

# PLACE-BASED EDUCATION : CONNECTING CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES PDF, EPUB, EBOOK



David Sobel | 156 pages | 19 Jan 2017 | Orion Magazine | 9781935713050 | English | MA, United States

## **Labor and Economic Opportunity - Place-Based Education**

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## **Place-based education : : connecting classrooms & communities**

State-mandated curriculum and high-stakes tests put everyone on the same page on the same day and discourage an attention to significant nearby learning opportunities. Educational biodiversity falls prey to the bulldozers of standardization. Schools hover like alien spacecraft, luring children away from their home communities. More and more, we drive a wedge between our children and the tangible beauty of the real world. During his boyhood in the late s, he rambled the hills around his home in Tiburon, California, just across the bridge from San Francisco.

I spent every after-school moment and every weekend or summer day, outside until it got dark. Located near wetlands, grasslands, remnant redwood forests, and new development, the school was well situated for field trips and for social and natural science learning. Through silence about the earth and the native people of Tiburon, Bel-Aire School, perched on the slopes of a steep golden-grassed hill, taught plenty. We actively learned to not-think about the earth, about that place where we were. We could have been anywhere—or nowhere.

Teachers made no effort to incorporate our vast, if immature, knowledge of the land into the curriculum. Whether it was in the study of history, writing, science, arithmetic, reading or art, school erected a Berlin Wall between academics and the rest of our lives. We became inured to spending days in manufactured space, accustomed to watching more earth bulldozed and covered with yet more manufactured spaces. It was the same everywhere. In my mid-twenties, I got interested in plant taxonomy. As a high school biology student, my unquestioned misconception was that this was a model of a rain forest flower, or at least a far-away flower. It never occurred to me that real flowers, with real flower parts, existed on the school playground.

I was on the ball, but most of our teachers had no sense that it was important to connect up the classroom world with the nearby outside world. Place Based Education is the antidote to the not-thinking about the Earth common in many schools. Which leads us into a definition for place-based education: Place Based Education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum. Community vitality and environmental quality are improved through the active engagement of local citizens, community organizations, and environmental resources in the life of the school.

As a truly grassroots movement, its practitioners draw strength from the image of those hearty dandelions and other herbaceous plants that force their way up through asphalt. As William James described,. Drops of waters and rootlets unite! Give me your students yearning to be free! Bring education back into the neighborhood. Connect students with adult mentors, conservation commissions, and local businesses.

Get teachers and students into the community, into the woods and on the streets—closer to beauty and true grit. Get the town engineer, the mayor, and the environmental educators onto the schoolyard and inside the four walls of the school. This is where we belong. About the Author David Sobel has written extensively on the topic of children and hands-on education and play in nature. His numerous books—from Wild Play: Parenting Adventures in the Great Outdoors to Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities and to Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Educators , plus other works focusing on different age levels—offer parents and teachers insights into the value, appeal, and techniques of outdoor experiences for personal, physical, and social growth. Sobel is a regular contributor to Community Works Journal.

CWI is a not for profit educational organization dedicated to engaging students and teachers with their local communities through integrated learning projects. We work with educators and schools across the U. We strongly encourage re-publication, but we do ask that you properly credit, and then share your re-publication link with us directly. Skip to content. Which leads us into a definition for place-based education: Place Based Education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum.

In his introduction to the first book specifically focused on the pedagogy, [ Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities ISBN , David Sobel describes the context within which place-based education was developed,. In an increasingly globalized world, there are often pressures for communities and regions to subordinate themselves to the dominant economic models and to devalue their local cultural identity, traditions and history in preference to a flashily marketed homogeneity.

A process of disintegration occurs as basic connections to the land fray and communities become less resilient and less able to deal with the dislocations that globalization and ecological deterioration bring about. A community's health—human and more-than-human—suffers. The path to

a sustainable existence must start with a fundamental reimagining of the ethical, economic, political and spiritual foundations upon which society is based, and that this process needs to occur within the context of a deep local knowledge of place.

