

# Responding to Specific Passages in a Literary Text

Often it is useful to have the entire class focus attention on a particular passage. Ms. Rief regularly passes out copies of key passages and has students write responses on that page. Students then pass the papers to a classmate who reads and responds to the first set of comments. Eventually, a third student reads both sets of comments and offers his or her own. This interchange then serves as a springboard for full-class discussion.

Here is one set of interchanges based on the passage provided in the student activity sheet called "Passage for Student Response":

Genetic engineering. Those two words scare me; I picture a world full of people that have been designed, ordered, like you might order a hamburger at a restaurant. And I don't want that. I think it's sad that as a society we would choose to create our children to fit our likes. People are supposed to be born as individuals, individuals created from two people, not human beings whose genes have been altered. That's wrong and the possibilities scare me....

*I agree with you, I don't think people should be designed by other people, I think that they shouldn't mess with genes at all.*

**I don't think that we should tamper with genes either. But I think that for many people if they could choose exactly what their kids would be like they would do it.**

A variation on this activity asks students to come to class with a passage written out which they then pass to classmates for responses.