Directions: Read the excerpt from *Into the Wild* and complete the □ bolded tasks along the way.

Notes:

- **Indirect characterization:** How the author uses a character’s: speech, appearance, thoughts, actions, and interactions with other characters to develop his or her personality. A reader must infer a character trait through indirect characterization.
  
  **Example:** As Jane walked past the box labeled ‘Free Puppies,’ she furtively glanced around her, then gave the box a swift kick.
  
  From Jane’s actions we can infer that she is not a nice person and/or she really doesn’t like free puppies.

- **Direct characterization:** An author explicitly (directly) tells the reader something about the character.
  
  **Example:** Zoe is a bright and determined teenager. She works hard at the cafe after school and gets straight A’s.
  
  From the underlined words we know exactly what kind of person Zoe is.

Jim Gallien had driven four miles out of Fairbanks when he spotted the hitchhiker standing in the snow beside the road, thumb raised high, shivering in the gray Alaska morning. He didn’t appear to be very old: eighteen, maybe nineteen at most. A rifle protruded(stuck out) from the young man’s backpack, but he looked friendly enough; a hitchhiker with a Remington semi automatic isn’t the sort of thing that makes motorists want to stop and help someone in the forty-ninth state. (*Alaska is the 49th state*)

□ Re-read the underlined text. Put the text in your own words. ________________

Gallien steered his truck onto the shoulder and told the kid to climb in. The hitchhiker swung his pack into the bed of the Ford and introduced himself as Alex.

“Alex?” Gallien responded, fishing for a last name.

“Just Alex,” the young man replied, pointedly rejecting the bait.

*(Rejecting the bait is a slang term that means he did not give the driver what he wanted to know about himself. If Alex did not tell him but only his first name what type of person do you think he is?) Write your answer below.*

_____________________________________________________________________

Five feet seven or eight with a wiry build, he claimed to be twenty-four years old and said he was from South Dakota.

□ The author wrote, “he claimed to be twenty-four.” What can we assume or think about Alex’s real age?

_____________________________________________________________________

1
(1) He explained that he wanted a ride as far as the edge of Denali National Park, where he intended to walk deep into the bush and “live off the land for a few months.” (2) Gallien, a union electrician, was on his way to Anchorage, 240 miles beyond Denali on the George Parks Highway; he told Alex he’d drop him off wherever he wanted. (3) Alex’s backpack looked as though it weighed only twenty-five or thirty pounds, which struck Gallien—an accomplished hunter and woodsman—as a light load for a stay of several months in the backcountry, especially so early in the spring.

Does Alex seem ready to live off the land for months? Why or why not? Which sentence tells you this? 2 or 3? Cite your answer using the quote from the sentence you choose. Below are some sentence starters.

Alex seems prepared/unprepared to live in the wild because _______________. I know this because in sentence _______________ it states ____________________________.

“He wasn’t carrying anywhere near as much food and gear as you’d expect a guy to be carrying for that kind of trip,” Gallien recalls. The sun came up. As they rolled/drove down from the forested ridges above the Tanana River, Alex gazed/looked across the expanse (a large area) of windswept muskeg (a North American swamp) stretching to the south. Gallien wondered whether he’d picked up one of those crackpots from the lower forty-eight who come north to live out ill-considered or badly thought out Jack London fantasies (Jack London was a writer who lived his fantasy of living in the wild from writing about it. He never lived in the harsh wild).

Re-read the underlined text. Put the text in your own words. Think about the examples given in this paragraph; what do they say about Alex? What does the driver think about him? Use these ideas when rewording the sentence.

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Alaska has long been a magnet for dreamers and misfits, people who think the unsullied enormity of the Last Frontier will patch all the holes in their lives. The bush is an unforgiving place, however, that cares nothing for hope or longing.

What point-of-view is the story told from? (1st person: uses-I, we, me) 2nd person: uses-you, your) 3rd person: uses- they, she, he)

How can you tell? __________________________________________________________________________
I can tell the author uses(type of point of view) ________________
because(cite textual evidence) ________________________________.

“People from Outside,” reports Gallien in a slow, sonorous (having a sound that is deep, loud, and pleasant) drawl, “they’ll pick up a copy of Alaska magazine, thumb through it, get to thinkin’ ‘Hey, I’m goin’ to
get on up there, live off the land, go claim me a piece of the good life.' But when they get here and actually head out into the bush—well, it isn’t like the magazines make it out to be. The rivers are big and fast. The mosquitoes eat you alive. Most places, there aren’t a lot of animals to hunt. Livin’ in the bush isn’t no picnic.”

It was a two-hour drive from Fairbanks to the edge of Denali Park. The more they talked, the less Alex struck Gallien as a nutcase. He was congenial and seemed well educated. He peppered Gallien with thoughtful questions about the kind of small game that live in the country, the kinds of berries he could eat— "that kind of thing."

What does congenial mean? Use a dictionary.  ___________________________
What is “small game”? _________________________________________________

Still, Gallien was concerned. Alex admitted that the only food in his pack was a ten-pound bag of rice. His gear seemed exceedingly minimal for the harsh conditions of the interior, which in April still lay buried under the winter snowpack. Alex’s cheap leather hiking boots were neither waterproof nor well insulated. His rifle was only .22 caliber, a bore too small to rely on if he expected to kill large animals like moose and caribou, which he would have to eat if he hoped to remain very long in the country.