The solutions to many of our ecological problems lie in an approach that celebrates, empowers and nurtures the cultural, artistic, historical and spiritual resources of each local community and region, and champions their ability to bring those resources to bear on the healing of nature and community. Schools and other educational institutions can and should play a central role in this process, but for the most part they do not.

Indeed, they have often contributed to the problem by educating young people to be, in David Orr's words, 'mobile, rootless and autistic toward their places. Place-based education might be characterized as the pedagogy of community, the reintegration of the individual into her homeground and the restoration of the essential links between a person and her place. Place-based education challenges the meaning of education by asking seemingly simple questions: Where am I? What is the nature of this place?

What sustains this community? It often employs a process of re-storying, whereby students are asked to respond creatively to stories of their homeground so that, in time, they are able to position themselves, imaginatively and actually, within the continuum of nature and culture in that place. They become a part of the community, rather than a passive observer of it. The pedagogies in these schools are rooted around a deep connection to place, specifically the old-growth forest and beach that surround the school.

Each morning, rain or shine, the kindergarten students are led out into the forest by two instructors. Their task is to explore, to observe, and to connect, with the environment around them. It is hoped that the students will develop a lifelong connection to nature, which will lead them in turn to become responsible and passionate stewards of the land. A strong focus on the history of Indigenous people on the land is also incorporated into the program. These nature kindergartens are modelled on the Scandinavian nature schools. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. This article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. Education Week.

## **Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms & Communities by David Sobel**

In Berkeley, California, a similar grassroots school-and-community effort has been transformed into a bioregional initiative. From one vegetable garden at the Martin Luther King Middle School came the idea to have a garden on every schoolyard in Berkeley, which spread to the idea of a garden on every schoolyard in California. Instead of freeze-dried burritos trucked in from the Midwest, how about burritos with organic beans and cheese grown and produced by area farmers who are threatened by suburban sprawl? These ideas have led to the creation of the Food Systems Project, where the aim is to have all the food in the Berkeley school lunch program be organic and locally grown within the next decade. Project director Janet Brown comments,. At the same time the program connects the loss of farmland and farming as a way of life and the social problems facing school communities. The mosquito-breeding ponds in your backyard and the downtown places where you shop are similarly appropriate contexts for learning.

Get back. Get back to where you once belonged. The Presidential Range has a fascinating alpine zone, classic glacial cirques, and some of the most awe-inspiring mountain terrain in the country. Yet most of the students have never hiked the mountains and the curriculum ignores the great local teaching resources. Instead, geography is taught using pretty pictures of faraway places. Generic textbooks designed for the big markets of California and Texas provide the same homogenized, unnutritious diet as all those fast-food places on the strip. The landscape of schooling looks like sprawl America. State-mandated curriculum and high-stakes tests put everyone on the same page on the same day and discourage an attention to significant nearby learning opportunities. Educational biodiversity falls prey to the bulldozers of standardization.

Schools hover like alien spacecraft, luring children away from their home communities. More and more, we drive a wedge between our children and the tangible beauty of the real world. During his boyhood in the late s, he rambled the hills around his home in Tiburon, California, just across the bridge from San Francisco. I spent every after-school moment and every weekend or summer day, outside until it got dark. Located near wetlands, grasslands, remnant redwood forests, and new development, the school was well situated for field trips and for social and natural science learning. Through silence about the earth and the native people of Tiburon, Bel-Aire School, perched on the slopes of a steep golden-grassed hill, taught plenty. We actively learned to not-think about the earth, about that place where we were. We could have been anywhere—or nowhere. Teachers made no effort to incorporate our vast, if immature, knowledge of the land into the curriculum. Whether it was in the study of history, writing, science, arithmetic, reading or art, school erected a Berlin Wall between academics and the rest of our lives.

