



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2005 Volume I: The Uses of Poetry in the Classroom

A Century of War in Poetry: 1915-2015

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by Kinta Flemming

This unit is designed for tenth or eleventh grade students. Students examine poetry and prose that relate to three main themes: the reasons men and women go to war, the pain and death many soldiers face, and the effect of war on men and women. In addition, students gain knowledge of World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War. They also reflect on their feelings about patriotism and the current situation in Iraq. Students research and present in groups additional war-related poems and write an essay.

Students examine eleven poems from various war poets and study technique, structure, and theme. The poetry selections contain a variety of styles and poetic devices including a sonnet, a ballad, and free verse. Included in this unit are selections from Tim O'Brien's collection of short stories, *The Things They Carried*. Lessons emphasize class discussion, interpretation, analysis, and a well-developed notebook.

(Recommended for English, grades 10 and 11.)

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