

## ***Twenty Questions***

### **Exploring *Angel Park*: A Novel with Author Patricia Kokinos**

1. Your novel, *Angel Park*, is called a philosophical mystery, which sounds intriguing. What's your book about, and what's the mystery?
2. School reform is a big issue to tackle, and fiction is an unusual way to do it. Why have you chosen to write a novel about it, instead of a non-fiction book about your experiences?
3. How close to the bone does *Angel Park* go? Is your story really what's happening in schools today?
4. You've been involved in a lot of school change yourself, both as a teacher and as an administrator. Aren't school people making changes every day, all over the country?
5. We've found out a lot in the past few decades about how kids learn. Why haven't these discoveries changed schools to be more effective?
6. What are those forces that are holding schools back from making changes that count? Is *Angel Park* intended as a wake-up call?
7. You're a parent and so am I. What do you think parents want from school, and are they being reasonable?
8. How do you think kids are different today than we were 20 or 30 years ago? How does the world look to them?
9. You have an image in *Angel Park* of students moving along a conveyor belt in a factory. Is that how kids today feel about school?
10. Is that why there are so many different kinds of schools today—charter schools, magnet schools, online schools, home schools, alternative schools, religious schools?
11. Can we ever all agree on what we want out of school?
12. With the way technology has transformed the world, do we really even need brick-and-mortar schools anymore?
13. It always seemed to me that the most memorable times in school were the teams we were on or the events we took part in. How could we make academic work feel more like that?
14. How can we get kids to *want* to do more challenging work?
15. What do *kids* want out of school, particularly in high school?
16. What is your idea of the ideal school?
17. How do we make something like that real? Are there schools like that now?
18. How do you think better schools can improve our whole society?
19. Do you really think books can change the world?
20. How do you think your novel, *Angel Park*, can inspire people to want or do something different about schools?