

Workshop 6: What's in It for Me?

Description

The video for Workshop 6 complements that of the previous workshop by continuing to explore how students can benefit from reading novels. In the video, teachers present strategies to help students respond to novels on deeply personal levels. At the end of the workshop, you will write a lesson plan that encourages students to connect their real-life experiences to a novel you teach.

Workshop 6 Timeline

Getting Ready

30 minutes

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

Discuss the assigned reading by Prose. What are the other sides of these arguments? With what do you agree and with what do you disagree? And what are the implications of these debates for English teachers?

Distribute the expanded and revised paragraph of your novel to the group.

Watch the Workshop Video

60 minutes

During the video

First 15-second break. Question on screen: How can a novel you teach connect you and your students with issues it raises?

Five-minute break. Discuss how a novel has challenged your understanding of human nature.

Second 15-second break. Question on screen: How would a novel widen the world of students of different backgrounds?

Going Further

30 minutes

Think about some of the key concepts in the program—opening up and empathizing with others, understanding choices and significant issues, finding ourselves and finding a safe place. Think also about the final remark about the writer’s responsibility to create authentic experiences that become each reader’s own. Keeping these things in mind, how can you help your students connect their lives to the novels you teach?

For Next Time

Homework Assignment

1. Write a lesson plan that encourages students to connect their lives to a novel you teach. Bring copies to distribute at the next workshop.
2. ✎ Rewrite or extend the first paragraph of your novel, this time shifting point of view.

SUPPLEMENTAL

3. ✎ Freewrite for five or six minutes about your name: why it was given to you, how you feel about it, whether or not you are named for anyone, your nickname if you have one, etc.
4. Go to the “Teachers and Lesson Plans” section of the *In Search of the Novel* Web site, www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel. Read Betty Williams’s lesson plan for teaching *Things Fall Apart*.

Reading Assignment

1. Baldwin, James. “Many Thousands Gone.” *Collected Essays*. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1998.
2. Novakovich, Josip. “Character: Inventing Fictional People.” *Fiction Writer’s Workshop*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Story Press, 1995.
3. Go to the “What’s in It for Me?” page on the *In Search of the Novel* Web site, www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel. Read the “Participants’ Comments and Observations” section.

