



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.111

HOW ORGANIZATIONS CREATE CULTURE, BRAND AND TRADITIONS

Unit. FFA: An Integral Component of Agricultural Education

Problem Area. What Are the Components of a Successful Organization?

Precepts. F5: Acquire new knowledge

National Standards. NSS-C.9-12.5 — Roles of the Citizen — What civic dispositions or traits of private and public character are important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy?



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Define and identify cultural values and symbols, using FFA as an example.
- 2 Define tradition.

3 Identify FFA traditions and the benefits of becoming involved in them.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Hellriegel, D., J.W. Slocum, and R.W. Woodman, “Organizational Behavior,” 9th edition, Cincinnati, Ohio, South-Western College Publishing, 2001.
“Official FFA Manual,” National FFA Organization, 2002.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Blank Sheets of Paper
- ✓ Official FFA Manual—one per student
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Different Colored Pipe Cleaners—one per student
- ✓ HS.111.Assess—one per student
- ✓ HS.111.TM.A
- ✓ HS.111.TM.B
- ✓ HS.111.TM.C
- ✓ HS.111.TM.D
- ✓ HS.111.AS.A—one per student



Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ **Cultural symbol**
- ▶ **Cultural value**
- ▶ **Tradition**



Interest Approach

Arrange tables or seats in a circle before class begins. Instruct students to select at least three things they carry with them almost all the time that would cause them to panic if they lost them. Encourage them to select specific items; e.g., if they choose their wallet or purse, what is inside their wallet or purse that would cause them to panic if lost. Have them arrange these items in front of them. Also, have them think of at least three things in their home they would never throw out.

Use a marker or pen to write them down on a piece of paper and then tape the paper to the front edge of their desk or table. When they are done, have the students pair up, review each other's items, and ask the following questions of one another:



What meaning do the things you selected have for you?
What values do they represent?



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What does that tell you about yourself?

Questions will be on HS.111.TM.A, or write them on a public writing surface.

When they are done, have students change pairs and repeat the questions. Then pose the following questions:



Who saw an interesting item of one of your classmates?

What was it?

What did it represent?

Why is it sometimes easier to talk about who we are when we have an item in front of us to help explain it?



The items in front of you—whether you wrote them down or whether they are physically in front of you—symbolize an important aspect of who you are. Just one small item can communicate volumes about who you are and what you value.



Today, we are going to explore how companies and organizations use symbols and traditions to communicate their unique culture.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Define and identify cultural values and symbols, using FFA as an example.

I. Define and identify cultural values and symbols



Think about everyday symbols that organizations or companies use to carry a specific meaning. Quietly consider what symbols you see every day. When I say the word, “Symbol,” grab one or two pipe cleaners and form this symbol. What questions do you have? Symbol.

Allow students to share their symbol and what it represents to their neighbors. Show HS.111.TM.B to help facilitate students’ note taking. Instruct students to capture definitions on HS.111.AS.A.

A. **Cultural symbol:** unique language, pictures, or other physical objects that have a specific meaning within an organization

Have students write the definition on their worksheets using Graphic Artist Moment.



You just re-created a cultural symbol with your pipe cleaner. A cultural symbol is unique language, pictures, or other physical objects that has a specific meaning within an organization.



Pick out a few examples of the symbols they created: golden arches of McDonalds; eagle of U.S. Postal Service; state flag; American flag; school mascot; Nike swoosh; wedding ring; letter jacket; class ring; cross; smiley-face



What do these symbols symbolize? What are the companies or organizations trying to communicate?

Bring out that companies, like us, use these images, pictures, language, and/or objects to better communicate what they are and what they do—otherwise known as cultural values. Show definition on HS.111.TM.B, instructing students to capture definition on HS.111.AS.A.

B. Cultural value: shared beliefs, notions, and mind-sets about what things are good and of worth within organizations

Instruct students to write the definition on their worksheets using Graphic Artist Moment.

