

Workshop 4:

Where Do Novels Come From?

Description

This workshop's core question is "Where do novels come from?" The video and workshop activities will help you get beyond the quick answer ("Novels come from experience and imagination") to explore how reflecting upon experience gives birth to a novel. After the workshop, you will form your own answer to the question and develop a lesson plan that will encourage students to begin to tell their own stories.

Workshop 4 Timeline

Getting Ready

30 minutes

In pairs or groups of three, share the lesson plan that you created after the previous workshop. Distribute copies to the site participants.

Share with the group any experience you have had writing a poem or work of fiction. On newsprint, write the key words that capture the feeling you had when you knew you had something important to say.

Watch the Workshop Video

60 minutes

During the Video

First 15-second break. Question on screen: Where or when do you get your best ideas?

Five-minute break. ✍ Take five minutes to freewrite on something you have just seen.

Second 15-second break. Question on screen: Do novelists bear any social responsibility?

Going Further

30 minutes

Share experiences you have had that might provide interesting material for a novel or story. *(Facilitator: Draw out those who have written or tried to write fiction, asking them to describe their attempts to bring their experiences into the story.)*

For Next Time

Homework Assignment

1. Write a lesson plan that encourages students to explore where the novel they are reading comes from and how it might have traveled from experience through imagination and reflection. Bring copies to distribute at the next workshop.
2. Write a lesson plan to launch students on their own novel-writing project. For ideas that you might adapt for your students, see the readings for this workshop in Appendix B, the relevant homework assignments below, and the writing exercises for students in Appendix A.
3. ✎ Write or rewrite the first paragraph of your novel. Bring copies to distribute at the next workshop.

SUPPLEMENTAL

4. Go to the “Teachers and Lesson Plans” section of the *In Search of the Novel* Web site, www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel. Depending on the reading level of your students, read either Sharon Madison’s lesson plan for teaching *Ceremony* or Ashby Reid’s lesson plan for teaching *Flowers for Algernon*.
5. Write a paragraph or two on the question, “Where do novels come from?”
6. Prepare a 20-minute lesson on the sources of a particular novel you teach for which there are letters, diaries, or interviews with the author.
7. ✎ Freewrite for 15 minutes, using one word from each list below. Derivatives permitted.

1	2	3	4	5
luminous	flock	trudge	turtle	together
opaque	clump	hedge	pigeon	apart
dense	pair	flee	beagle	alone
metallic	myriad	hinder	fish	separately

8. ✎ Freewrite in response to one aspect of the video program that most interested or inspired you.
9. Check out from the library Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, and read Part I: “The Adventure of the Hero.”

For Next Time

Reading Assignment

1. Please refer to the “Where Do Novels Come From?” section of Appendix B, and read the text by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley and E. M. Forster.
2. Go to the “Where Do Novels Come From?” page on the *In Search of the Novel* Web site, www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel. Read the “Participants’ Comments and Observations” section.