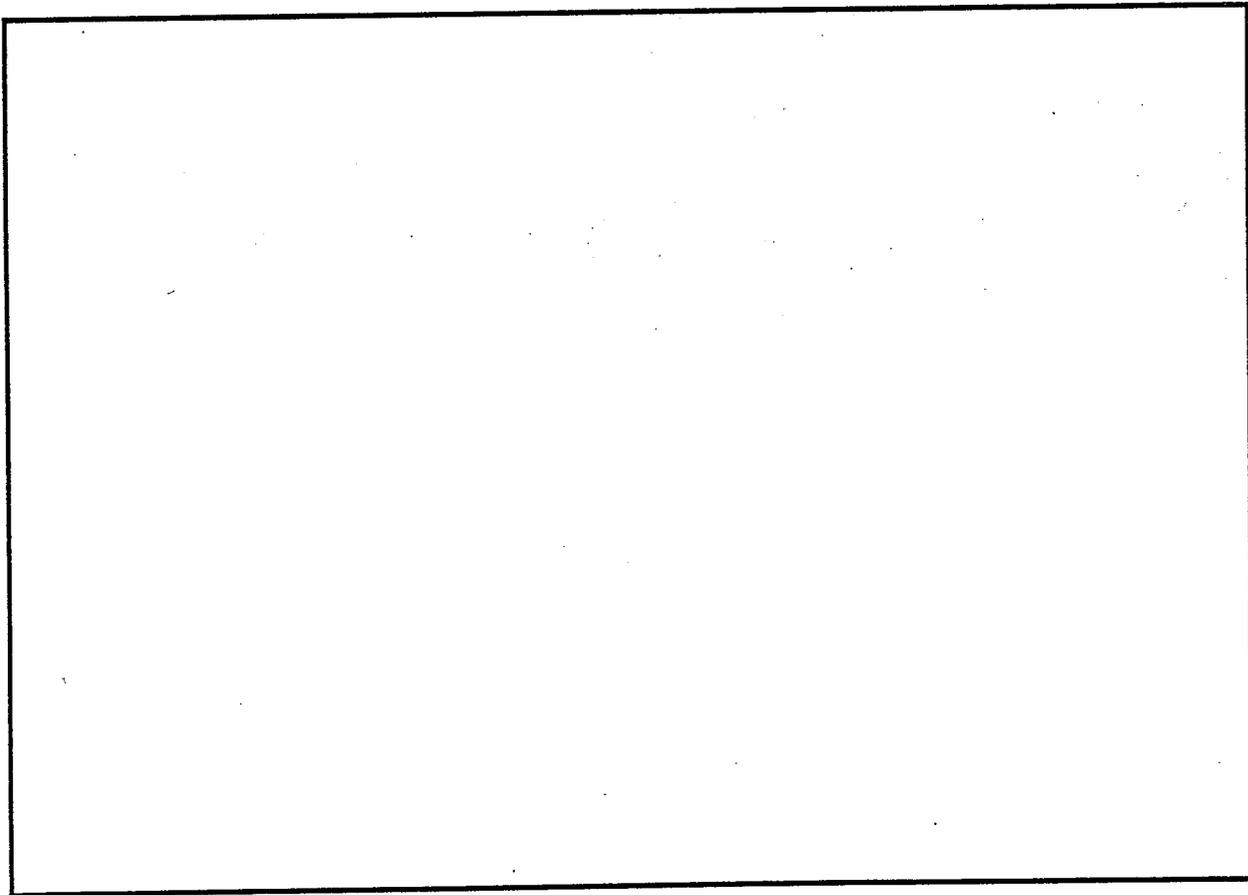
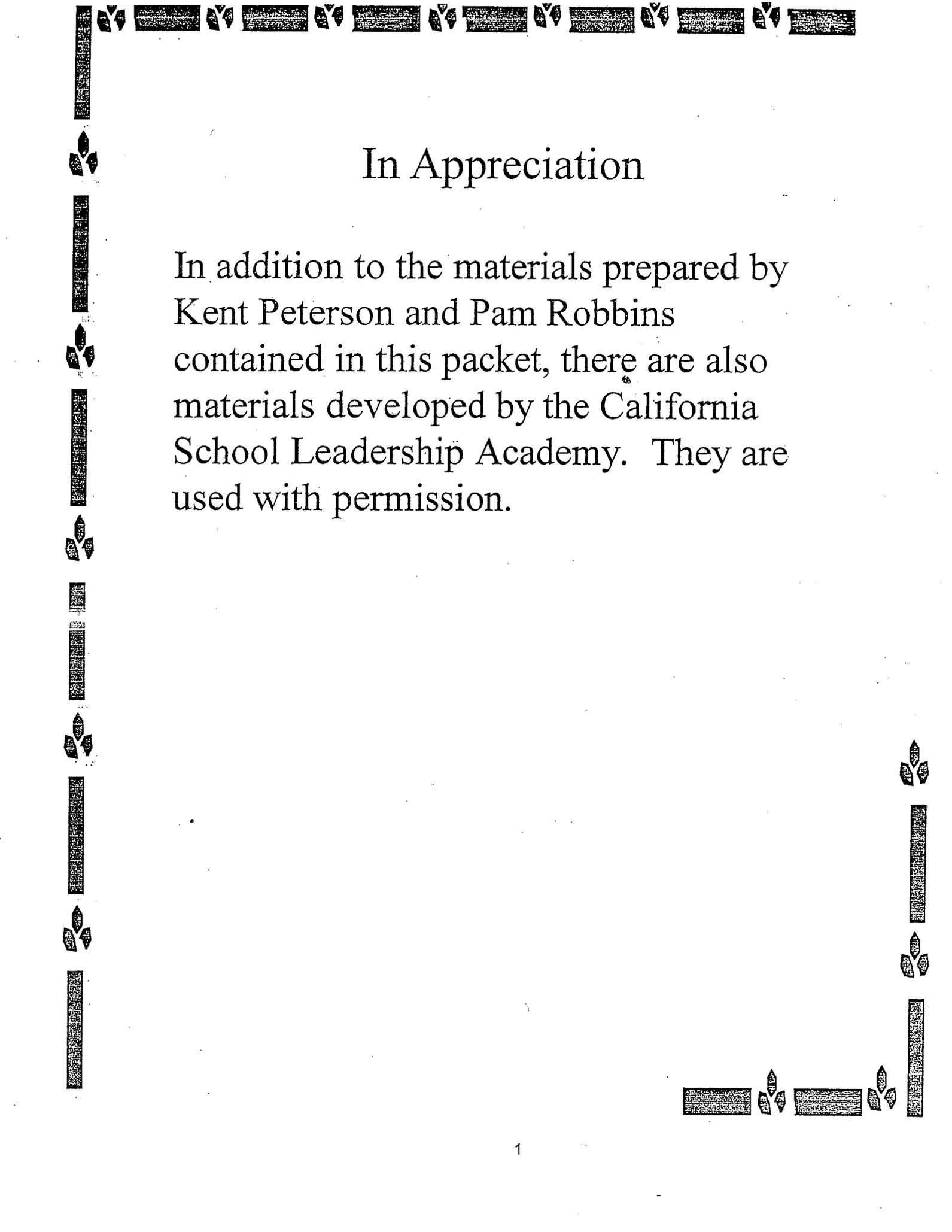


# Bracketing

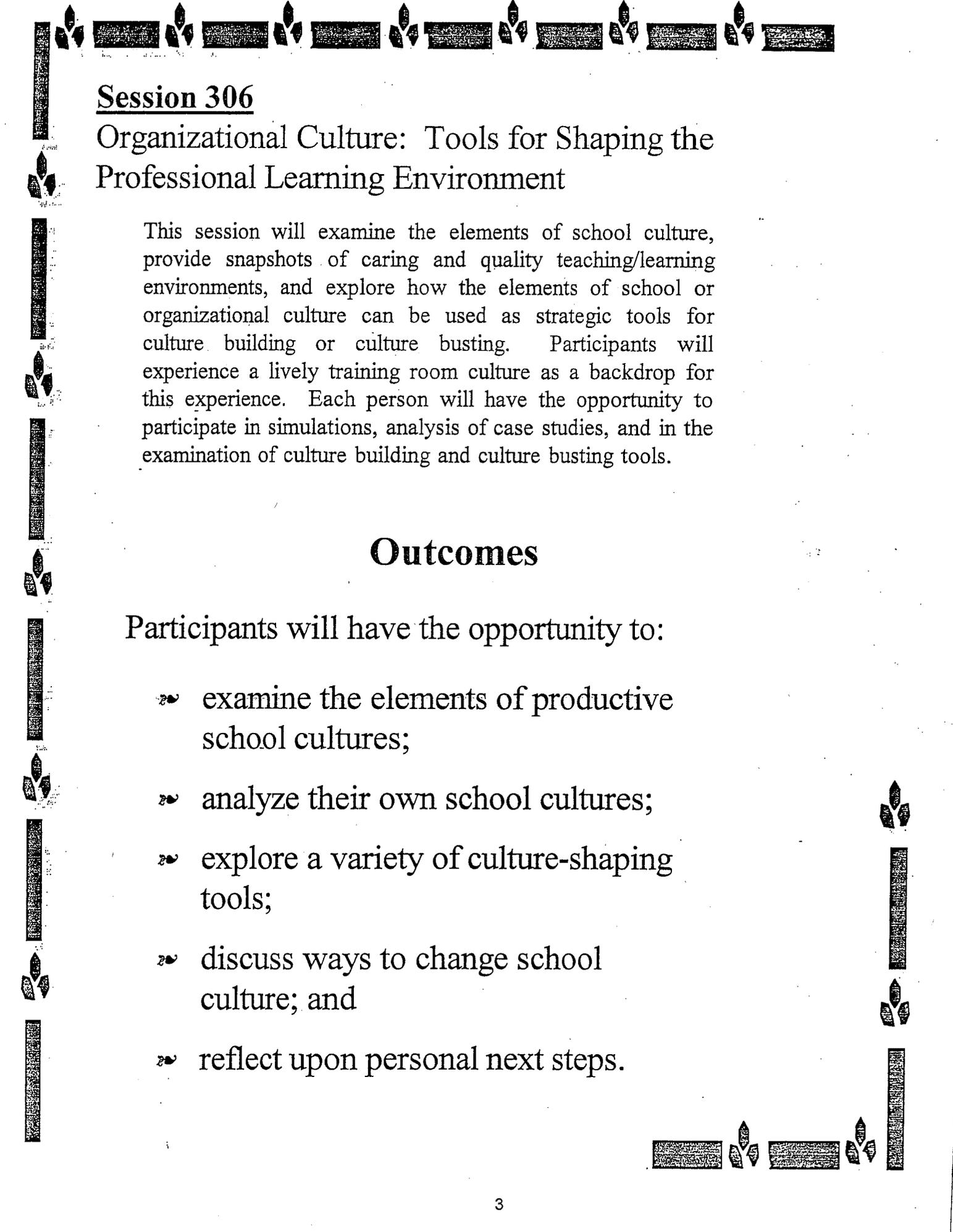
“Bracketing” invites workshop participants to take a moment and reflect on “things to do” or thoughts that may interfere with being able to focus on a session’s content. Often by writing these items down and putting them aside, attention to the content of the session can be enhanced. This strategy also can be used in faculty meetings, and in the classroom. Some have even used it during sleepless nights! Use the space below to see if it works for you:





