Honors *Into the Wild* Research Paper

# Quest as a journey for self-knowledge

* 1. Research the archetypal quest, also known as the hero’s journey
  2. Explore its connection to Christopher McCandless. In what ways does McCandless’ experience fit into this ancient storytelling method? In the end, is McCandless worthy to be called a hero?

# Human Psychology

McCandless’ drive to go on his Great Alaskan Adventure bordered on obsession. His past troubles with his parents appear to lead to extreme resentment, distrust, and depression. Some medical professionals have speculated he may have been schizophrenic.

* 1. Research the clinical assessments made about McCandless in Into the Wild and on the internet
  2. Use your findings to compare what you know about McCandless to the clinical definitions of these ailments
  3. Determine if McCandless was of sound mind or assess the extent of his mental illness
  4. Explore motivating factors for mental illness and possible treatments for others who suffer like McCandless.

# McCandless’s Literary Heroes

* 1. Read Into the Wild to find out who McCandless was reading.
  2. How did writers like Tolstoy, Emerson, Thoreau, and London influence McCandless’ thinking and actions?

# Survival Techniques

1. Read Into the Wild to find out how McCandless prepared for his adventure and how he failed to prepare.
2. Research survival techniques (farming, hunting, tracking, proper gear, etc.) to communicate how people can survive in the wild.

# Close Reading of Poetry

1. Read each poem to explain how each poet uses literary techniques (imagery, figurative language, tone, repetition, metaphor, theme, and diction) to convey ideas and emotional states within the poem?
2. How do the ideas and emotions in the poems connect to Christopher McCandless?
3. Research the authors of the poems (Kerouac, Snyder, and Carver) to find connections between their personal philosophies and those held by Chris McCandless.

[Poems:](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html) “[Dharma Bums](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html)” [by Jack Kerouac,](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html) “[Above Pate Valley](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html)” [by Gary Snyder,](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html) “[Where Water Comes Togethe](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html)r [with Other Water](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html)” [by Raymond Carver,](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html) “[Meeting the Mountain](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/177250)[s](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html)” [by Gary Snyder](http://justintimeformoore.blogspot.com/2010/07/where-water-comes-together-with-other.html)

1. **Geography (biomes)**
2. Using the book, the book’s map, and/or the link below, consider the type and variety of locations that Chris encountered.

<https://www.scribblemaps.com/maps/view/Chris_McCandless_journey/56UrPbQuR_>

1. Which place/setting fascinates *you* the most? Do a “deep dive” and research one of these locations. You might consider Slab City, the Detrital Wash, Lake Tahoe, Salton City, or the Stampede Trail in Fairbanks, just to name a few.
2. What is the history and background of this particular place?
3. What are the current characteristics and conditions here?
4. How did Chris interact with this place?
5. What kind of impact did the place and its people have on Chris? For example, did he make adaptations to his life and plans (weather? culture? work / finances?)
6. What kind of impact did Chris have on the place and its people?

Once you have selected a final topic from above,

Project Goals:

-LA11.C.28b: summative assessment of the book

-LA11.C.21 and LA11.C.23: practice informational writing

-LA11.C.27: evaluation / utilization of sources

-LA11.C.26: research skills (databases, technology, bibliography / works cited)

-create an outline and tag sources to specific paragraphs therein (daily grade)

-LA11.C.24 and LA11.C.29: practicing the writing process (drafting, editing, revising, avoiding plagiarism, publishing)

Notes:

-Research, outlining, and documentation to be done online (Scrible, Google Classroom, etc.).

-During peer editing time, the rough draft will be graded “live,” including a strong emphasis on grammar and mechanics, during an individual student conferencing session.

-Rough Draft will stand until the final draft is submitted; this will replace the rough draft grade, too. If no final draft is submitted, the rough draft grade will be duplicated into the final grade.

Evaluation Percentages:

Development (30%)

Evidence (30%)

Language (20%)

Conventions (20%)

Your final submission consist of 4-6 pages, three sources (correlating to at least three in-text citations) on their Works Cited page, and everything adhering to MLA standards.

Deadlines:

Media Center Research Dates February 11-14

Additional Lab Date February 19 & 20

First Draft (printed and submitted) February 25

Final Draft after conference (submitted to dropbox) March 4