**Tim O’Brien’s WRITING STYLE in *The Things They Carried***

**As you review the stylistic choices that O’Brien makes in his writing, consider the intended effects.**

* What is truth? “story truth” vs. “happening truth”
* Focus on emotion and feeling, not the events
* “Makes the stomach feel”
	+ sensory details SHOW the reader, rather than tell
	+ specific examples make the reader feel
	+ descriptive diction
* Vivid imagery – words create pictures in the reader’s mind
* Sensory details
* Figurative Language
	+ Similes
	+ Metaphors
	+ Onomatopoeia
	+ Personification
* Symbolism (i.e. physical items represent abstract values, beliefs and feelings)
* Repetition (of words, phrases, images)
* Parallel Structure
* Syntax
* Series of long, hyphenated sentences along with use of multiple commas and conjunctions
* Brief sentences, fragments, one-word statements
* Rhetorical Questions
* Non-linear structure: sequence of events are not linear or in chronological order
* Manipulation of Time
* Foreshadowing
* Flashbacks
	+ - * Parallels are made between the past and present, United States and Vietnam
* Circularity – within a chapter and within the entire book
* Juxtaposition, contrast, and opposition – for emphasis and to demonstrate a change or effect of an experience
* Fragmentation
* Different Point of Views
* first person “I”, third person, and other characters’ voices
* employs different perspectives and ‘spins’ on the same topic
* Dialogue (between two people) and Internal Dialogue (thoughts in one’s head)
* Conversational language – how people actually talk (i.e slang and obscenities)
* Series of vignettes and inter-related chapters: thematic and character connections

bgamericanlit.wikispaces.com

* Meaningful and symbolic titles (of chapters and book)