## In Appreciation

In addition to the materials prepared by Kent Peterson and Pam Robbins contained in this packet, there are also materials developed by the California School Leadership Academy. They are used with permission.



## Session 306

### Organizational Culture: Tools for Shaping the Professional Learning Environment

This session will examine the elements of school culture, provide snapshots of caring and quality teaching/learning environments, and explore how the elements of school or organizational culture can be used as strategic tools for culture building or culture busting. Participants will experience a lively training room culture as a backdrop for this experience. Each person will have the opportunity to participate in simulations, analysis of case studies, and in the examination of culture building and culture busting tools.

### Outcomes

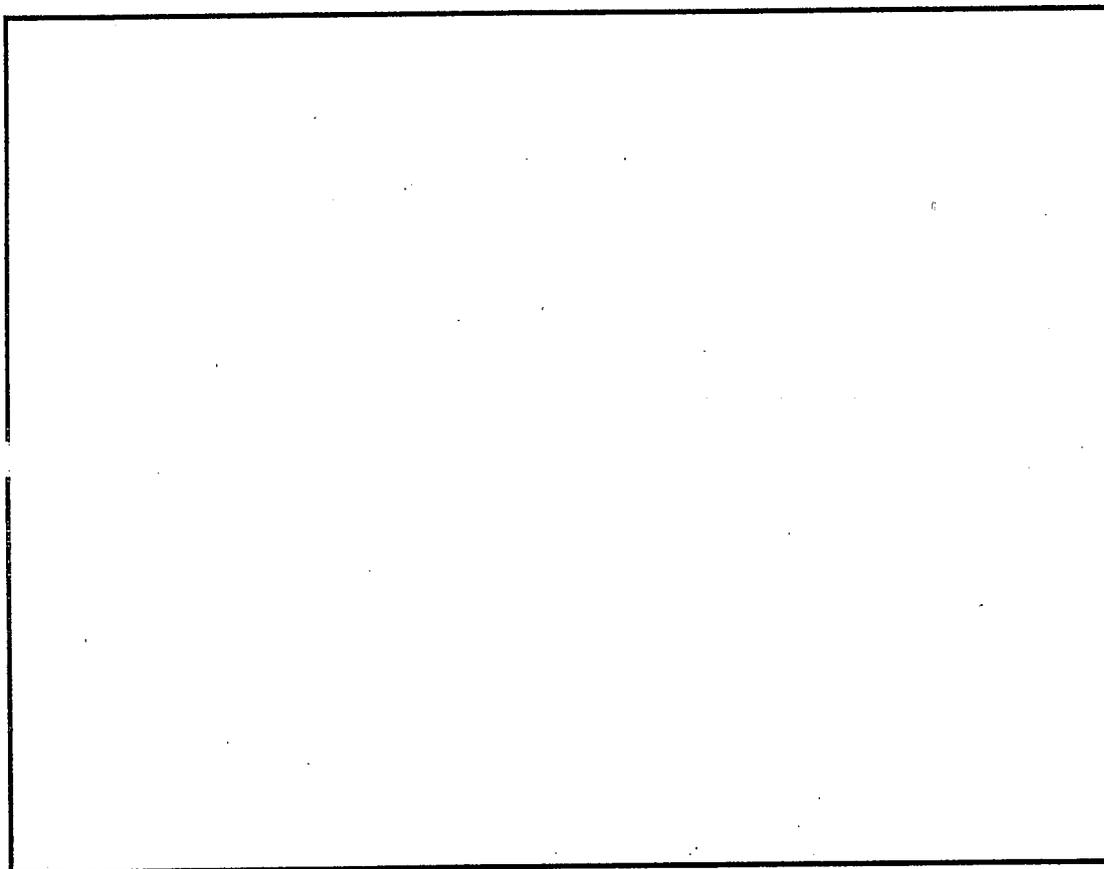
Participants will have the opportunity to:

- examine the elements of productive school cultures;
- analyze their own school cultures;
- explore a variety of culture-shaping tools;
- discuss ways to change school culture; and
- reflect upon personal next steps.



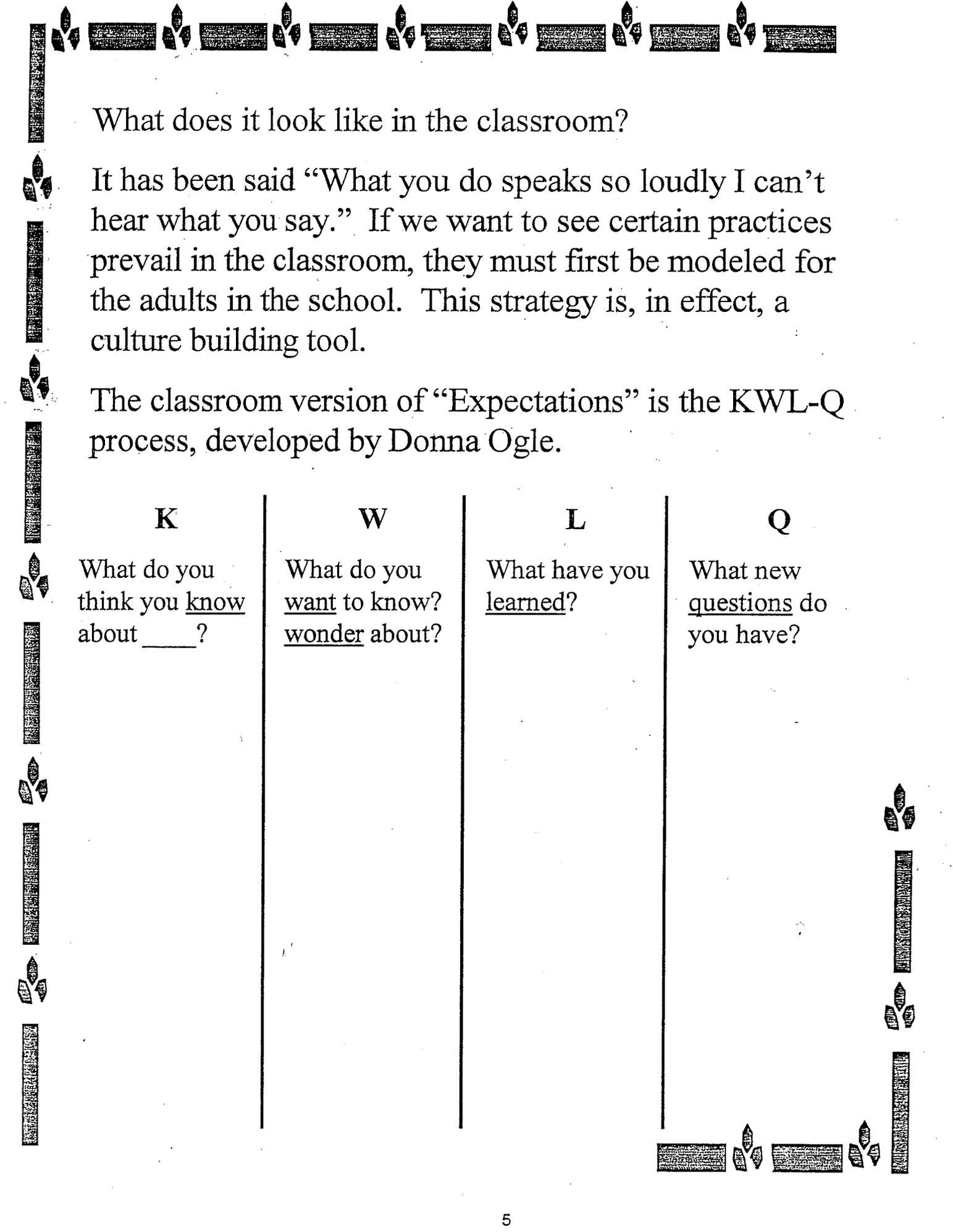
# Expectations

Reflect for a moment on the context in which you work. Think about what you hope to take away from this session. Then, browse through the packet and identify your expectations in the space below.



Compare your expectations with those of your table group members. Develop a composite list. Be ready to share these. They will be recorded and honored as the content of the session is addressed.





What does it look like in the classroom?