Almanac and Encyclopedia Moment using FFA Manual. Have students search through FFA manual and jot down on HS.111.AS.A what they might consider to be cultural symbols. Halfway through, have them pair up with a neighbor and finish. Ask for examples and record on blackboard or flipchart. Examples include the emblem, colors, ceremonies, rituals, motto, creed, official dress, jacket



One of the most recognized cultural symbols of FFA is the official emblem. The emblem was developed as a symbol of vocational agriculture about two years before FFA was organized, and it evolved into the present day FFA emblem. It contains five symbols that represent the history, goals, and future of the organization.



Close your FFA manuals and look at the official emblem on the front cover. As we identify each symbol on the transparency, make your best guess as to the cultural value it represents. Record it on your worksheet. Turn your tables or chairs to a position that allows you to comfortably view the writing surface.

Students will record on worksheet HS.111.AS.A. Show symbols and values on HS.111.TM.C, having

students guess which value matches each symbol.

- C. Cross section of the ear of corn
 - 1. Symbolizes unity, because corn is grown in every state in the nation
- D. Rising sun
 - 1. Symbolizes progress and opportunity
- E. Plow
 - 1. Symbolizes labor and tillage of the soil, the historic foundation of our country's strength
- F. Eagle
 - 1. National symbol of our freedom and ability to explore new horizons for the future of agriculture
- G. Owl
 - 1. Symbolizes the knowledge and wisdom required to be successful in agriculture



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- H. National Blue and Corn Gold
 - 1. Symbolizes the unity of our organization

Turn to your neighbor and share two things you learned about the cultural symbols of FFA that you did not know before.

Objective 2. Define tradition.

II. Define tradition



You will have 30 seconds when I say the word, “Tradition” to move your desks, chairs, or tables to the position they are traditionally placed. As you move, think about traditions you have in your life that you really like. Questions? Tradition.



You are going to have an opportunity to advertise your favorite traditions. When I say, “Bill-

board,” grab two sheets of blank paper. Draw two of your favorite family traditions during the December holidays. What questions are there? Billboard.

As they are drawing their traditions, write the following questions on a public writing surface:



What do you like about your two holiday traditions?
Why do these traditions exist?
What is their purpose?

When they are nearing completion, have students pair up and share their favorite traditions, asking each other the questions you just wrote on the writing surface.

When they are done, have them tape their favorite traditions around the room to form a Gallery of Traditions. As they are taping the billboards, display the definition of tradition on HS.111.TM.B and have students record it on HS.111.AS.A.

A. Tradition

1. Actions and behaviors shaped by cultural values and experiences of organizational members



All around us are actions and behaviors shaped by cultural values and experiences of organizational members. Yes, in a sense, your family is an organization. What did we discover was the purpose of the holiday traditions?

Anticipated responses: fun; brings family closer together; forms relationships; stability; allows us to be a part of something larger than ourselves (Challenge the students to dig deeper if they answer “because that’s the way it has always been done”)



Great! These are all cultural values that have shaped your current family traditions. From what we have heard and seen in our Gallery of Traditions, we can observe that most of our cultural values are not that different, but the traditions formed from those values can change. Remember that a tradition is one way to reflect a cultural value, but not the only way.



Objective 3. Identify FFA traditions and the benefits of becoming involved in them.

III. Identify FFA traditions

Use an Almanac and Encyclopedia Moment and have students flip through their FFA manuals to find five FFA traditions they want to be a part of and write them on a blank sheet of paper.



Write your name at the top right-hand corner of your paper. Write five FFA traditions down the left-hand side of the page.

Examples include officer ceremonies; CDEs; state and national FFA convention; MFE; WLC; chapter office

A. Traditions

1. CDEs
2. State convention
3. National convention
4. Made For Excellence
5. Washington Leadership Conference
6. Chapter office
7. Ceremonies
8. Official dress
9. Degrees

When they are done writing their five traditions, explain that they are going to have an opportunity to share with their classmates, in a non-traditional manner, the traditions they chose and the benefits of being a part of an FFA tradition.

