

Into the wild by jon krakauer - a study of the individual lifestyle of the protag...

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Into the Call of the Wild Critical Review

The novel *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer was overall an entertaining and thought provoking piece of literature. The protagonist, Chris “ Alex” McCandless, took a journey across America to live the exciting life of a vagrant. Chris left home after graduating college to pursue the life he always wanted, also to escape the restrictions of his parents. He met a variety of interesting characters along the way that ultimately made him realize the greater value in relationships over that of living an independent and individual lifestyle.

A strong novel in terms of entertainment will give a lot of detail to draw the reader in and bring the story to life. One of the novel’s strengths revolves around the explicit and enthralling description of each moment of action. By doing so, Krakauer is able to bring the audience along the journey and give the emotion that Chris felt to the reader. In this passage, Krakauer describes the intense adrenaline that one endures while participating in such as activities such as climbing the Devil’s Thumb. “ The accumulated clutter of day-to-day existence—the lapses of conscience, the unpaid bills, the bungled opportunities, the dust under the couch, the inescapable prison of your genes—all of it is temporarily forgotten, crowded from your thoughts by an overpowering clarity of purpose and by the seriousness of the task at hand.” (142) This creates a sense of solidarity and allows the reader to escape the same way that Chris does through his journey, thus separating the importance of relationships for the need to survive. This strength allows the

reader to relate to it because human relationships are subjects that cannot be evaded.

One of the novel's weaknesses is that it constantly goes from viewpoint to viewpoint. Krakauer uses various viewpoints in order to show how Chris' story can be interpreted in many different ways, and to reveal how many people this story has affected. However, doing this can leave the reader confused in who is narrating the story. " God, he was a smart kid," the old man rasps in a barely audible voice." (37) This opinion creates a single view of Chris that differs from various viewpoints throughout the novel. These differing viewpoints can make it more difficult for the reader to understand what Chris McCandless was actually like. This can also distract the reader from understanding Krakauer's intended message.

Into the Wild is appropriate for our grade level because it contains a large vocabulary and plenty of deeper themes. It will not only engage students into the overall plot, but interest them in it's themes about individualism, independence, and ingenuity. Thematic ideas like this one, " The only person you are fighting is yourself and your stubbornness to engage in new circumstances," (Krakauer) are found throughout the book and Chris' story. This is significant because Krakauer explores ideas that relate to the audience and society during that time. It is weak in terms of education because it is not as rich in rhetorical/literary devices as other studied novels. It is still appropriate for teaching in high schools, but not the perfect choice when compared to other works of literature.

The overall message of *Into the Wild* is that human relationships and interactions are more significant than the value found in surviving off the land. The world would not be able to function without relationships between people, families, and countries. Chris comes to this realization after his journey comes to a tragic end, as documented in the novel, “ he noted, “HAPPINESS ONLY REAL WHEN SHARED,”” (187). Chris always left people behind when he felt too attached, but in the end, it was his insistence upon independence that killed him. Krakauer uses his story to hit his message home.

This novel is one worth of a recommendation but only for entertainment purposes, not for education for any future SSR readers. *Into the Wild* had a fun and entertaining story to tell and was in fact a good read, making it easier to become motivated to read, but the novel lacked literary and rhetorical strategies and uses and only had a theme to teach.

All in all, *Into the Wild* was sufficiently entertaining and rich in its relatable themes. We enjoyed Chris' story and appreciated the inclusion of other similar cases for their contribution to the novel's meaning.