It has been said “What you do speaks so loudly I can’t hear what you say.” If we want to see certain practices prevail in the classroom, they must first be modeled for the adults in the school. This strategy is, in effect, a culture building tool.

The classroom version of “Expectations” is the KWL-Q process, developed by Donna Ogle.

**K**

What do you think you know about \_\_\_\_?

**W**

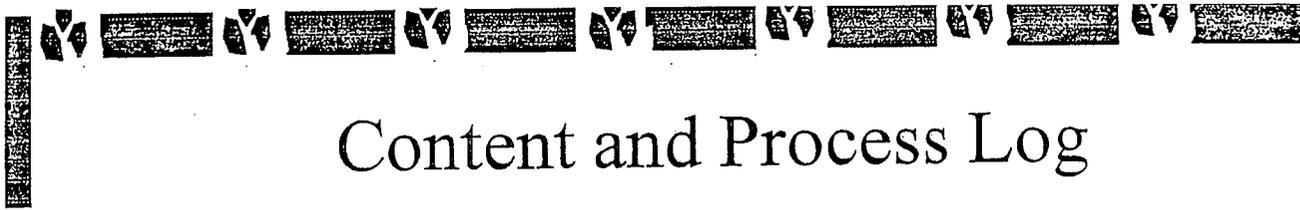
What do you want to know? wonder about?

**L**

What have you learned?

**Q**

What new questions do you have?

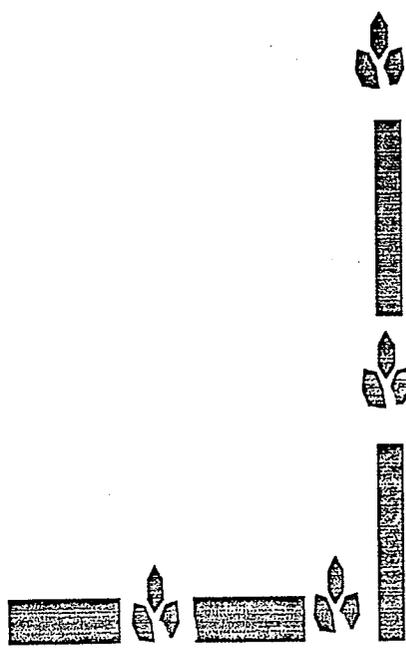


# Content and Process Log

It takes both content and processes/strategies to shape school culture. Within this session, we will be building a training room culture. If you are so inclined, you may wish to keep track of the content addressed, the strategies used and messages implicit in specific actions.



Content	Processes/Strategies	Messages



# Introductory Activity

Please develop a group resume for your table. You may include such information as:

- educational backgrounds
- total years of experience
- talents and experiences
- major accomplishments
- geographical locations represented
- any other serious or humorous data to describe your group!

You'll have 2 minutes to report out.



# The Importance of Culture

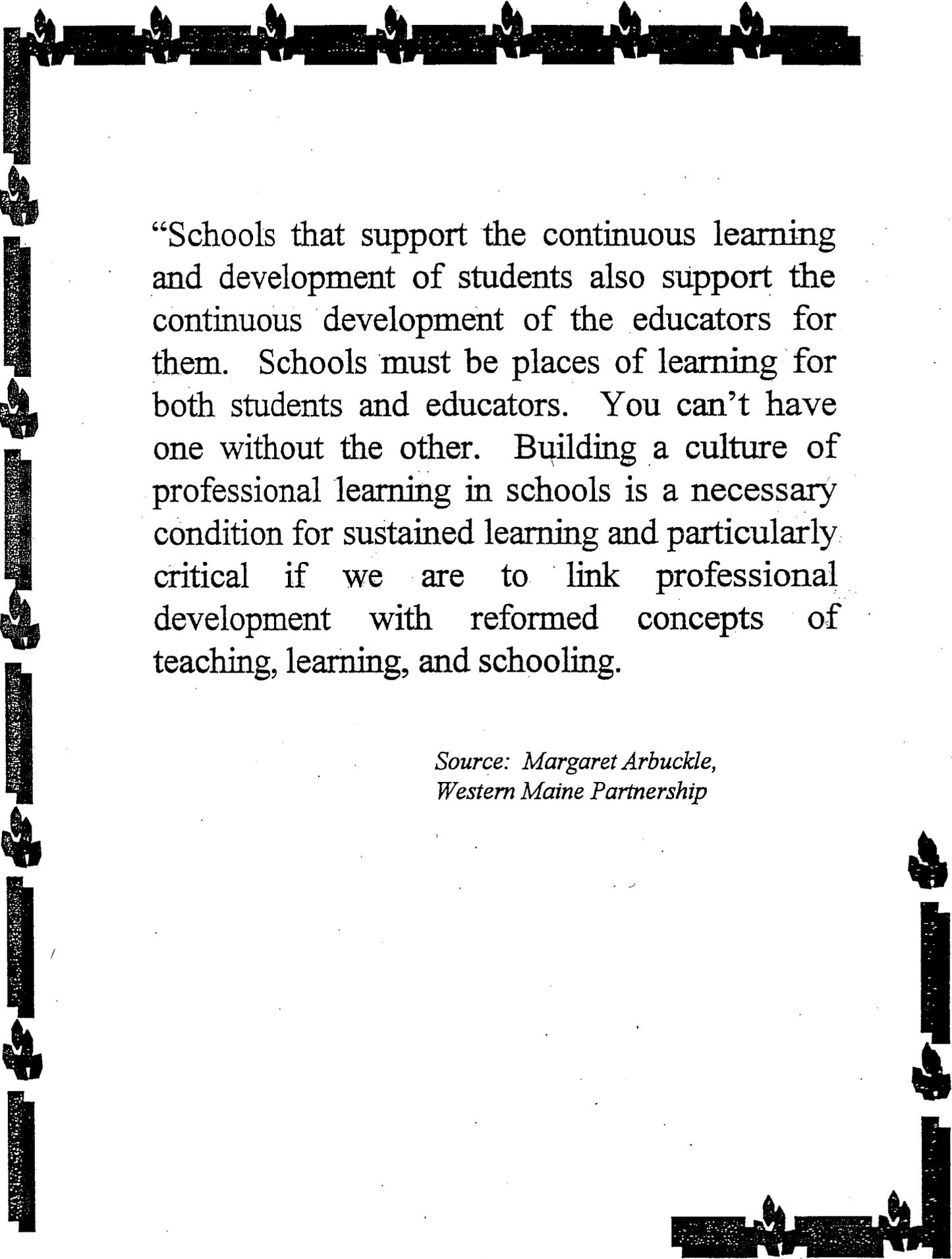
“It is important to begin by asking the moral question, ‘Why do this?’.” (Michael Fullen)

Within any organization, there is an “inner reality” (Deal & Peterson, 1993) or culture that influences the way people interact, what they will and will not do, and what they value as “right and rude” (Little, 1982). This inner reality reflects what organizational members care about, what they are willing to spend time doing, what and how they celebrate, and what they talk about. It is evident in daily routines. The inner reality or culture of a school influences its productivity, professional development, leadership practices, and traditions. The same stable culture that brings meaning to a school can also frustrate efforts to implement new, innovative ideas, especially if they are contradictory to the existing culture. Consider, if you will, the open classroom of the 1960s. It soon became walled up because the culture of the one-room schoolhouse was so strong. Hence one understands Fullan and Stiegelbauer’s (1991) words “to restructure is not to reculture.”

Despite its pervasive nature, culture or inner reality is often overlooked as a critical force. Instruction, curriculum, quality assessment and leadership surely all contribute to a quality school. But “the unmet, unspoken set of values and purposes that weave quality into the daily routine and motivate everyone to do his or her best” (Deal & Peterson, 1993) is equally if not more powerful in moving a school toward achieving a vision of quality. A school’s culture is reflective of its organizational members. The culture is the “meaning” individuals create in their world of work. Bennis (1991) has written, “Each employee

is, to a remarkable extent, the organization in miniature” (p. 156). This explains both why culture is such a critical force and how individual interactions influence the culture. Because the way people interact daily or “do business” at a site dramatically influences its ultimate productivity for all members, culture is a powerful school improvement tool. It is not surprising, however, that if a culture is a negative one, it can serve as a hindering force to school improvement efforts. In such cases, the culture must first be studied and then transformed if school improvement efforts are to thrive.

from: The Principal’s Companion by Pam Robbins and Harvey Alvy, Corwin press, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA 1995, pp. 23-24)



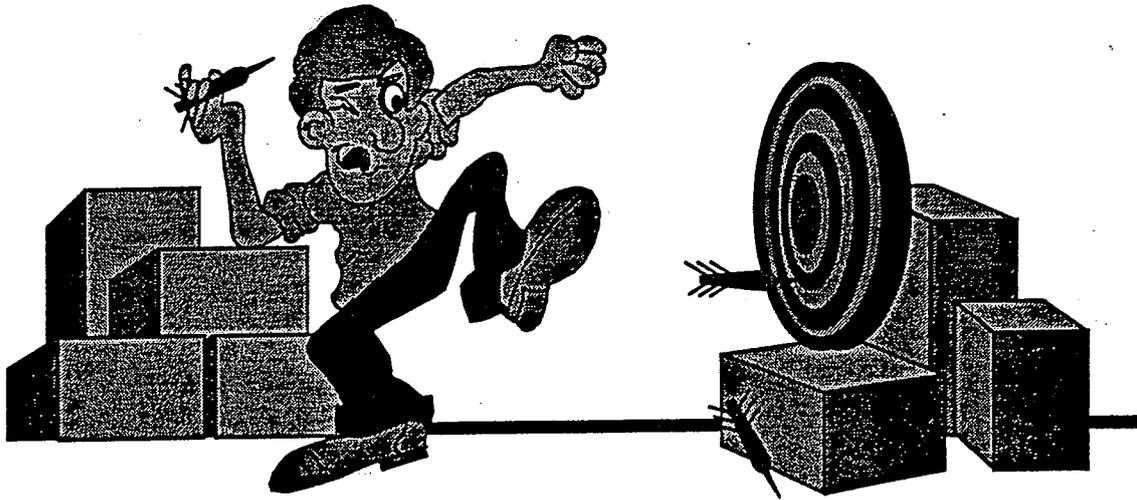
“Schools that support the continuous learning and development of students also support the continuous development of the educators for them. Schools must be places of learning for both students and educators. You can’t have one without the other. Building a culture of professional learning in schools is a necessary condition for sustained learning and particularly critical if we are to link professional development with reformed concepts of teaching, learning, and schooling.