Here is how the process will work. Provide a koosh ball to a student, have the student tell one of their traditions, and then have the student toss the ball to any classmate except the one right next to them. Emphasize that they need to remember to whom they tossed the ball. Each student will repeat the process, tossing the ball to a different student until every student has had a chance to share one tradition.

The last student to share will toss it back to the student who began. Then, follow the directions below to have the students crumple the paper on which they have written their traditions and toss it to the student to whom they tossed the koosh ball.

The entire class will do this at the teacher's command, creating a tradition bomb. The student receiving the tradition bomb will unfold the paper, read the first tradition listed, and write a benefit to getting involved with that specific tradition on the same paper.

They can use their FFA manuals to research the tradition and read more about it if needed. Stress

that the tradition bombs must be tossed together, only after they hear you say the words. “Bombs Away.” Once you have said those words, the entire class will crumple their papers and toss their tradition bombs to the same student to whom they tossed the koosh ball. That student will unfold the paper, add a benefit to the tradition listed, and repeat the process until every tradition



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has a benefit listed by it; it will take at least five tosses. See HS.111.TM.D for a visual representation of what it might look like.



You are now going to have the opportunity to share with your classmates some benefits of being a part of FFA traditions. Begin the process when you hear the words “Bombs Away.” When you hear those words, write your name clearly on your paper. Crumple your paper into a ball, and toss it to the student to whom you threw the koosh ball. At the same time, you will be receiving a crumpled paper. Catch the paper, unfold it, and use your FFA manual to research the tradition. Read a little about the tradition, then write one benefit you perceive of being a part of that specific tradition. Write your name beside the benefit you write down.

An example will be appropriate at this point. Provide a visual example of what this experience will look like on HS.111.TM.D: If needed, demonstrate process by writing down a tradition, crumpling it up, tossing it to a student, having him or her unfold it, write a benefit beside it with his or her name, crumpling it up, and tossing it to the next student. It is important that they write their names beside the benefit in order to receive credit for their responses.

If the tradition is Career Development Event, then look it up, read about it, and write down the benefit of the opportunity to compete in competitive events.



When you are done writing the benefit beside the tradition, crumple the paper back up and wait until you hear the go words, then toss it on to the same student you tossed to previously. As you toss, you will also receive a bomb. Pick it up, unfold it, and write down a benefit to the second tradition listed. You will hand these papers in to me at the end of class for a grade.



What questions do you have? Bombs away!

After five tosses, instruct students to hand the papers back to their original owners.



Review/Summary

Have students turn to their neighbor and share a reason why cultural symbols are important to organizations, and why traditions are important to organizations.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students develop cultural symbols that have meaning for agriculture using pipe cleaners. Or have them develop classroom traditions that reflect their values and experiences in Agriculture class. This may include a slogan, a chant said at the start of class, a motion or chant said at the end of class or a reward at the end of the semester.



►FFA Activity:

Have students contact a staff member at the National FFA Center via phone or e-mail to request information about the cultural symbols located inside and outside the FFA Center in Indianapolis. Students can compile information and report their findings to the class or in a report.

►SAE Activity:

Have students identify cultural symbols and traditions of their SAE.



Evaluation

HS.111.Assess will measure Objectives 1 and 2. Collect the tradition bombs from students in order to evaluate performance on the third objective.

Answers to Assessment:

1. Plow
2. Progress and/or opportunity
3. National, corn
4. Owl
5. Eagle
6. Unity
7. T
8. T
9. F, traditions are behaviors shaped by cultural values...
10. F, it is one way to express FFA's cultural value of unity



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HS.111.Assess Name: _____

HOW ORGANIZATIONS CREATE CULTURE, BRAND AND TRADITIONS

► Fill in the Blank

Fill in the blank with the most appropriate cultural symbol or cultural value of FFA

1. The _____ in the FFA emblem symbolizes labor and tillage of the soil.
2. The rising sun within the FFA emblem symbolizes _____.
3. _____ blue and _____ gold are the official colors of FFA.
4. The _____ in the emblem represents the knowledge and wisdom.
5. The _____ symbolizes our freedom and ability to explore new horizons for the future of agriculture.
6. The cross-section of the ear of corn represents _____.