Share This Paper. Background Citations. Methods Citations. Results Citations. Citation Type. Has PDF. Publication Type. More Filters. Roger Coss is a K educator and a doctoral student in curriculum and instruction at the Benerd School of Education at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, California. View 1 excerpt, cites background. Research Feed. Damiano, K. An environmental education, science based, curriculum on raptors, to help bring a focus and awareness to the raptors found in Minnesota The area of focus addressed in this ... Expand.

View 3 excerpts, cites background. Pedagogies of sustainability education. International Professional Development: Lessons Learned. Back to this book I also love the combination of I love this book. I also love the combination of connecting kids to the nature and the people of their community. So many times environmental activism seems in conflict with economic needs of people who live in the environment, but I think educating with both in mind would make it easier to create short-term win-win situations after all those are the only ones that will allow long-term survival, because people are part of nature. So we need this kind of book and this kind of education now! Mar 23, Jason Bies rated it really liked it. This is an excellent book. It provides a nice overview of what place-based education is and how it works to better the lives of children and enrich the community and local environment.

I strongly recommend the first half to anybody interested in fostering ecological literacy and community engagement in children. The second half gets much more into the nuts and bolts of successfully implementing place based programming. Therefore, it reads a bit slower and is not geared towards everyone. There ar This is an excellent book. There are some nice points, though, like how programs needed to move away from the label

"environmental education" because it raised the hackles of people in the community. Feb 17, Sarah rated it really liked it. Apr 16, Viki Bridge rated it really liked it. Dec 18, Marshall Baker rated it really liked it. Great read! I want to be clear, first of all, that I agree with the idea behind this book.

All too often do we teach students to perform their tasks in a bubble, ignoring the rich communities, natural and built, that surround us. Place-based education is something that is sorely lacking in today's environment of standardized testing and mandated curriculum, and is exactly the kind of thing that students need in order to feel connected to what they are learning. That said, I hated this book. Sobel discusses r I want to be clear, first of all, that I agree with the idea behind this book.

Sobel discusses research conducted on place-based and environmental education in a way that is at best incomplete, and, at least to this research-minded reader, feels somewhat misleading. If Sobel wanted to make claims about the success of these new educational programs, and provide statistics related to those claims, he needed to at least need to give the reader enough information about the studies to show the fidelity of the data. The book's organization is haphazard and desperately lacking the firm hand of an editor. Some of the language sounds more like propaganda than the serious discussion of a schooling philosophy on page 5: "Schools hover like alien spacecraft, luring children away from their home communities.

Sobel had a beautiful opportunity here to share the philosophy of place-based education, and unfortunately, between the poor discussion of the research and the dramatic language, I fear that this book will cause the philosophy to lose credibility with some readers. Dec 31, Rae rated it it was ok. Jun 02, John rated it liked it. This isn't a book that you sit down and read, exactly, it's more of a manual for people who are in a position to connect classrooms and communities and nature, and want some tips and case studies that might help them to accomplish this.

I really just scanned it for ideas that might relate to my job this summer, connecting a historic house museum and cultural landscape with the local community and hopefully some local schools. There are some good examples of making these sorts of connections wo This isn't a book that you sit down and read, exactly, it's more of a manual for people who are in a position to connect classrooms and communities and nature, and want some tips and case studies that might help them to accomplish this. There are some good examples of making these sorts of connections work, some warnings of pitfalls, etc. Useful resource. May 16, Jen rated it it was amazing. As a full time teacher who needed a quick introduction into the world of place based education, this little book gave me the best introduction I could have asked for.

It provided theory and showed the theory in practice. I looked up many of the resources Sobel mentioned, which gave me further and deeper reading. I also googled the schools and programs he mentioned to see more place based education in action. Great little read, but only if you are already interested in the topic and have space fo As a full time teacher who needed a quick introduction into the world of place based education, this little book gave me the best introduction I could have asked for. Great little read, but only if you are already interested in the topic and have space for this type of education in your learning space.

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