*Source: Margaret Arbuckle,  
Western Maine Partnership*

Culture is the most powerful source  
of leverage for bringing about  
change in a school—or any  
organization, for that matter.

—Thomas J. Sergiovanni, *Moral  
Leadership: Getting to the Heart  
of School Improvement*, 1992

# Defining Culture



# Table Group Dialogue

1. What does the term "School Culture" mean to you?

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2. What is the relationship between school culture and change?

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3. In what ways do you currently use school culture to promote change?

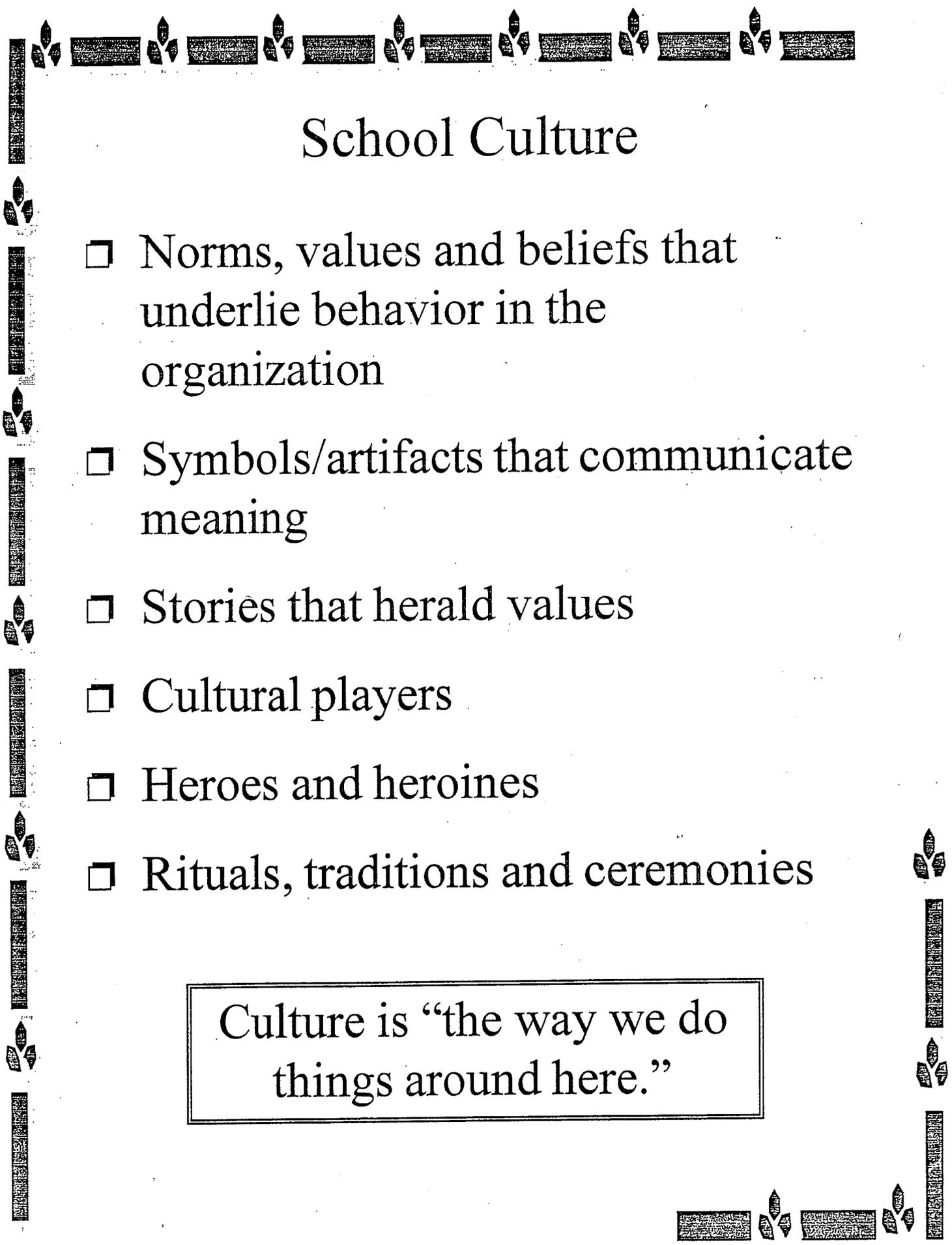
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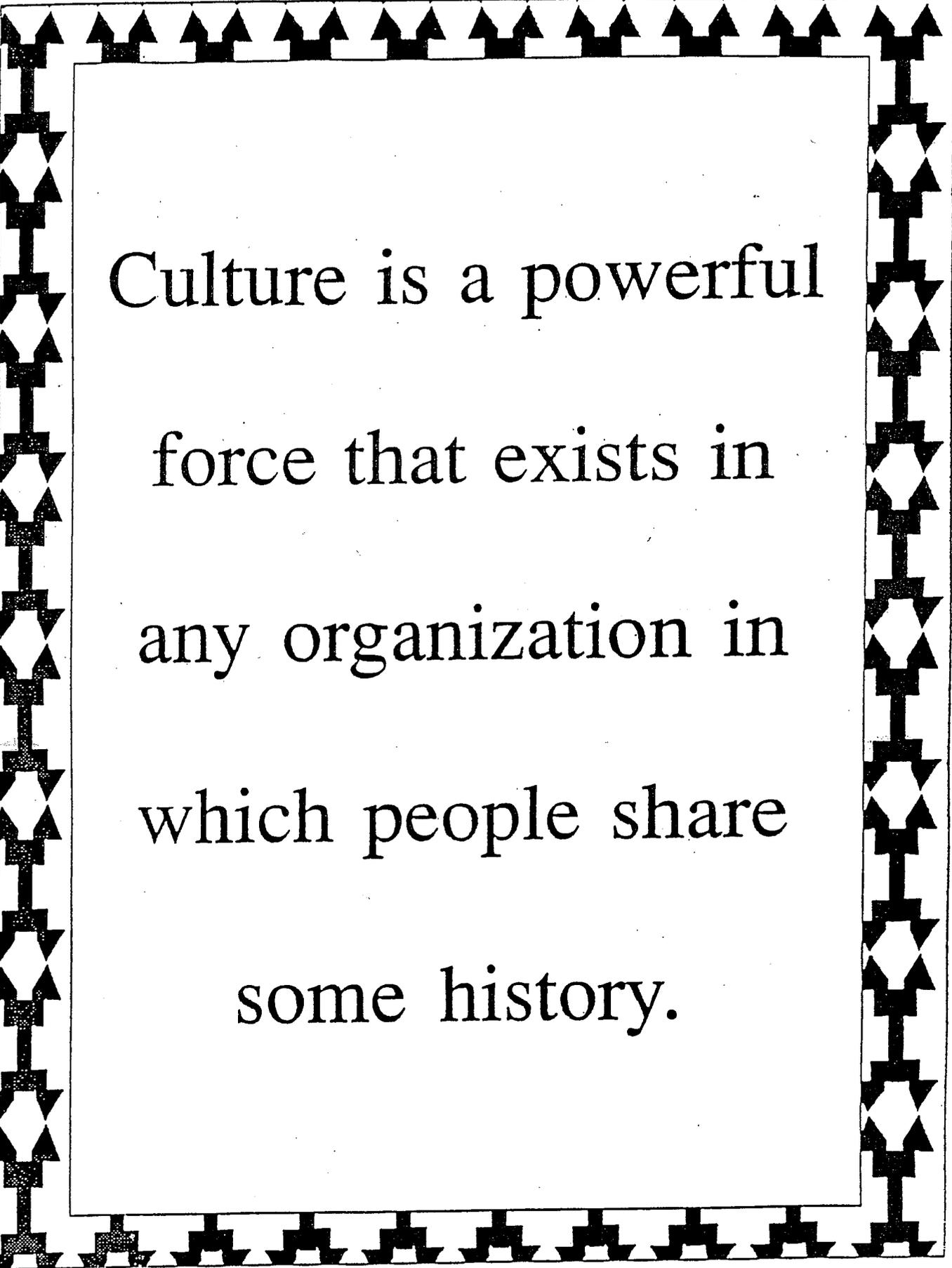


# School Culture

- Norms, values and beliefs that underlie behavior in the organization
- Symbols/artifacts that communicate meaning
- Stories that herald values
- Cultural players
- Heroes and heroines
- Rituals, traditions and ceremonies

Culture is “the way we do things around here.”