► **True/False**

For each sentence that is true, write T. For each false statement, write F. For each false statement, strike through the words that make the statement false and write in the word or words that make it true.

- _____ 7. A cultural value is a belief, notion, or mindset about what things are good and of value within organizations.
- _____ 8. A class ring is an example of a cultural symbol.
- _____ 9. Cultural symbols are behaviors shaped by cultural values and experiences of organizational members.
- _____ 10. A tradition like wearing an FFA jacket at official FFA events is the only way to express FFA's cultural value of unity.



► **Optional Evaluation/Extended Classroom Activity:**

Many well known companies have cultural symbols that have become commonplace in our society. Choose a company or organization, with teacher approval, and use the Web or other resources to research the company, applying the knowledge you have gained from this lesson to finish this questionnaire.

1. What is the name of the company? 1 pt.
2. What year was the company/organization founded? 1 pt.
3. Where are its headquarters located? 1 pt.
4. What are two cultural symbols of this company/organization? (Print pictures or graphics as needed and attach to this sheet) 2 pts.
5. What cultural values do these cultural symbols represent? 2 pts.
6. What are three observable traditions of the company/organization? 3 pts.



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HS.111.TM.A

- ◆ **What meaning do the things you selected have for you?**
- ◆ **What values do they represent?**
- ◆ **What does that tell you about yourself?**



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HS.111.TM.B

◆ ***Cultural symbol:*** unique language, pictures, or other physical objects that have a specific meaning within an organization

◆ ***Cultural value:*** shared beliefs, notions, and mindsets about what things are good and of value within an organization

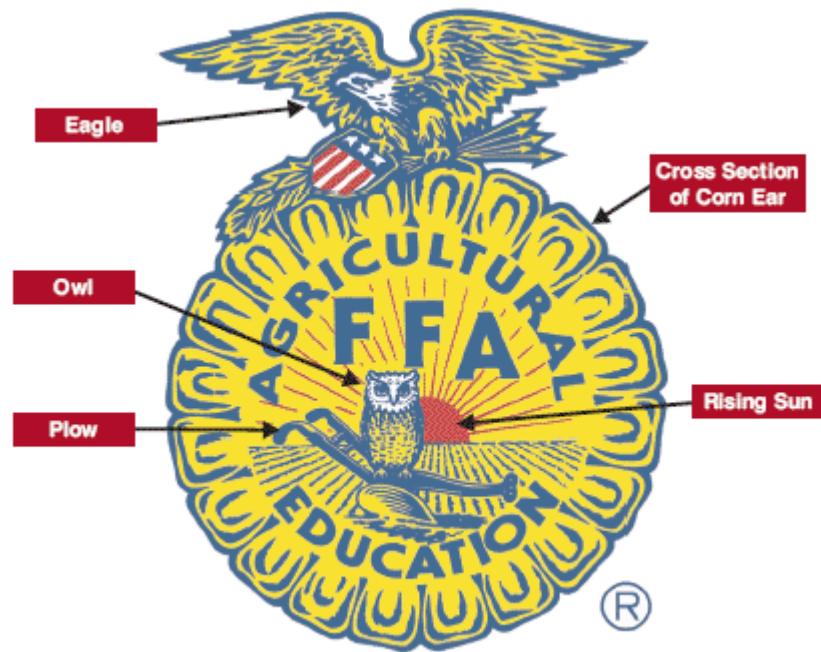
◆ ***Tradition:*** actions and behaviors shaped by cultural values and experiences of organizational members



