



Pushing the Limits of Tradition Suggested Reading and Discussion Questions

Adults pass along practices to children, and the human body physically benefits from the repetition of motions and routines—two very different types of traditions! Traditions can manifest in many ways—such as beliefs, events, and even repetitions of certain activities. Include in your discussions how our traditions can become springboards to exceeding our current limitations.

Eagle Blue: A Team, a Tribe, and a High School Basketball Season in Arctic Alaska

By Michael D’Orso, Nonfiction. Eight miles above the Arctic Circle, there's a village with no roads leading to it, but a high school basketball tradition that lights up winter's darkness and a team of native Alaskan boys who know "no quit." Author D'Orso (coauthor of *Like No Other Time* with Tom Daschle) follows the Fort Yukon Eagles through their 2005 season to the state championship, shifting between a mesmerizing narrative and the thoughts of the players, their coach and their fans. What emerges is more than a sports story; it's a striking portrait of a community consisting of a traditional culture bombarded with modernity, where alcoholism, domestic violence and school dropout rates run wild. . . . Among D'Orso's unusual characters are the woman who built a public library in her home, the families who adopt abandoned children, and, of course, the boys for whom "difficult" has an entirely different meaning (e.g., regularly trudging through "icy darkness" to board flights to Fairbanks for games). With a ghostlike presence, D'Orso lends a voice to a place that deserves to be known. - *Publishers Weekly*

- What traditions do sports bring to our community?
- Bob Boyer, the football coach at Beaverton High School, says, “There’s a role for every kid in our program.” What is a similar key message communicated by the coach of Eagles?
- Do you think that having traditions shape our actions on an everyday basis? In times of stress? Why would that be the case? How does that help us physically or socially?
- How do the Eagles’ players prepare physically and psychologically for their games? Have you found that practicing something physically makes you better? Why would you think your physical body responds to that?

