



Summer Reading, CAP Honors 9 English

Into the Wild, Jon Krakauer

Directions are important; please follow them.

Read *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer. Type your answers to the following questions in 10 or 12 pt. font. Please double-space your responses (skip lines). Staple this sheet to the front of your responses. Please, no folders. Spelling and grammar always count! All responses must be written in **present tense**! Please proofread. I will not accept hand-written responses, or those that are **not** double-spaced. Your responses should be no more than four pages TOTAL. All responses must be written in complete sentences. This assignment is due to Dr. Simel at the BEGINNING of class on the 1st day of school. Note: These are not short-answer questions.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Think about Chris's relationship with his family. Does inclusion of this back-story make the reader more or less sympathetic to him? Do you sympathize with his parents? His sister, Carine?
2. Compare Chris's relationship with his parents and the people with whom he interacts at Emory, to his relationships with people whom he meets on the road? What makes them so different?
3. "For these were a life in conformity to higher principles," according to Henry David Thoreau. What do you think Thoreau meant by this? What is it to lead a life that conforms to higher principles?
4. Henry David Thoreau wrote, "rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth" (117). McCandless highlights this passage and writes "truth" above it. Why do you think McCandless identifies with this quote?
5. Chris flees intimacy, friendship, and baggage. How does that affect the people close to him? How does that affect him? Is his escape into the wild really a painless transition for anyone, including Chris?
6. Chris marks the following passage in Tolstoy's *Family Happiness*, "He was right in saying that the only certain happiness in life is to live for others" and then writes "Happiness only real when shared." Why do you think McCandless marks this passage? What does he mean by this inscription?
7. Some people believe that McCandless was on a suicide mission. Krakauer believes that Chris was just seeking something greater than himself. Do you believe Chris ever intends to return from Alaska? Does Chris intend for his journey to end as it does?
8. Chris sets out to "kill the false being within." What does he mean by this?
9. Unlike Thoreau, McCandless goes into the wilderness not primarily to ponder the nature of the world at large but, rather, to explore the inner country of his own soul." Why do you think that he does this?
10. What are your impressions of Chris? Is he noble? Reckless? Selfish? Courageous?
11. Many readers find it hard to have sympathy for Chris McCandless. His stubborn idealism and lack of preparedness, as some have pointed out, show arrogance; yet, to others he is a hero. Critics point to Krakauer's power as a writer to evoke sympathy for him. Where do you stand?
12. Chris McCandless' story is still talked about today. What do you think his legacy is?
13. Chris thinks that one should own nothing except what one can carry on his/her back. What do you think of this belief? What is the value of a minimalist lifestyle?
14. Chris "believed that wealth is shameful, corrupting, (and) inherently evil." What are your thoughts on wealth accumulation? Does it corrupt?
15. Krakauer notes that risk-taking is a rite of passage. Do you agree?
16. How does your reading of *Into the Wild* influence your goals for high school, college, and plans for after college?