

Learning Targets

- Analyze an author’s use of epigraphs.
- Understand how writers integrate multiple sources of information to develop their subjects.

Before Reading

1. In literature, an **epigraph** may serve as a preface, as a summary, as a counter-example, or to link the work to a wider literary canon, either to invite comparison or to enlist a conventional context.
2. Krakauer uses epigraphs at the beginning of each chapter. Look at the epigraphs that begin Chapter 3 below. Think about the connections between the epigraphs and the events and themes in Chapter 3. Fill out the graphic organizer with your ideas.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Graphic Organizer,
Note-taking, Think-
Pair-Share, Quickwrite,
Discussion Groups

Literary Terms

An **epigraph** is a phrase, quotation, or poem that is set at the beginning of a document or component.

| Epigraph | Paraphrase the Quote | Connection to Chapter Events or Theme |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <p>Chapter 3: Carthage</p> <p><i>I wanted movement and not a calm course of existence. I wanted excitement and danger and the chance to sacrifice myself for my love. I felt in myself a superabundance of energy which found no outlet in our quiet life.</i></p> <p>Leo Tolstoy “Family Happiness”</p> <p>Passage highlighted in one of the books found with Chris McCandless’s remains</p> | | |
| <p>Chapter 3: Carthage</p> <p><i>It should not be denied. . .that being footloose has always exhilarated us. It is associated in our minds with escape from history and oppression and law and irksome obligations, with absolute freedom, and the road has always led west.</i></p> <p>Wallace Stegner, <i>The American West Living Space</i></p> | | |

Literary Connection

My Notes

3. Now consider the epigraphs used in chapters 4–7. Your teacher will assign you to a discussion group. Your group will take one of the chapters and analyze the connections between the chapter title, the epigraph, and the chapter’s events. With your group members, analyze the epigraph(s) for your chapter, connecting it to Transcendentalism and the chapter in the chart below. Fill out the top row of the epigraph before rereading the chapter.

During Reading

4. As you read the chapter, mark the text for quotes, details, and other features that reveal the tenets of Transcendentalism that appear in the chapter. Record quotes that illuminate this philosophy.

| Chapter/Title Epigraph | Interpretive Statement / Paraphrase | Connection to the Chapter |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | |
| <p>Connections to Transcendentalism/Emerging Themes:</p> | | |

After Reading

5. With your group members, discuss the effect of Krakauer’s use of epigraphs from literary works in the various chapters. What is the effect in terms of conveying information and engaging the reader? What is the effect when the epigraph is from McCandless’s own writings?

Check Your Understanding

Explain different ways writers may use epigraphs for effect in their writing.