

Survey the Text - Follow these steps:

- Look at the chapter titles. What do these titles have in common? What do you notice?
- Read a few of the short epigraphs that come before each chapter begins. Do they seem to have a common thread? What do you know about them? Their authors?
- Look at the length of the book and count the chapters.
- Look for any photographs or maps - what are they of?
- Identify the author and publication date.
- What other works has Krakauer written? What do you know of them?
- Read the author's note (preface)

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

1. What do you know or assume about a magazine called *Outside Magazine*? Who do you think the intended readers are?
2. Why do you think Krakauer wrote this particular book?
3. What do you think made this story so popular? What do you think people found engaging about it?

Author's Note

1. What might McCandless' motives have been for his behavior? (p. 3)
2. How difficult would it be to invent a new life?
3. In p. 4, Krakauer introduces some themes of the book. Discuss these.
4. In p. 5, Krakauer warns that he will not be an impartial biographer. What does he mean by this?
 - a. Are all biographers impartial? What can we expect from Krakauer?
5. In the last paragraph, he introduces the complexity of Chris McCandless. Keep in mind these questions as you read the book...

- Should we admire McCandless for his courage and noble ideas?
- Was he a reckless idiot?
- Was he crazy?
- Was he arrogant and/or stupid?

In your notebook/paper, write a 4-5 sentence response to Krakauer's author's note.