

## “The Death Of the Ball Turret Gunner” vs. “Why Soldiers Won’t Talk”

Both stories, “The Death Of The Ball Turret Gunner” by Randall Jarrell and “Why Soldiers Won’t Talk” by John Steinbeck, discuss the war from a soldier’s point of view. Both authors show how the war can have debilitating effects on the human mind , body, and soul. A lot of people come home from the war with memories they wish they didn’t have. Some of them are good, but most of them are bad, and some don’t come home at all. War has many hardships that people have to overcome.



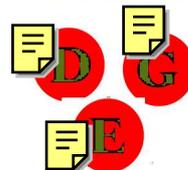
In "The Death Of The Ball Turret," the spirit of the gunner is talking of his death. He talks about how he died "hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze". He was scared and unaware of what happened when he died. After he died, he said "they washed me out of the turret with a hose." By this it shows a sad end to a soldier that who fought with his life to protect his country, being washed away by a hose.



"Why Soldiers Won't Talk" by John Steinbeck is a look into the mind of a soldier after a war. He shows how war can effect a soldier mind’s. Many

of them come back from the war wishing they didn't have many of the memories, "They did not remember ." Steinbeck shows how many of the soldiers will forget what they have seen to try and make life easier on themselves. Many of them prefer not to talk about their experiences in fear that it will bring all the memories back. He also shows how some of the soldiers have selective memory, trying only to remember the good things. In the end I don't think any of the soldier have forget what they have been though or ever really be re-lived of the weight he must carry for the rest of their lives.

Many people who go to war have to not only deal with a lot of things in the war, but also after they have left the battle grounds. Even though they are not there to physically experience the war, they still are haunted by the memories in dreams and sometimes in everyday life. As they watch war movies, they sit and wonder if their children will have to see and experience the same things they have gone though.



ELA TASK: 7.5 Teacher Commentaries

**The Task:**

A summary of the task if provided:

*Students should read/review the following and then with a partner, using a graphic organizer, identify the common elements, character traits (both common and unique), and significant events in each literary piece.*

*Students should use the above analysis to write a response that compares and contrasts the literary pieces. (N.B. The commentary is restricted to the written part of the task.)*

Circumstances of Performance:

The student work is produced under the following conditions:

X Alone	X In a group
X In class	X As homework
With teacher feedback	X With peer feedback
Timed	X Extended project
No opportunity for revision	X Opportunity for revision

What the work shows:

Literature

- E5a** -- The student responds to non-fiction, fiction, poetry, and drama using interpretive, critical, and evaluative processes; that is, the student:
- ESa.1** identifies recurring themes across works (A)
  - E5a.3** identifies the characteristics of literary forms and genres
  - E5a.5** identifies the effect of point of view (B)
  - ESa.6** analyzes the reasons for characters' actions, taking into account the situation and basic motivation of the character (C)
  - E5a.8** identifies the effect of literary devices such as figurative language, allusions, diction, dialogue, and description
  - E5a.9** makes inferences and draws conclusions about fictional and non-fictional context, events, characters, settings, and themes (D)

Writing

- E2b** -- The student produces a response to literature
- E2b.2** advances a judgment that is interpretive, analytic, evaluative, or reflective (E)
  - E2b.3** supports judgment through references to the text, references to other works, authors, or non-printed media, or references to personal knowledge (F)
  - E2b.4** demonstrates an understanding of the literary work
  - E2b.8** provides a sense of closure to the writing (G)

## Conventions, Grammar and Usage of the English Language

**E4a** - The student independently demonstrates an understanding of the rules of the English Language in written and oral work, and selects the structures and features of language appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of the work. The student demonstrates control of:

- E4a.1** grammar (H)
- E4a.2** paragraph structure (H)
- E4a.3** punctuation (H)
- E4a.4** sentence construction (H)
- E4a.6** usage (H)

**A.** The student addresses the theme by comparing the two works: "Both authors show how the war can have debilitating effects on the human mind, body, and soul."

**B/F** The student makes connections to the theme and recognizes the points of view from both literary pieces through the use of direct quotes: "...the spirit of the gunner is talking of his death." He talks about how he died "hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze." Many of them (soldiers) come back from the war wishing they didn't have many of the memories... "They did not remember."

**C.** The student analyzed the reasons for characters' actions for one of the two works, *Why Soldiers Won't Talk*: "In the end I don't think any of the soldiers forget what they have been through or ever really can be relieved of the weight they must carry for the rest of their lives," and "Many people who go to war have to not only deal with a lot of things in the war, but also after they have left the battle grounds."

**D/E** The narrative closes with the student reflecting on the impact of the war and its impact on the characters. "As they watch war movies, they sit and wonder if their children will have to see and experience the same things they have gone through."

**F.** The student demonstrates a thorough and accurate understanding of main ideas and all significant supporting details. "By this is shown a sad end to a soldier that fought with his life to protect his country, being washed away by a hose," and "He also shows how some of the soldiers have selective memory, trying only to remember the good things."

**G.** The student took "an event" from the past, tied it to the present and wove them into a thought provoking closure. "As they watch war movies, they sit and wonder if their children will have to see and experience the same things they have gone through."

**H.** The few mechanical and grammatical errors do not detract from the overall quality of the piece.