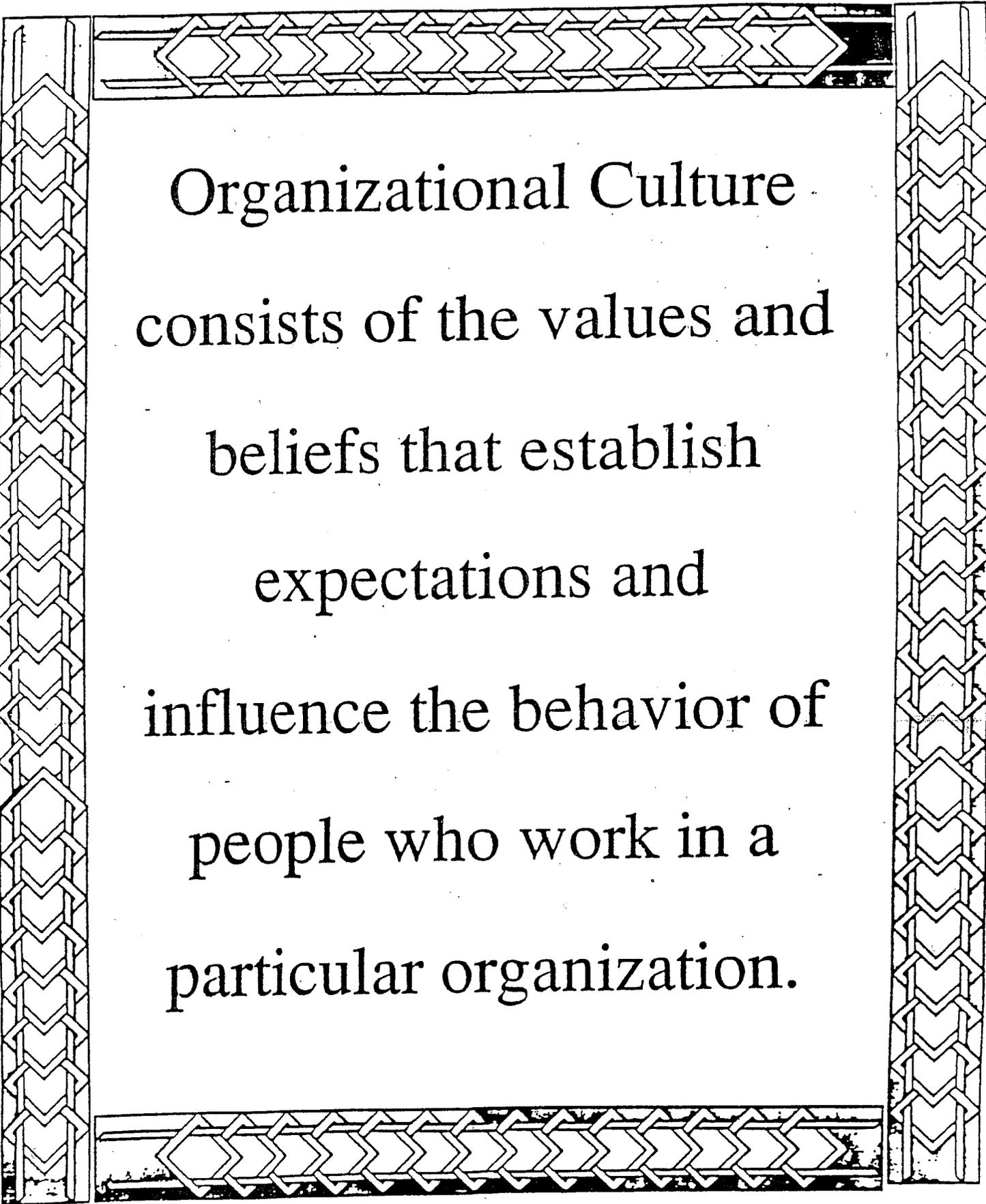
Window Pane Lecturette:  
School Culture

Culture is a powerful  
force that exists in  
any organization in  
which people share  
some history.

The term “culture” should be reserved for the deeper level of *basic assumptions* and *beliefs* that are shared by members of [a group], that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic “taken-for-granted” fashion [a group’s] view of itself and its environment.

—Edgar Schein,  
*Organizational Culture  
and Leadership*, 1985, p. 6



Organizational Culture  
consists of the values and  
beliefs that establish  
expectations and  
influence the behavior of  
people who work in a  
particular organization.

The values and beliefs that  
form the core of the  
culture are those that are  
most pervasive and  
influential in shaping  
people's opinions about  
"what ought to be."





## WHERE CORE VALUES SHOW UP IN SCHOOLS

If it really is a core value, it will be reflected in many of the following arenas of school life. A helpful question to ask is, "What would each of these arenas look like if \_\_\_\_\_ were a core value?"

1. Curriculum
2. Materials -- classroom and library
3. Classroom routines
4. Instructional patterns and lesson structures
5. Grouping practices between classes and within classes
6. Handling of negative behavior
7. Reward systems for students
8. Traditions and ceremonies
9. Posters and slogans
10. Cafeteria
11. Playground
12. After-school sports and activities
13. Student councils/class offices
14. Evaluation system of teachers
15. Professional development programs
16. Faculty meeting time
17. Interpersonal contacts

## Statements from Members of One School Culture

1. "Walk like you talk." The importance of modeling cannot be over emphasized. Action speaks more profoundly than words.
2. Take risks and experiment. One teacher explained, "It is the idea that you change and you get all the information you can and you then try it and it's okay not to do well for a while." Another said, "If you want a school that is able to adapt and be responsive to kids' needs, it has to be okay to make mistakes."

The dominant values and beliefs within an organization reflect the attempts of the people in that organization to maintain the organization internally while adapting to the outside world.

**The Difficult Part of  
Change is Changing  
the Culture...**

"Cultures can be changed  
by attending to key  
cultural attributes --  
heroes, values, rituals --  
that must be affected  
if the change  
is to succeed."

Deal and Kennedy, 1982

**Pam Robbins**

# ARTIFACTS

are the

visible and

tangible

expressions

of a culture's

core values and

beliefs.



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# EXAMINING ARTIFACTS

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1. Think about the culture in which you work.....
2. Describe an artifact or two.
3. Meet with a colleague.
  - ✓ Share your artifact example.
  - ✓ Ask your colleague to describe his or her thoughts about your culture's values based on the artifact.
4. Be ready to report out.

**Stories**

**about people and events**

**reinforce**

**the values and beliefs**

**of people**

**in an organization.**

.....

## Stories that Communicate Norms and Beliefs

- About the success of students
  - About the dedication of staff
  - About the importance of working together
  - About overcoming adversity
- 

# Stories that Communicate Norms and Beliefs

.....

**Rituals**

**Daily**

**Weekly**

**Before or At the End of School Day**

•

**Rituals**



# Traditions

- Before School Opens
- After Winter Break
- End of the School Year
- Turkey Day



# Traditions

.....

**Ceremonies**

**Graduation**

**Tenure**

**Retirement**

**Athletic and Academic Awards**

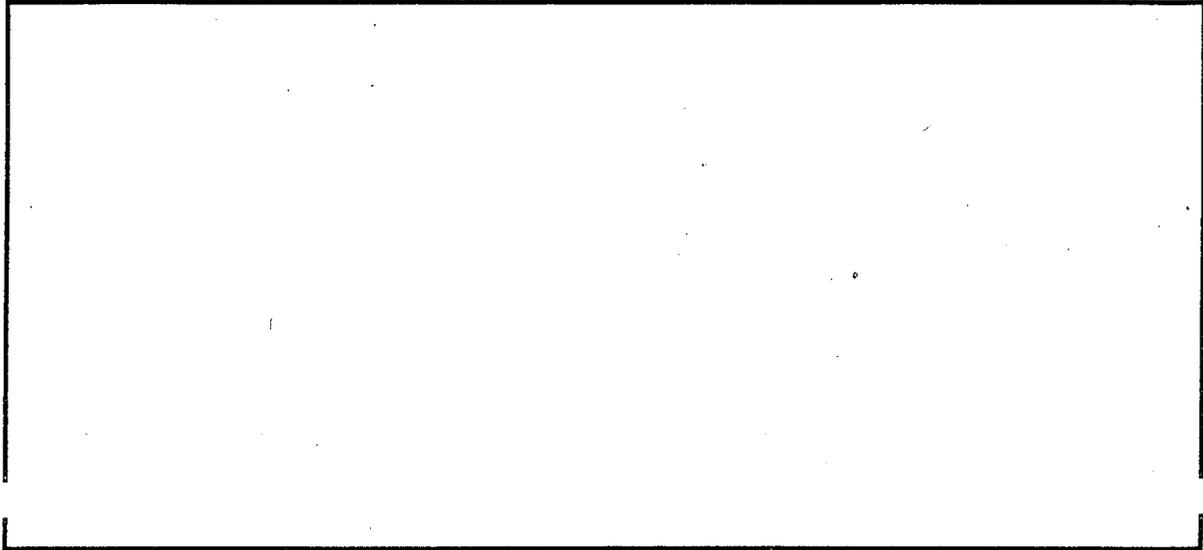
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**Ceremonies**

