

















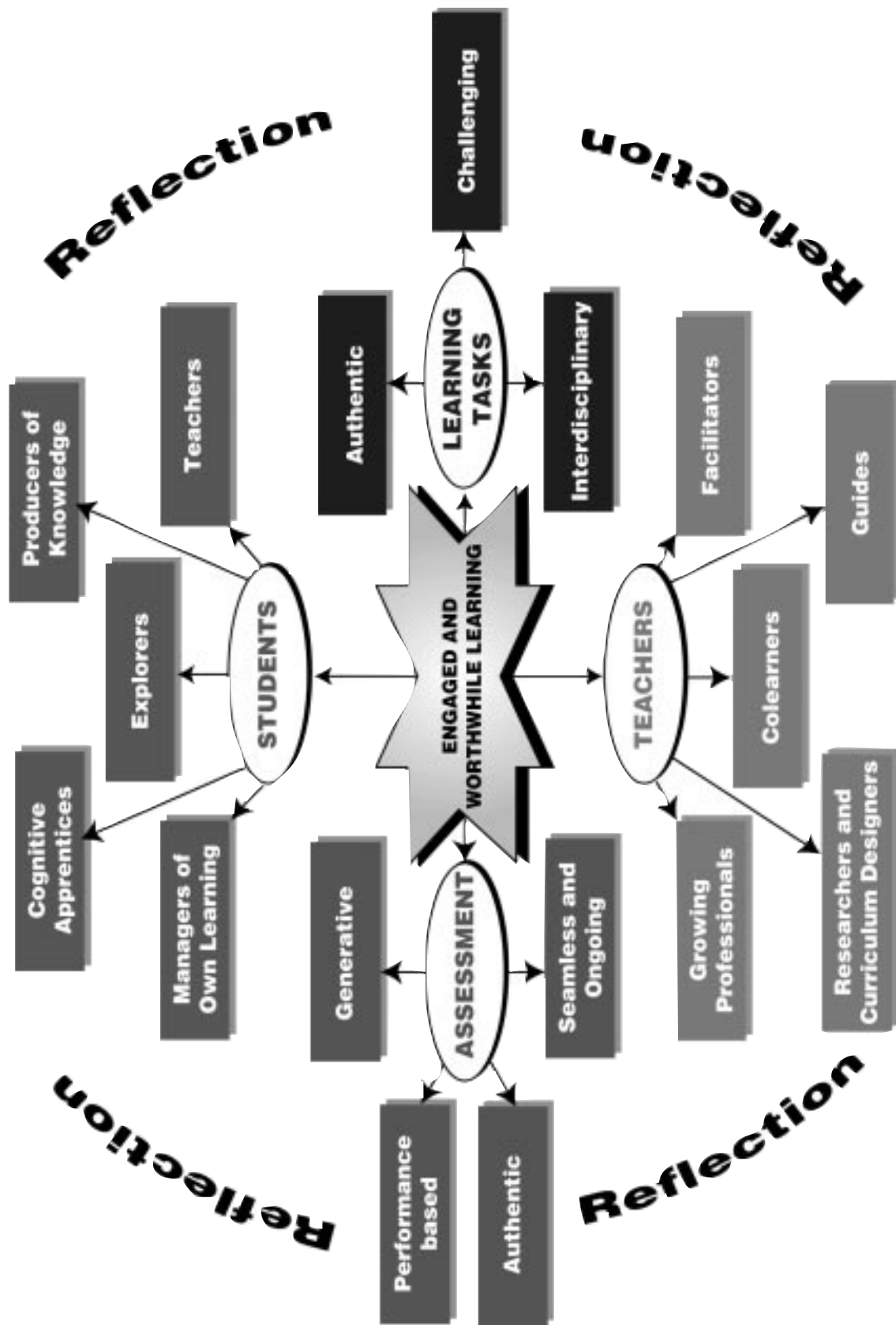








Illustration 1



## A Final Word

Engaged and worthwhile learning has been a reality in many classrooms and other learning contexts for centuries, long before the recent explosion of electronic technologies. However, computer technologies can offer some rich opportunities to enhance engaged learning and authentic assessment and to promote engaged student and teacher roles. Students who have access to these technologies can explore and find information from sources around the world. No longer is information solely controlled by or confined to the teacher or the textbook. Information gained through computer technologies also tends to be more current. In fact, it changes rapidly as new discoveries are made or as important events take place—discoveries and events that may not find their way into student textbooks for several years. These technologies also provide students with opportunities to learn at any time and in any place.

With technology, students cannot only participate in the world of knowledge via the Internet, listservs, CD-ROMs, and other sources, but they also can participate much more in the world of knowledge *making* than ever before. They can converse with experts in many fields, seek information from other students or adults from around the world, and in turn offer their own knowledge and products to the world. While it has always been important for students to learn how to select, reflect upon, manipulate, organize, and evaluate information, the need is even greater now. Without these skills, the bombardment of information would be confusing, misleading, and overwhelming.

At the very least, with technology so prevalent in all aspects of our lives, especially in our jobs, students need all the opportunities they can get for becoming facile with this remarkable tool. Every day new uses of technology appear; what today seems routine, would have caused disbelief only a few years ago. Unfortunately, schools seem behind in their adoption of technology as a tool. Clearly, we are failing our students if we do not use it. But while everyday uses are important for students to understand, and while they need to become adept at using technology to succeed in their future careers, students' greatest opportunity is now, in school, where they can pursue, along with their teachers, the highest educational standards possible.