

# Workshop 8: Am I Getting Through?

## **Description**

In the video for Workshop 8, teachers and novelists explore the issues and practical considerations involved in evaluating students' reading. The teachers also demonstrate evaluation strategies that allow them to assess their students while encouraging them to be lifelong readers.

# Workshop 8 Timeline

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## Getting Ready

30 minutes

Present the lesson plan that you created as homework after the previous workshop. Distribute copies to site participants.

Discuss which of the many activities introduced during the *In Search of the Novel* workshop might be suitable for assessing your students' understanding and involvement in reading?

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## Watch the Workshop Video

60 minutes

### During the Video

First 15-second break. Question on screen: Would Socratic seminars work for you, your students, and the novels you teach?

Five-minute break. Discuss how creative activities could replace one of your traditional written tests.

Second 15-second break. Question on screen: How do you define an "A"?

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## Going Further

30 minutes

1. Evaluate what you have seen and consider how you might adapt activities shown in this and other programs to your situation. Use this final discussion period to share ideas with your fellow teachers.
2. Consider the following words of novelist Amy Tan as they might apply to encouraging and assessing students:

I hope that children will love to read for the rest of their lives as much as I have loved to read—and that through pictures and words together they'll develop their own imagination. There are certain to be little messages in any story. I don't try to plant them intentionally, but if I were to look at them, then this [*The Chinese Siamese Cats*] is a story about censorship . . . authoritarianism, also a story about your own actions and how they affect others, especially your family. And it's also a story about the ability for any individual to change the world . . .

Amy Tan. Online interview. *Mosaic Magazine*, fall 1994.

# Final Assignments

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## Homework Assignment

1. Go to the “Teachers and Lesson Plans” section of the *In Search of the Novel* Web site, [www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel). Read Frazier O’Leary’s lesson plans for teaching *A Lesson Before Dying* and *Song of Solomon*.
2. Go to the “Am I Getting Through?” page on the *In Search of the Novel* Web site, [www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/isonovel). Read the “Participants’ Comments and Observations” section.