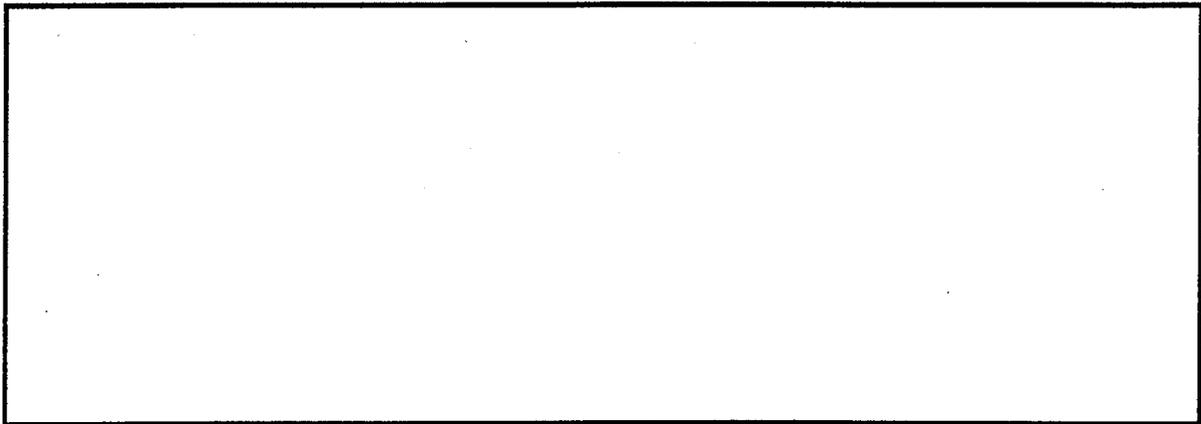


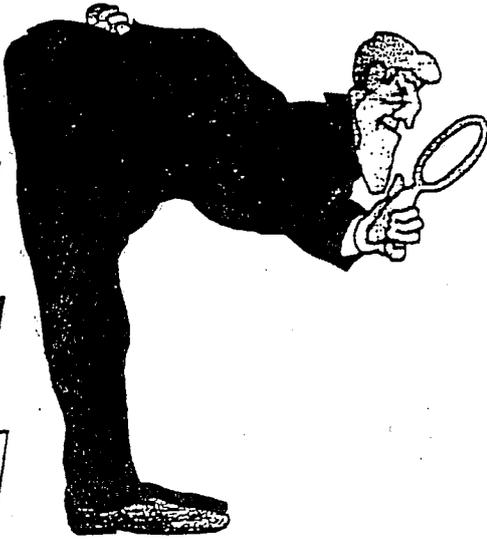
## A Look at Ceremonies: What Makes Them Meaningful?

After viewing the video clip, reflect for a moment on the elements of a meaningful ceremony. What are they?



Share ceremonies at your table group. Take one of your own ceremonies upon which to focus. How could you expand or refine it?

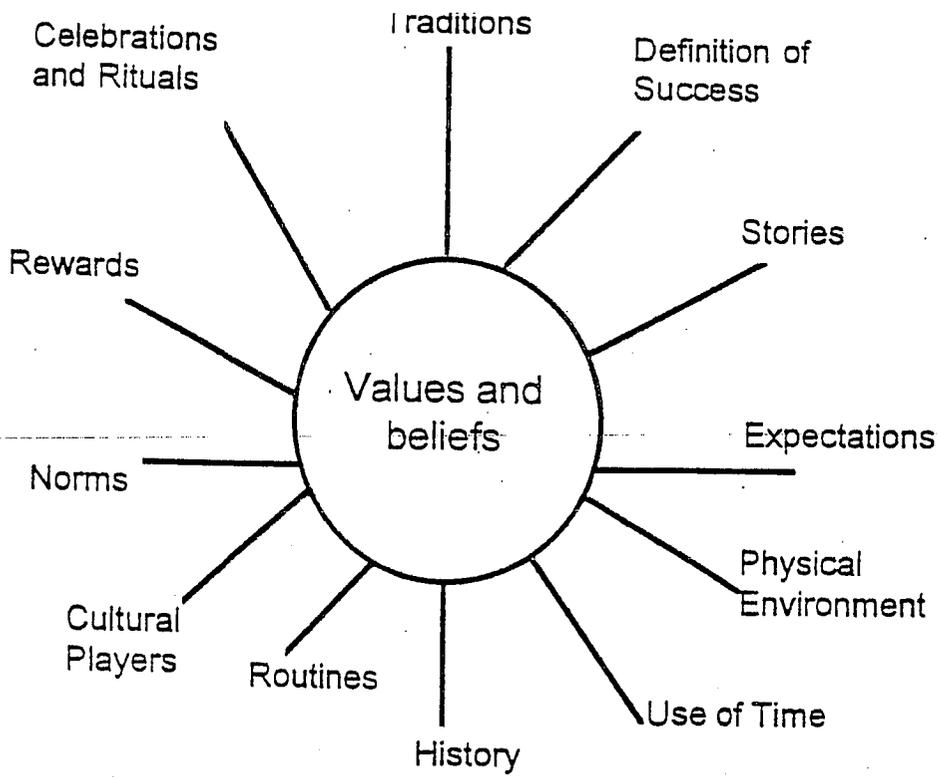




## Archaeological Dig

School reform will be accomplished best in schools that function as learning communities. However, not all schools have organizational cultures that will foster the development of learning communities. The workplace context plays a crucial role in determining school success. The activity that follows offers an opportunity for you to dig into your school's or organization's culture in order to determine "What are the prospects for building a collaborative learning community?" "Will culture 'busting', 'building', 'enhancing' or 'reinforcing' be required?"

Pam Robbins, 1997



<i>Element</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
Values and beliefs	
Stories	
Expectations	
Physical Environment	
Use of Time	
History	
Routines	
Cultural Players	
Norms	
Rewards	
Celebrations, Rituals	
Traditions	
Definitions of Success	

---

## Characteristics That Enable Faculties to Function as a Learning Community

- vision of high quality academic work that a school expects from students
- shared purpose for all students' learning
- collaborative activity to achieve that purpose
- collective responsibility for student learning
- agreed-upon curricula that enables teachers to send clear and consistent messages to students about the objectives and methods of learning
- teacher efficacy -- teachers could count on colleagues to reinforce their objectives

Source: Fred Newmann, Successful School Restructuring

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# Creating a Culture of Learning

“Schools that work to become learning communities try to go beyond structural considerations to address the tougher, less tangible issue of change.

It is here that educators begin to consider the changes in their own behaviors, attitudes, and expectations that can improve the effectiveness of their school.

And it is here that significant school improvement really begins.”

*MARK LIPSON, RIE, "FUNCTIONING AS LEARNING COMMUNITIES:  
Enables Schools to Focus on Student Achievement," Journal of Staff  
Development, Spring 1997, Vol. 18, No. 2.*

“The collective beliefs that individuals within an organization hold make up the core of school culture.”

*Source: Pam Robbins, 1997*

## To Ponder ...

Given your experiences in the 1-2-4 activity, what might the rationale be for transforming faculty meetings into invitations to learn?

What are some specific goals that faculty meetings might enable staff to accomplish (e.g. development of shared vision for student success)?

Develop a list of key focus areas/activities that might galvanize collective staff energies during these faculty meetings – and perhaps during other forms of job-embedded interactions (e.g. curriculum mapping).

"The working relationships that teachers have with other adults, are closely connected to and deeply consequential for the teaching and learning relationships they in turn have with their students." The current work structures of teachers, Hargreaves believes, are based on a rational, scientific view of progress and designed for a time (modernity) that advocated separating "... management from workers, planning from execution, and head from hand."

Hargreaves lists five potential forms for teachers' work culture: individualism, balkanization, collaborative cultures, contrived collegiality, and the moving mosaic. He builds a case for the moving mosaic as the most promising form for the post-modern age. Because the work cultures and structures that are most likely to prosper in this era are "... ones characterized by flexibility, adaptability, creativity, opportunism, collaboration, continuous improvement, a positive orientation towards problem solving and commitment to maximizing their capacity to learn about their environment and themselves," the moving mosaic is most able to contribute to the organizational learning that these qualities demand, Hargreaves argues.

"The moving mosaic can foster vigorous, dynamic and shifting forms of collaboration through networks, partnerships, and alliances within and beyond the school ... In staff development there are trends towards professional networks where teachers are connected by electronic mail and satellite and can meet in smaller, interconnected sites."

Hargreaves concludes that "... the basic principles of the moving mosaic represent some of our best hopes, organizationally, for forms of schooling and teaching in the postmodern age that are flexible, responsive, proactive, efficient, and effective in their uses of shared expertise and resources in order to meet the continuously shifting needs of students in a rapidly changing world." (from Andy Hargreaves in *Changing Work Cultures of Teaching*, as cited in *The Developer*, Feb. 1995, p. 3, NSDC)

# Faculty Meetings: An Obligatory Chore or Opportunity to Learn?

Faculty meetings can be tools for shaping culture and building community. Examining what goes on in faculty meetings, what are the explicit and implicit messages, how they are perceived, what business is transacted, when and how "business" is accomplished, who sits with whom, and whether there is a separate meeting after the meeting (in the parking lot) are all enlightening considerations.

## Taking Care of Business – and People

The one legged meeting ...

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Meeting while standing ...

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Meeting via memo ...

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# Reflections on Reality

Think about faculty meetings as you know them, or have experienced them. Jot down a few notes to describe them.

A vision is a descriptive statement of what something will be like at a specified time in the future. It represents what one might expect to see, hear and experience if the vision was in place. What would a faculty meeting be like that focused on learning? Describe it in the space below.

"Cultural change means real changes in the behavior of people throughout the organization. New roles, different stories, people spending their time differently on a day-to-day basis, different work rituals....

This kind of deep-seated cultural change...takes a long time to achieve."

Deal and Kennedy, 1982

**Pam Robbins**

"Change always threatens a culture. People form strong attachments to heroes, legends, the rituals of daily life, the hoopla of extravaganzas and the ceremonies--all the symbols and settings of the workplace.

Change strins down these relationships and leaves employees confused, insecure, and often angry."

Deal and Kennedy, 1982

"Culture is the barrier to change. The stronger the culture, the harder it is to change. Culture causes organizational inertia; it's the brake that resists change because this is precisely what culture should do--protect the organization from willy-nilly responses to fads and short-term fluctuations."

Deal and Kennedy, 1982

**Pam Robbins**

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## Culture

is the expression of  
shared attitudes, values,  
and beliefs.

A powerful way to influence  
the culture is to shape  
new attitudes.

Significant  
instructional improvement  
efforts  
will be **SUCCESSFUL**  
" only  
to the extent that  
they are  
**CONSISTENT WITH** and  
**SUPPORTED BY**  
the  
**ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT**  
of the school district in which  
they are attempted.

