Discussion Questions for *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed

1. Why do you think Strayed decided to hike the Pacific Crest Trail? Why would she want to hike it alone?

2. Strayed is quite forthright in her description of her own transgressions, and while she’s remorseful, she never seems ashamed. Is this a sign of strength or a character flaw?

3. Through the book she talks about the blisters, the dehydration, the exhaustion, and the hunger. How—and why—did this physical suffering help her cope with her emotional pain? Do you think you could handle the physical and emotional pain she went through?

4. There are many metaphors throughout the book including Monster (Strayed’s backpack) which represents the weight of Strayed’s grief and guilt. What other metaphors were in the book (the feather, losing her boots, the Vietnam vet bracelet)?

5. What did this book teach you about fear and overcoming fear? Would you be able to hike the Pacific Crest Trail alone? What parts of the book made you feel afraid?

6. How did you like Strayed’s description of the wilderness? Did you feel like you were hiking with her?

7. Strayed meets many other people on her journey. Which ones did you like the best? Were you surprised by the kindness shown to Strayed by strangers or did you expect it?

8. What do you think Strayed learned from her journey? What did you learn? Were you satisfied with the book’s conclusion?

9. Does anyone have a personal story connected to the events or figures in this book?

10. Do you have unanswered questions? If the author were here, what would you ask her?

11. Are there any additional comments you would like to share?