What is a caribou? Use context clues. __________________________________

He had no ax, no bug dope, no snowshoes, no compass. The only navigational aid in his possession was a tattered state road map he’d scrounged at a gas station. A hundred miles out of Fairbanks the highway begins to climb into the foothills of the Alaska Range. As the truck lurched over a bridge across the Nenana River, Alex looked down at the swift current and remarked that he was afraid of the water.

“A year ago down in Mexico,” he told Gallien, “I was out on the ocean in a canoe, and I almost drowned when a storm came up.”

A little later Alex pulled out his crude map and pointed to a dashed red line that intersected the road near the coal-mining town of Healy. It represented a route called the Stampede Trail. Seldom traveled, it isn’t even marked on most road maps of Alaska. On Alex’s map, nevertheless, the broken line meandered west from the Parks Highway for forty miles or so before petering out in the middle of trackless wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. This, Alex announced to Gallien, was where he intended to go.

Gallien thought the hitchhiker’s scheme was foolhardy and tried repeatedly to dissuade him.

What does “foolhardy” mean? Use context clues._________________________

“I said the hunting wasn’t easy where he was going, that he could go for days without killing any game. When that didn’t work, I tried to scare him with bear stories. I told him that a twenty-two probably wouldn’t do anything to a grizzly except make him mad. Alex didn’t seem too worried. ’Til climb a tree’ is all he said. So I explained that trees don’t grow real big in that part of the state, that a bear could knock down one of them skinny little black spruce without even trying. But he wouldn’t give an inch. He had an answer for everything I threw at him.”

How would you describe Alex based on the underlined text?_______________
Gallien offered to drive Alex all the way to Anchorage, buy him some decent gear, and then drive him back to wherever he wanted to go.

How would you describe Gallien based on the underlined text? ______________

“No, thanks anyway,” Alex replied, “I’ll be fine with what I’ve got.” Gallien asked whether he had a hunting license.

“Hell, no,” Alex scoffed. “How I feed myself is none of the government’s business. Screw their stupid rules.”

When Gallien asked whether his parents or a friend knew what he was up to—whether there was anyone who would sound the alarm if he got into trouble and was overdue—Alex answered calmly that no, nobody knew of his plans, that in fact he hadn’t spoken to his family in nearly two years.

“I’m absolutely positive,” he assured Gallien, “I won’t run into anything I can’t deal with on my own.”

“There was just no talking the guy out of it,” Gallien remembers. “He was determined. Real gung ho. The word that comes to mind is excited. He couldn’t wait to head out there and get started.”

Gallien describes Alex as “determined”, “gung ho”, and “excited”. Name another character we have read about or watched in a clip that exhibits those same three traits. __________________________

Three hours out of Fairbanks, Gallien turned off the highway and steered his beat-up 4x4 down a snow-packed side road. For the first few miles the Stampede Trail was well graded and led past cabins scattered among weedy stands of spruce and aspen. Beyond the last of the log shacks, however, the road rapidly deteriorated. Washed out and overgrown with alders, it turned into a rough, unmaintained track. In summer the road here would have been sketchy but passable; now it was made unnavigable by a foot and a half of mushy spring snow. Ten miles from the highway, worried that he’d get stuck if he drove farther, Gallien stopped his rig on the crest of a low rise. The icy summits of the highest mountain range in North America gleamed on the southwestern horizon.

What is a “rig”? Use context clues if needed. __________________________

Re-read the underlined text. Highlight the text according to the Color-it-up key.

Alex insisted on giving Gallien his watch, his comb, and what he said was all his money: eighty-five cents in loose change.

“I don’t want your money,” Gallien protested, “and I already have a watch.”

“If you don’t take it, I’m going to throw it away,” Alex cheerfully retorted.

“I don’t want to know what time it is. I don’t want to know what day it is or where I am. None of that matters.” Before Alex left the pickup, Gallien reached behind the seat, pulled out an old pair of rubber work boots, and persuaded the boy to take them.

“They were too big for him,” Gallien recalls.

“But I said, ‘Wear two pair of socks, and your feet ought to stay halfway warm and dry.’”

“How much do I owe you?”

“Don’t worry about it,” Gallien answered.

Then he gave the kid a slip of paper with his phone number on it, which Alex carefully tucked into a nylon wallet. “If you make it out alive, give me a call, and I’ll tell you how to get the boots back to me.”
Gallien's wife had packed him two grilled-cheese-and-tuna sandwiches and a bag of corn chips for lunch; he persuaded the young hitchhiker to accept the food as well. Alex pulled a camera from his backpack and asked Gallien to snap a picture of him shouldering his rifle at the trailhead. Then, smiling broadly, he disappeared down the snow-covered track. The date was Tuesday, April 28, 1992.

Gallien turned the truck around, made his way back to the Parks Highway, and continued toward Anchorage. A few miles down the road he came to the small community of Healy, where the Alaska State Troopers maintain a post. Gallien briefly considered stopping and telling the authorities about Alex, then thought better of it.

“I figured he’d be OK,” he explains. “I thought he’d probably get hungry pretty quick and just walk out to the highway. That’s what any normal person would do.”

Through indirect characterization, what do we know about Alex? (Look back to the first page for definition of indirect characterization)

Through indirect characterization, what do we know about Gallien?

When you think about Indirect characterization think about the acronym STEAL:

S- SPEECH: What does the character say? How do they say it?

T- THINK: What are the characters thoughts? What things do we know about the character by how he thinks or how they feel about something?

E-EFFECT: What type of effect do the characters have on each other? How do they feel or behave toward one another?

A-ACTIONS: What does the character do and why do they do it?

L-LOOK: How does the author describe the character's appearance? How do they look? What words are used to describe how they look?