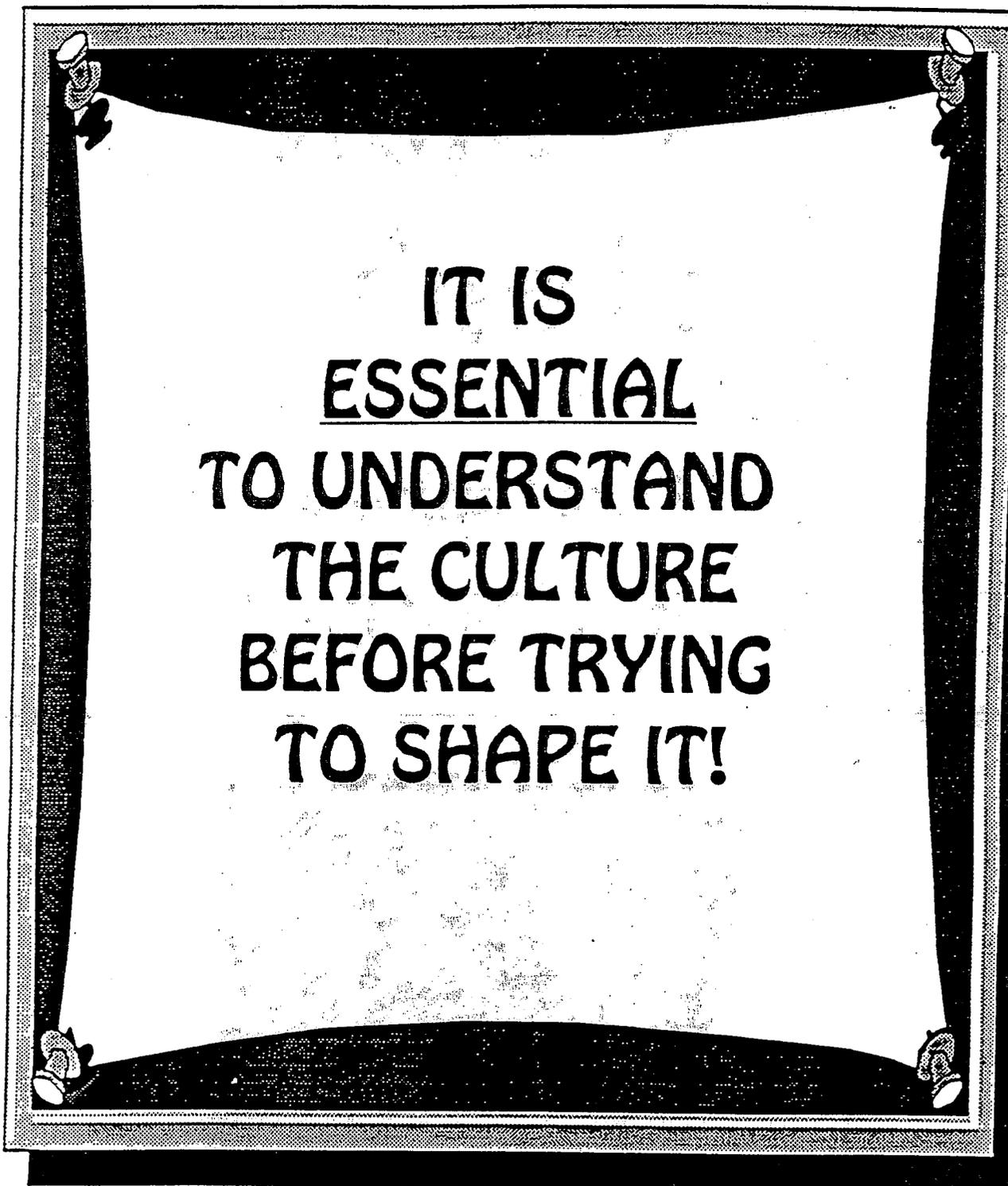
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**The Difficult Part of  
Change is Changing  
the Culture...**

"Cultures can be changed  
by attending to key  
cultural attributes --  
heroes, values, rituals --  
that must be affected  
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Deal and Kennedy, 1982

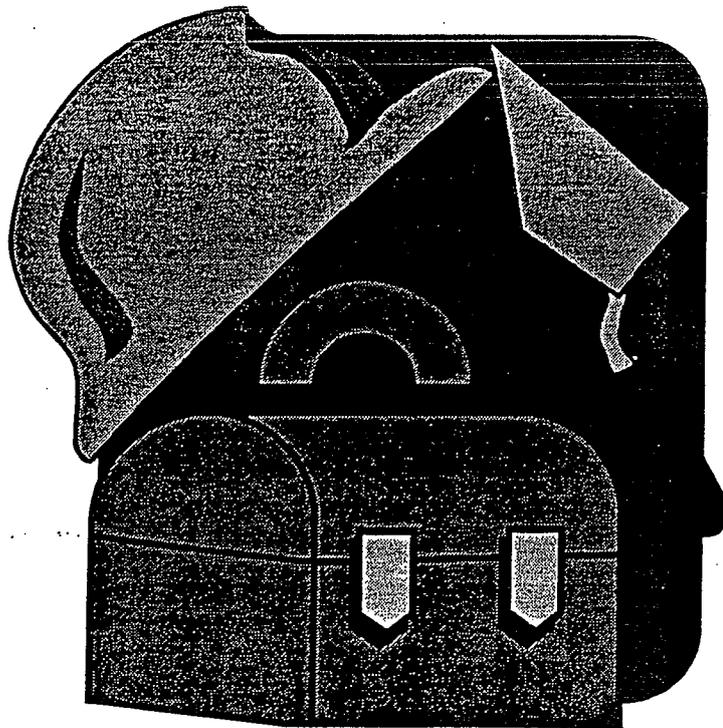
**Pam Robbins**



**IT IS  
ESSENTIAL  
TO UNDERSTAND  
THE CULTURE  
BEFORE TRYING  
TO SHAPE IT!**

# Culture Shaping

- ❖ culture “busting”
- ❖ culture “building”



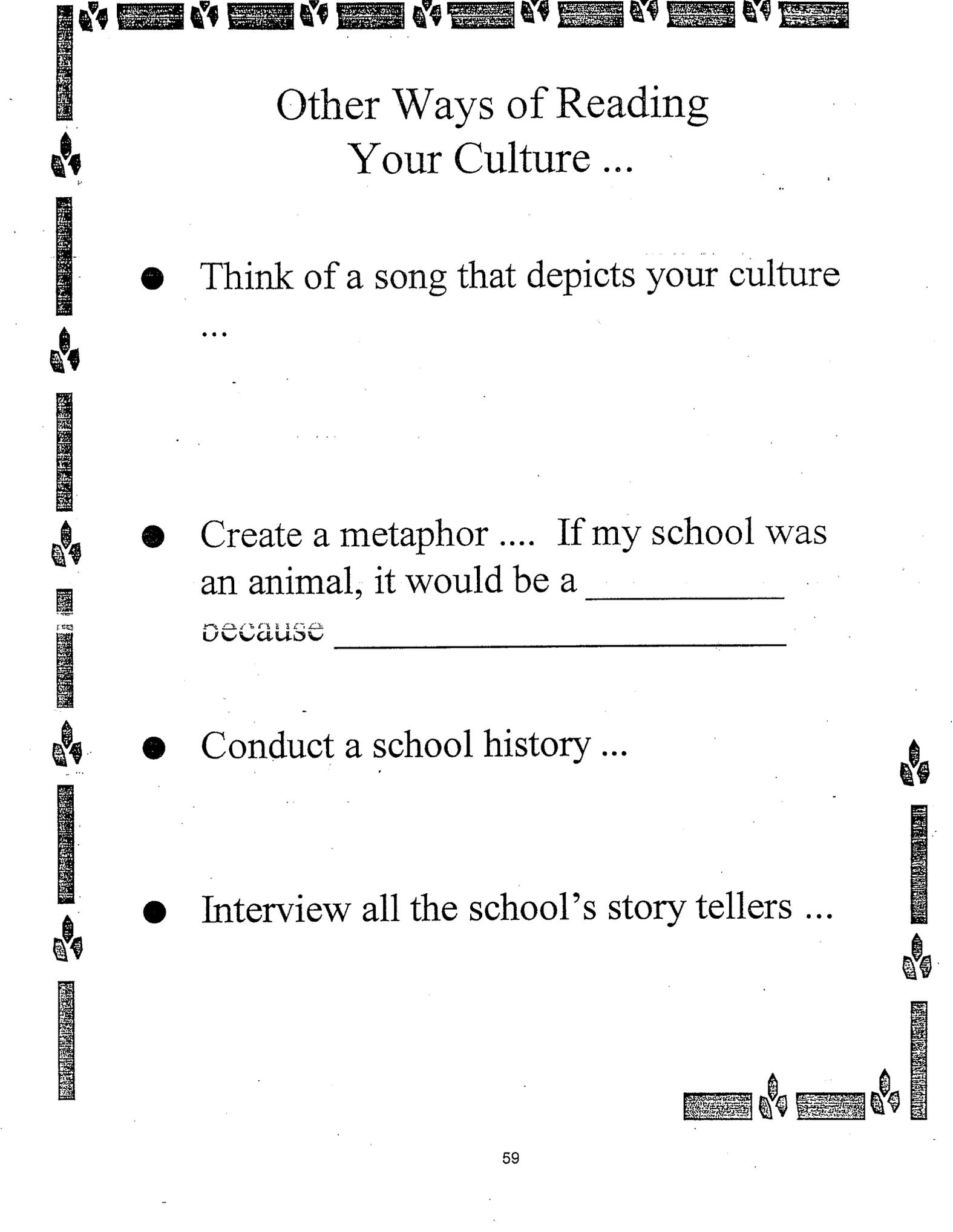
# Creating a Timeline

## Materials Needed:

- butcher paper
- colored markers
- masking tape

## Directions:

- Prepare for the activity by papering the walls with butcher paper which will serve as the medium for the timeline that is to be created.
- Explain that the purpose of this activity is to enable all staff members to gain a sense of the history of the school.
- Invite staff members who have been at the school the longest to think about key events that transpired during their first years in the building and jot down dates, events, people, and any emotions they recall (“highs” and “lows”). Suggest that they can use words or graphics to express their memories.
- Ask other staff members to join in completing the timeline, according to the year that they entered the building.
- When the timeline is finished, provide time for dialogue, questions, and answers. Invite staff to ponder, “Are there trends or patterns that emerge as you look at the timeline?”
- If possible, leave the timeline up for a while so that it can continue to serve as a basis for conversation.



