

SHORT ANSWER STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS
The Things They Carried

Chapters 1-3

1. Who was Martha and what did Jimmy Cross wonder about her?
2. What did “hump” mean?
3. What was the “single abiding certainty”?
4. What did Jimmy Cross do with the photo?
5. For what had Jimmy Cross never forgiven himself?
6. What did the narrator of this chapter do for a living, and what was the narrator’s name?
7. What did Jimmy Cross bring from the guest room?
8. For what favor did Jimmy Cross ask the narrator?

Chapter 4

1. When back in college, how did the narrator feel about the war?
2. What job title did the narrator have in the summer of 1968?
3. What happened one morning on the pig line?
4. To where did the narrator drive?
5. Who was the hero of the narrator’s life?
6. What was in the envelope tacked to the narrator’s door?
7. Why did the narrator call himself a coward?

Chapters 5-8

1. Why did Lee Strunk and Dave Jensen get into a fistfight?
2. What did Dave Jensen do with a borrowed pistol?
3. After Lee Strunk stepped on a mortar round, what did he make Dave Jensen promise?
4. To whose sister did Rat Kiley write?
5. According to the story, how can you tell a war story is true?
6. What did the listening patrol hear?
7. What confession did Sanders make?
8. What advice did older women give the narrator?

Chapter 9

1. For what did Rat Kiley have a reputation?
2. Who used the compound where Rat was stationed for a base of operations?
3. Who brought over his girlfriend from the United States?
4. Who was the Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong?
5. What did Mitchell Sanders guess correctly about Rat’s story?
6. When Mary Anne was “missing,” where was she actually?
7. What “compromise” did Mark make?
8. What, ultimately, happened to Mary Anne?

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Chapters 10-14

1. What did Henry Dobbins wrap around his neck?
2. What happened to Henry Dobbins in October?
3. What kind of motion did the younger monk perform?
4. What advice did Kiowa give?
5. To whom did the monks take a special liking?
6. What did Kiowa ask the narrator about the man he killed?
7. What did Kathleen ask the narrator?
8. How did the narrator respond to his daughter's inquiry?
9. What did Dobbins do when Azar mocked the girl's dancing?

Chapters 15-16

1. Where did Norman Bowker drive?
2. What medal didn't Norman Bowker win?
3. What kind of field were the soldiers camped in?
4. What happened to Kiowa?
5. What did Norman Bowker almost tell the intercom operator?
6. Why was "Speaking of Courage" written?
7. After the war, what eventually happened to Norman Bowker?

Chapters 17-19

1. What gift did Kiowa receive as a birthday present?
2. According to Azar, what was ironic about Kiowa's death?
3. What was in the rucksack?
4. Which soldier found Kiowa's body?
5. Why did the soldiers feel a secret giddiness?
6. What did the narrator give Kathleen as a birthday present?
7. What was inside the narrator's cloth bundle?

Chapter 20

1. Who was Bobby Jorgenson?
2. Why did the narrator want revenge on Bobby Jorgenson?
3. What was hard for the narrator to admit to himself?
4. What did it mean to "get spooked"?

Chapter 21-22

1. How was Rat Kiley wounded?
2. What wouldn't the narrator do, despite the urging of the other soldiers?
3. Who was Linda?
4. How did Linda die?
5. Where did the narrator ask his father to take him?
6. With what did "Tim" try "to save Timmy's life"?