

US History Honors Summer Reading 2026

The Vietnam War was a long, divisive, and costly war that spanned decades and affected millions across Southeast Asia and the United States. The war also contributed to the disillusionment of many Americans as the United States worked to limit the spread of communism during the Cold War.

Select **one** of the following books to read that examines a component of the Vietnam War. Before selecting your book, go online or on Goodreads to read a brief summary or reviews to find the one that is most interesting to you.

- *The Things They Carried* (1990) by Tim O'Brien
 - *Tap Code: The Epic Survival Tale of a Vietnam POW and the Secret Code that Changed Everything* (2019) by Carlyle Harris
 - *Courageous Women of the Vietnam War* (2018) by Kathryn J. Wood
 - *Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War* (2019) by Steve Sheinkin
 - *Kent State: Four Dead in Ohio* (2020) by Derf Backderf
 - *The Women* (2024) by Kirstin Hannah
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After reading your selected book, you will have a two-part assignment over the summer.

- **Part One: Reflection**

Write a reflection about what you learned from reading the book and how the war and its effects would contribute to the disillusionment for some Americans of this era. What perspectives did this book give to those affected by the Vietnam War? What did you previously know about the Vietnam War? What insight did reading this book give to you about this era? What questions do you have about reading this book? Feel free to include any other reflective information. Include specific details or events referenced in the book to back up your opinions and ideas. You may use first person as needed in your response. Your response should be in paragraph form about 400-500 words, double-spaced.

- **Part Two: Quote Selection**

As you read, document at least 6 powerful or impactful quotes that reflect on the historical event, time period, or experiences being discussed. Students should give a brief 2-3 sentence explanation or analysis as to why this quote was selected and/or how it is helpful to their understanding. Selected quotes should be no more than 4 sentences in length and page numbers need to be provided for each quote. The quotes and explanations should be double spaced and can be formatted into a chart or bulleted list.

Assignments will be due by Monday August 10, 2026.

Students will complete an in-class assignment within the first week of school using their reflection and selected quotations. It is not required, but it would be helpful to bring your copy of the book to school that day.