

## Reviews

“It may be nonfiction, but *Into the Wild* is a mystery of the highest order.”- *Entertainment Weekly*

“Terrifying...Eloquent...A heart-rending drama of human yearning.”- *New York Times*

“A narrative of arresting force. Anyone who ever fancied wandering off to face nature on its own harsh terms should give a look. It's gripping stuff.”- *Washington Post*

“Compelling and tragic...Hard to put down.”- *San Francisco Chronicle*

“Engrossing...with a telling eye for detail, Krakauer has captured the sad saga of a stubborn, idealistic young man.”- *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

(*bookbrowse.com*)

## Movie Adaptation

There is plenty of sorrow to be found in *Into the Wild*, Sean Penn's adaptation of the nonfiction best seller by Jon Krakauer. The story begins with an unhappy family, proceeds through a series of encounters with the lonely and the lost, and ends in a senseless, premature death. But though the film's structure may be tragic, its spirit is anything but. It is infused with an expansive, almost giddy sense of possibility, and it communicates a pure, unaffected delight in open spaces, free air and bright sunshine. Some of this exuberance comes from Christopher Johnson McCandless, the young adventurer whose footloose life and gruesome fate were the subject of Mr. Krakauer's book. As Mr. Penn understands him (and as he is portrayed, with unforced charm and brisk intelligence, by Emile Hirsch), Chris is at once a troubled, impulsive boy and a brave and dedicated spiritual pilgrim. He does not court danger but rather stumbles across it — thrillingly and then fatally — on the road to joy. — A. O. Scott, *The New York Times*

## **Further Reading**

*Dead Lucky: Life After Death on Mount Everest* by Lincoln Hall

*Danger Stalks the Land: Alaskan Tales of Death and Survival* by Larry Kaniut

*Everett Ruess: A Vagabond for Beauty & Wilderness Journals* by W. L. Rusho (ed)

*Touching the Void: the True Story of One Man's Miraculous Survival* by Joe Simpson

*The Call of the Wild* by Jack London

# **BOOK CLUB To Go!**

## **Into the Wild**

### **By Jon Krakauer**

#### **Possible Discussion Questions**

1. The author claims that *Into the Wild* is very much a story about a son's relationship with his father. What conclusions did you make regarding McCandless's response to his family?
2. Do you believe McCandless's decision to leave his family without a word was justified? Why or why not?
3. What significance did you attach to Chris's last entry into his journal quoting Dr. Zhivago? "Happiness is only real when shared"?
4. Krakauer's research allows us to "meet" Christopher McCandless/Alexander Supertramp through a variety of people, including his friends, family members, and co-workers. Are these impressions of Christopher consistent with one another? Do you agree with Krakauer's view of Chris McCandless?
5. What do Chris's literary preferences suggest about his personality?
6. What do Krakauer and McCandless have in common? How do these similarities influence the narrative?
7. Why does Krakauer travel to Fairbanks bus 142, as recounted in chapter 17? What effect does this have on *Into the Wild*?
8. Why does Krakauer think Christopher McCandless adopts an alias?
9. Why does Krakauer include the stories of other adventurers?
10. What is the impact of Christopher's death?

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