INTO THE WILD STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

NAME: ____________________________________________

DIRECTIONS: ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN COMPLETE SENTENCES. YOUR ANSWERS MUST BE WRITTEN ON LOOSE-LEAF THAT CAN BE TURNED IN WHenever REQUIRED.

CHAPTER 1
1. Who is Jim Gallien?
2. What concerns does he have regarding Alex’s backpack, and how does it tie into his thoughts about outsiders’ perceptions about the Alaskan bush?
3. What does Alex insist on giving Gallien, and what does Alex say he will do with them if Gallien doesn’t take them?
4. What three things does Gallien give Alex before Alex leaves?
5. What was the date that Alex and Jim Gallien parted ways?

CHAPTER 2
6. What vehicle’s history do we learn about in chapter 2?
7. What do the hunters find taped to the outside of the bus?
8. What are “contumacious Alaskans,” and what do they like to do?
9. For how long had Chris McCandless been dead when he was discovered by the four hunters?
10. According to the autopsy, what was the cause of McCandless’ death? How much did his remains weigh?

CHAPTER 3
11. Who is Wayne Westerberg, and how would you describe his relationship with Chris McCandless?
12. What did Westerberg notice about McCandless’s work ethic and ethics in general?
13. What gift did McCandless give Westerberg before the latter went to prison for selling black boxes?
14. Where did McCandless grow up?
15. What was McCandless’s father’s profession? With whom did he start up a private business?
16. Where did McCandless go to school, and what kind of student was he?
17. How does Krakauer describe McCandless’s feelings after graduating from college?
18. What new name does McCandless take?

CHAPTER 4
19. What kind of car does McCandless drive? Why, when and where does he abandon this beauty?
20. Why, do you think, does Krakauer choose to include the car’s successes after McCandless’s abandoning of it? Is it necessary? What does it tell you about Krakauer?
21. According to Krakauer, of whom is McCandless a “latter-day adherent?”
22. By what means does McCandless travel into Mexico? Where does he nearly die?
23. For how many days does McCandless go without talking to another person?
24. Where does McCandless reside at the end of chapter 4?

CHAPTER 5
25. How does Krakauer describe Bullhead City, Arizona that makes it seem strange to him that it “would appeal to an adherent of Thoreau and Tolstoy” like McCandless?
26. Strangely, where does McCandless find employment in Bullhead City?
27. After leaving Bullhead City, to whom and to where does McCandless go, and for how long?
28. What are “the Slabs?”
29. McCandless romanticizes the writer Jack London and his romanticized take on the wilderness. Have you ever held someone up on a pedestal? What happens when you find out that your idealized perception of a person or thing is not true?
30. What is Jan Burres’s belief about McCandless’s possible fate in Alaska?

CHAPTER 6
31. Why is the passage by Thoreau highlighted by McCandless and included by Krakauer at the beginning of chapter 6? How does it apply to McCandless’s story?
32. Who is Ronald Franz, and what is his relationship with McCandless?
33. How does Krakauer describe the human culture Oh-my-God Hot Springs?
34. What creation does McCandless make that chronicles his adventure?
35. In his letter to Franz, what does McCandless ask his old friend to do? Does he?
36. What does Franz do upon hearing of McCandless’s death?

CHAPTER 7
37. Why do you think McCandless highlighted the passages concerning chastity?
38. What was Westerberg’s impression about McCandless’s future, after his Alaskan adventure?
39. What surprising talent did McCandless reveal the night before he embarked for Alaska?

CHAPTER 8
40. What was the typical response of Alaskans to Krakauer’s article about McCandless?
41. Reserve judgment for now, but was Nick Jans’ drunken condemnation of McCandless on target or not?
42. With whose stories does Krakauer follow? For what purpose?
43. In the story of Chris McCunn, what painful realization does he come to about his hand-signals when he sees the plane overhead?
44. What similarities and differences does Krakauer point out about McCandless, Rosellini, and McCunn?
CHAPTER 9
45. What is the shared impulse that Krakauer refers to when he talks of Ruess’, McCandless’s, and the Anasazis’ inscriptions?
46. Briefly describe Everett Ruess’ early life.
47. What are the parallels between Ruess and McCandless?
48. How old was Ruess when he vanished?
49. By what means is it theorized that Ruess died?
50. According to his father, with what literary character does Ruess identify? Why?
51. According to Ken Sleight, how did Ruess die?

CHAPTERS 10
52. After a week of fruitless inquiry, the police were informed by whom about the body they had discovered?
53. What member of McCandless’s family first knew that Chris McCandless was dead?

CHAPTER 11
54. Respond to how the passage from Doctor Zhivago mirrors McCandless’s philosophy.
55. What do you think about Walt McCandless question about how Chris “could cause his parents so much pain?”
56. How does Krakauer characterize Walt McCandless?
57. From seemingly each member of his family, Chris McCandless inherited, learned something; what were the attributes Chris took from his Walt (father), Carine (sister), Loren (grandfather)?
58. In which high school class did Chris receive an “F”? Why? According to a high school teammate, how did McCandless’s cross-country regimens embody his way of living?
59. What does Krakauer point out about Chris’s apparent hypocrisy regarding money?

CHAPTER 12
60. How does Krakauer utilize the quotation from Chesterton that opens chapter 12? What examples from the McCandless saga demonstrate the relevance of this quotation?

CHAPTER 13
61. Chapter 13 ends with Billie, McCandless’s mother stating, “I just don’t understand why he had to take those kind of chances...I just don’t understand at all” (132). Whose story does Krakauer tell in chapter 14, and, in reference to the quotation above, why?

CHAPTERS 14-15
62. Is there anything to the statement that men do these adventurous, wild, risky, stupid things, but women do not? If so, what truth is there, and why? If not, provide examples.
63. What do you think Krakauer means when he says, “But I never had any doubt that climbing the Devils Thumb would transform my life” (135)?
64. Why does Krakauer include the descriptions of the orcas and the mule deer in his tale of heading north on the salmon seiner?
65. How does the description of his “self-deceit” regarding human (sexual?) intimacy relate to McCandless?
66. What do the words “seemed charged with meaning” and to a self-possessed young man” do to your understanding of what Krakauer is doing in this chapter (138)? What is he doing?
67. Facing the likelihood of death, why does Krakauer continue after he dry heaves from fear?
68. What does the description of Krakauer’s focused climbing remind you of?
69. Does climbing Devils Thumb change Krakauer’s life?
70. What similarities and differences do Krakauer and McCandless have?

CHAPTERS 16-18 & EPILOGUE

71. Who was the last person to see Chris McCandless alive?
72. What was the irony that Krakauer points out about McCandless’s idea that he was “lost in the wild” (165)?
73. What does McCandless regretfully call “one of the greatest tragedies” of his life?
74. What was “the first of two pivotal setbacks” McCandless encounters that lead to his death?
75. How might have McCandless gotten out of his predicament if he had gone north?
76. Describe what Krakauer purports to be the reason for McCandless’s death?