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HS.111.TM.C

CULTURAL SYMBOLS

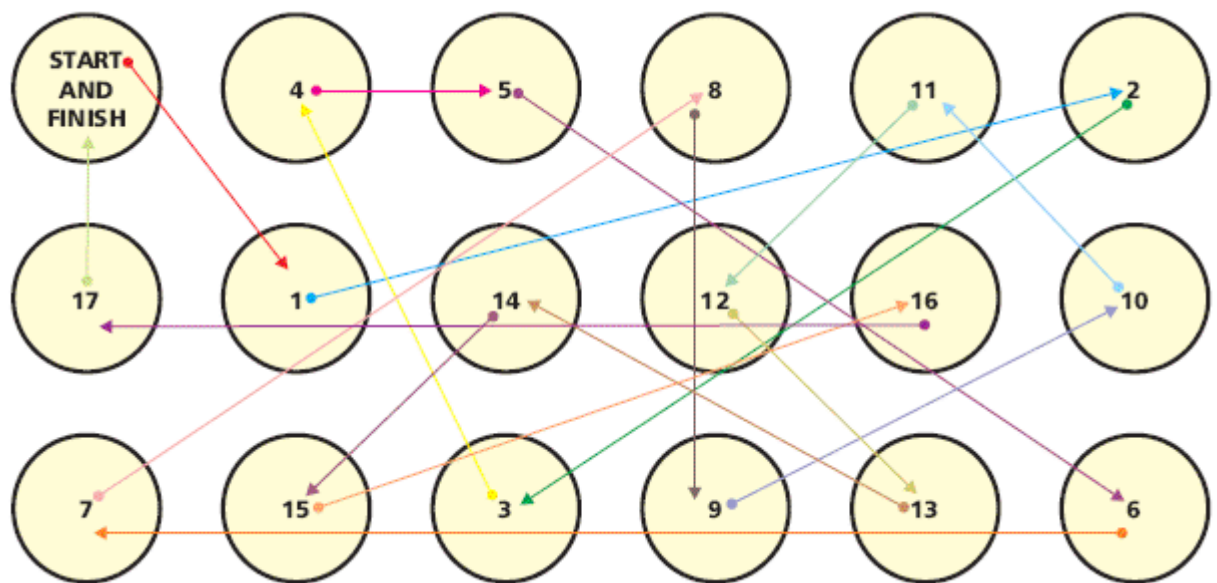


CULTURAL VALUES

- ◆ Symbolizes progress and opportunity
- ◆ Symbolizes unity, because corn is grown in every state in the nation
- ◆ Symbolizes labor and tillage of the soil, the historic foundation of our country's strength
 - ◆ National symbol of our freedom and ability to explore new horizons for the future of agriculture
 - ◆ Symbolizes the knowledge and wisdom required to be successful in agriculture
 - ◆ Symbolizes the unity of our organization by reflecting the background color of the U.S. flag and the color of corn

**HS.111.TM.D**

STEP 1: Throw ball around the room to determine the “bombing” pattern



STEP 2: Take the paper on which you have written five FFA traditions. Crumple it into a ball. When you hear the words “BOMBS AWAY,” throw it to the same person to whom you threw the koosh ball.

STEP 3: Simultaneously, there will be a crumpled paper coming your direction. Catch the paper, unfold it and look at the first tradition listed. Use your FFA

Manual to read about the tradition, then write a benefit to becoming involved in that tradition beside it. Initial your suggested benefit. Crumple the paper. When you hear the words BOMBS AWAY, throw it to the same person.

STEP 4: Repeat process until you have written five benefits of becoming involved in an FFA tradition on five different papers.

STEP 5: Walk the paper back to its original owner after you have completed the fifth tradition.



HS.111.AS.A Name: _____

A cultural symbol is ...

Examples:

A cultural value is ...

Examples:

FFA Cultural Symbol

FFA Cultural Value

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

A tradition is ...

Example:

