

## Reviews of the novel

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The following web link has 24 reviews of the novel from a variety of countries:

<http://www.metacritic.com/books/authors/tyleranne/diggingtoamerica>

Read each review and then answer the following questions:

1. Make a note of which country each review is from and how favourable, or otherwise, the review is.
2. Do you think the country of origin of the review makes a difference to the way in which the novel is perceived? In the case of USA reviews, do reviewers have different opinions depending on which State they are in?
3. Make a list of words and phrases used to describe the overall novel. Look at the words and decide which you think are the most appropriate to describe the book and which the least appropriate; explain your choices.
4. Write out the main characters' names (Sami; Ziba; Bitsy; Brad; Maryam; Dave) and write down words and phrases used to describe them. Which do you agree with and which do you disagree with? Give reasons and evidence for your views.
5. Compare the ways in which the reviewers write about Tyler and her other novels; do they see *Digging to America* as fitting in with a fine tradition for example, an improvement on what has gone before, a disappointment or something new altogether? What reasons do they give for this?
6. Many of the reviewers comment on the humour in the novel; do you find the text comic and why?
7. What do the reviewers write about the narrative voices in the novel? Do you agree with their comments?
8. What does each reviewer think the over-riding theme of the novel is? Do you agree or disagree? Give explanations for your answer.
9. A number of the reviewers comment on the 'Americanness' of Brad and Bitsy and the feelings of 'foreignness' of the Yazdans. Make a note of some of the descriptions and then discuss your opinions of the statements.
10. Using ideas from these reviews, write your own review of the novel.