

Learning Gardens and Sustainability Education

Bringing Life to Schools and Schools to Life

Dilafroz Williams and Jonathan Brown

Offering a fresh approach to bringing life to schools and schools to life, this book goes beyond touting the benefits of learning gardens to survey them as a whole-systems design solution with potential to address myriad interrelated social, ecological, and educational issues.

The authors creatively place soil at the center of the discourse on sustainability education and learning gardens design and pedagogy. Seven attributes from the metaphor of living soil are presented as a guide: Cultivating a sense of place; Fostering curiosity and wonder; Discovering rhythm and scale; Valuing biocultural diversity; Embracing practical experience; Nurturing interconnectedness; Awakening the senses.

The living soil of learning gardens forms the basis of a new metaphoric language serving to contest dominant efficiency and accountability metaphors presently influencing educational discourse. Examples from urban schools and from students, teachers, and school leaders provide practical understanding of how bringing life to schools can indeed bring schools to life.

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