 Ooh, they're red, white and blue.
 And when the band plays "Hail to the chief",
 Ooh, they point the cannon at you, Lord,

It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no senator's son, son.
 It ain't me, it ain't me; I ain't no fortunate one, no,

Some folks are born silver spoon in hand,
 Lord, don't they help themselves, oh.
 But when the taxman comes to the door,
 Lord, the house looks like a rummage sale, yes,

It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no millionaire's son, no.
 It ain't me, it ain't me; I ain't no fortunate one, no.

Some folks inherit star spangled eyes,
 Ooh, they send you down to war, Lord,
 And when you ask them, "How much should we give?"
 Ooh, they only answer More! more! more! yoh,

It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no military son, son.
 It ain't me, it ain't me; I ain't no fortunate one, one..

¹ a person who professes his or her patriotism loudly and excessively, favoring vigilant preparedness for war and an aggressive foreign policy

² Capital of Vietnam (North Vietnam at the time)

³ President Lyndon Baines Johnson

⁴ Army General William Westmoreland, commander of U.S. military operations during the Vietnam War