## Other Ways of Reading Your Culture ...

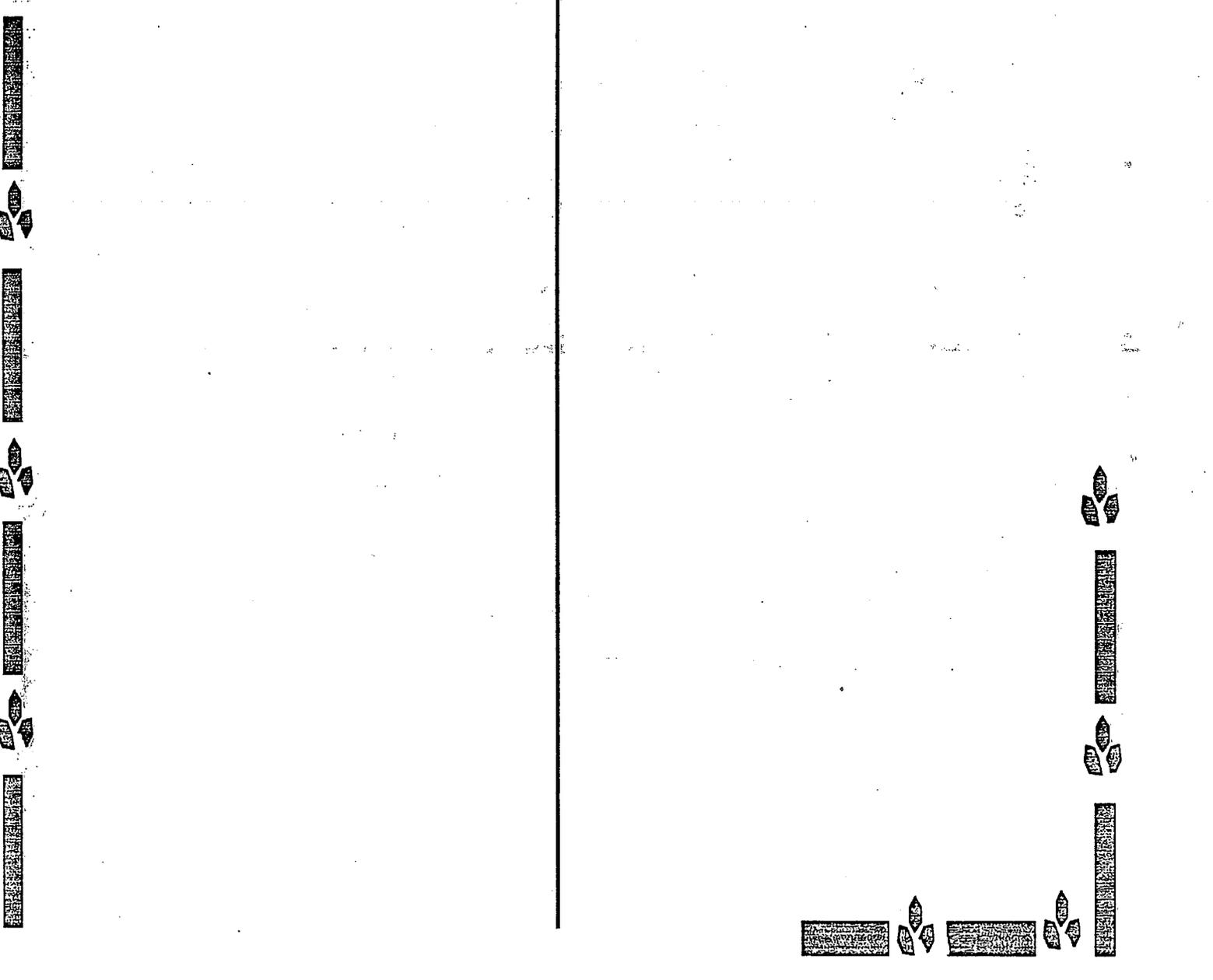
- Think of a song that depicts your culture  
...
- Create a metaphor .... If my school was  
an animal, it would be a \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
- Conduct a school history ...
- Interview all the school's story tellers ...

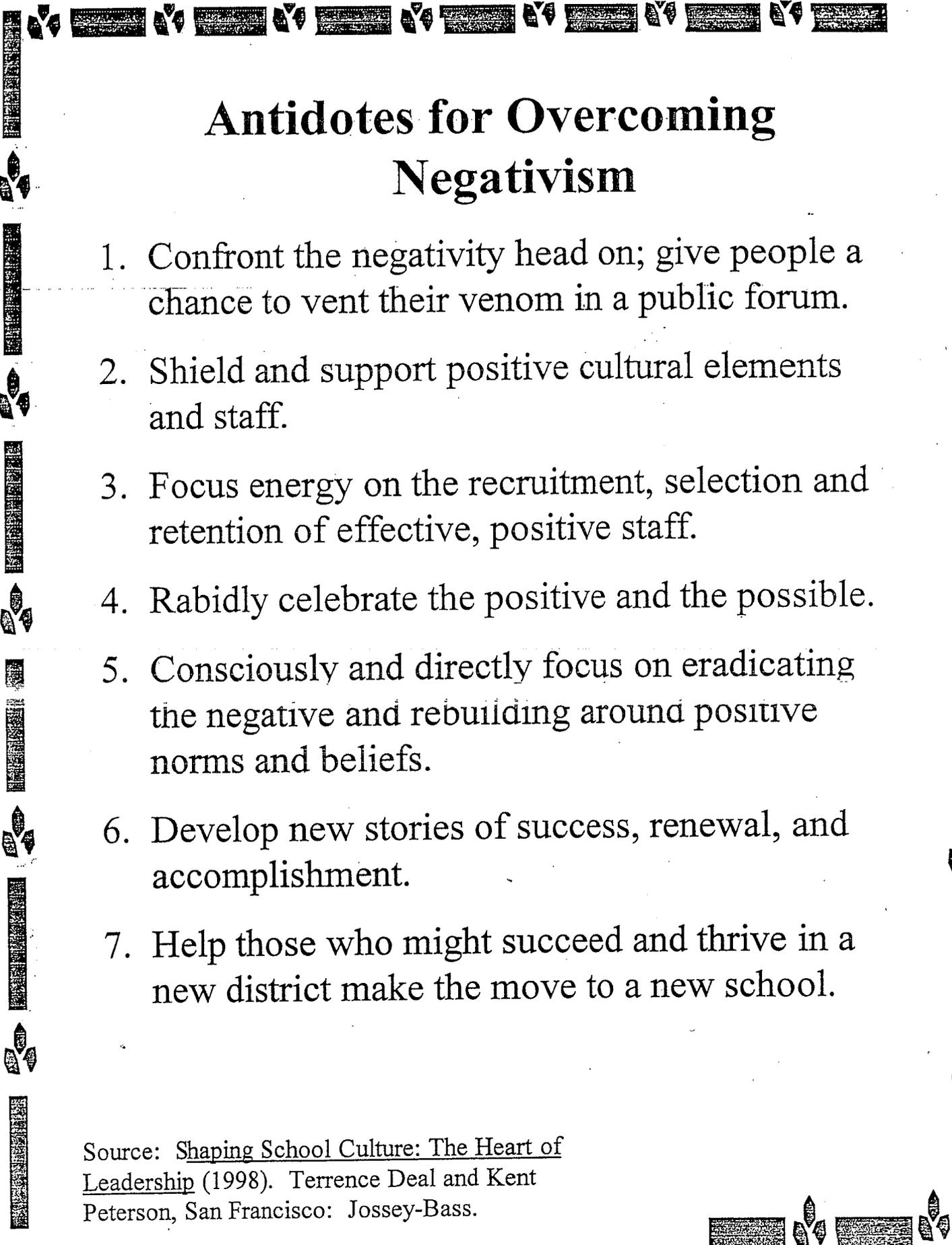


# Wallpaper Task

Reflecting on the culture in which you work, consider:

Positive Features of the Culture	Potentially Toxic Features of Culture





# Antidotes for Overcoming Negativism

1. Confront the negativity head on; give people a chance to vent their venom in a public forum.
2. Shield and support positive cultural elements and staff.
3. Focus energy on the recruitment, selection and retention of effective, positive staff.
4. Rabidly celebrate the positive and the possible.
5. Consciously and directly focus on eradicating the negative and rebuilding around positive norms and beliefs.
6. Develop new stories of success, renewal, and accomplishment.
7. Help those who might succeed and thrive in a new district make the move to a new school.

Source: Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership (1998). Terrence Deal and Kent Peterson, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



# Dysfunctional Norms

- put your school down
  - hate your work
  - hide new ideas and information from others
  - treat colleagues poorly
  - look busy and innovative when you're not
  - reward or recognize others on the basis of politics
  - laugh at and criticize those who are innovative
  - complain and criticize your school to the outside
  - complain constantly about everything
  - distrust colleagues
  - share information only when it benefits your own unit
  - do what will serve personal needs first and the needs of students later
- 

Source: Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership (1998). Terrence Deal and Kent Peterson, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

