



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2023 Volume IV: Energy and Environmental History of New Haven and the American City

Community Gardens: An Urbanite’s Connection to Nature, Community, and Self

Guide for Curriculum Unit 23.04.03, published September 2023
by Nancy Bonilla

This unit seeks to connect students to nature and their neighborhood community. Through reading Paul Fleischman’s book, *Seedfolks*, and by engaging students in garden-related activities, the unit attempts to help students realize that the nature that surrounds them is not just green space, such as parks, but instead plants and soil that they can tend that may change the quality of life for others. People develop a sense of belonging when they see others invested in a little piece of the neighborhood. Connecting students to the community gardening experience means more than growing vegetables. It entails collaborative skills, planning, effective communication, decision making and compromise. These skills help build future leaders through meaningful experience. Students gain the satisfaction of knowing that they are creating and nurturing life. By the end of the unit, I hope that participating students will see that they can be active in their community. Gardening will serve as a catalyst for more community service and activism that is meaningful to them as “citizens of the world.”

(Developed for ELA, grade 8; recommended for Social Studies, grades 6-8)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>