

## Sample Student

### Book List Survey

#### First Choice

1. Robert M. Pirsig's autobiographical philosophy book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values*, first published in 1974, 411 pages
2. The book is considered part autobiographical, part philosophy, and also part fiction, but the author's note at the beginning of the book states, "What follows is based on actual occurrences. Although much has been changed for rhetorical purposes, it must be regarded in its essence as fact."
3. What I find interesting about the way the book is written is that its approach is not one you would find in a textbook or an ancient philosopher's essay on existence, but rather one that reads as an autobiographical account of a motorcycle trip with humor and philosophy tied into the text. There are also multiple opportunities to compare the writing to other similar philosophical teachings, as many classical philosophical schools of thought are discussed. The book is also popular enough that I should also be able to find sources of professional critical analysis as needed to help me with writing my research essay.

#### Second Choice

1. Cheryl Strayed's memoir, *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*, first published in 2012, 311 pages
2. This autobiography focuses on the author's life journey and physical journey on part of the Pacific Coast Trail, from Oregon to Southern California. The book is written as more of an internal monologue as she is mostly alone on the trail, and focuses on the mental and physical sacrifices the author is making taking such a trip. Since this is a newer book, and one that spent some time on both the New York Times bestseller list and is being made into a movie, there is ample professional critical analysis available for use in my research essay.
3. What I find interesting is the limit on dialogue, with mostly internal monologue being the basis for much of the text, as she is alone in the woods on a very difficult physical and mental journey.

#### Third Choice

1. Jeannette Walls' memoir, *The Glass Castle*, first published in 2005, 281 pages
2. The book is memoir about the author's life growing up and moving up from absent and addicted parents. Because of the subject matter, there are many professional resources to find information about the scenarios in the book, particularly regarding parenting, poverty, and psychology.
3. What I find most interesting is the heavy subject matter, particularly the subject of alcoholism and absent parents.