

Culture Discussion Questions

1. The fish asks "What the hell is water?" What aspects of your school's culture are so embedded that people inside it can't see them? What would an outsider notice immediately?
2. Daniel Coyle identified three elements of great cultures: safety, shared vulnerability, and purpose. Which of these is strongest in your organization? Which needs the most work?
3. Bolman and Deal suggest leaders have a default "frame" they over-rely on (structural, human resource, political, or symbolic). What's your default frame? What problems might you be missing because you're not looking through other frames?
4. Anthony Muhammad categorizes teachers as Believers, Tweeners, Survivors, and Fundamentalists. Without naming names, what's the rough distribution in your building? How does this distribution shape what's possible?
5. "When we talk about school culture, whose culture are we actually talking about?" How might your school's culture privilege certain cultural norms while marginalizing others? What assumptions about "how things should be done" might need examination?