

## Description: Original Book Idea and Title Information Sheet

The following is based on a real person, but is a completely fictitious example.

### Book Description

Stephen Ritz is an educator for K-12 in the South Bronx, a notoriously rough neighbourhood with a high poverty rate. He is determined to change the outcome for these at-risk youths himself by providing them with the ability to provide for themselves and their families while learning about the importance of good quality foods as well as education. In the words of Stephen Ritz himself, he is “harvesting hope and cultivating minds” through his Green Room initiative. By educating children on how to grow their own food, he is providing an environment for them to thrive in.

Following on the success of his TEDTalk in Manhattan, he is bringing these concepts to you with detailed step-by-step instructions on how to do it in your own home, school, or community. *Cultivated: Growing Healthy Kids* is an overview of how to tie basic educational requirements like math, geography, and literacy in with a hands-on, practical approach of gardening. By providing a real-world example of when these principles apply as well as enabling students to watch the progress of their efforts, Mr. Ritz is maintaining their interest and increasing their ability to be productive adults. Not only does he provide a unique and engaging educational experience, he also provides families with fresh produce that has been missing from their tables.

Class attendance is the highest it has ever been (it went from 40% to 93% when he began this project) and youth that would have been recycled into the black hole of South Bronx living are now getting jobs, bringing food home to their nutrient-starved families, and going to college. There has been a lot of hype about his work in the United States and abroad because the overall aim of the Green Room applies to all countries where food is purchased at large shopping centres, sometimes far from home, if it is available at all.

Educators, parents, and those vested in the future of food consumption will be interested in this book. Mr. Ritz’s approach to the material is novel and easily understood by all educational backgrounds. *Cultivated* combines sustainability with education in realistic way that doesn’t detract from core programming. The final message of the book is that anyone can grow their own food; anyone can become self-sustaining; anyone can learn these basic life skills. This book is the best and easiest way to show them how. The paperback will be easily accessible with nicely spaced pages, room for notes (particularly around recipes, diagrams, and gardening observations), with clear and full-colour illustrations and pictures, on its 270 8.5x8.5 pages.

### Title Information Sheet

Title:

Cultivated

Subtitle:

Growing Healthy Kids

Author:

Stephen Ritz

Illustrator:  
Company-based or freelance

Ship Date:  
April 2016

Pub Date:  
May 2016

Season:  
Summer and Fall

ISBN: 978-x-xxxxxxx-x-x

Price:  
\$24.95 CAD

Pages:  
270

Trim Size:  
8.5x8.5

Format:  
Paperback (non-consumable)

Illustrations:  
Pictures and illustrations of plants (and genus), gardening-related tools and instructions, recipes, and kids happily doing schoolwork.

Category:  
Community and Culture. Indigo could have it under Gardening, Community & Culture, Well-being/Self-help, Children's section, or Cooking.

Target Audience:  
Educators, parents, and those interested in education as well as the future of our children (and, to another extent, our economy and culture due to the impact growing our own food can have on the population).

Sales Handle:  
Growing responsible adults, one seed at a time.

Key Sales Points:

- Hot topic (sustainability, education, troubled youth, economics)
- Proven success record of author (from 40% to 93% attendance in his class; awards; accolades and endorsements)

- Appealing topic (gardening and education; can learn about how to create sustainable gardens at home)
- Promotes the success of the underdog: few people thought much of these children or communities and Mr. Ritz is showing that, given the right tools or, in this case, food, these communities can excel.

Synopsis:

Stephen Ritz is bringing his successful methods for engaging at-risk children in the classroom to educators and parents alike. His novel educational techniques are increasing the standard of living in the South Bronx and are building strong life skills in troubled youth, not to mention helping those youth provide healthy food for their families.

Author Bio:

Stephen Ritz is an educator, innovator, social entrepreneur and keynote speaker. He recently received international notice and acclaim from not only a visit from Pope Francis, but also as a TEDTalk speaker in Manhattan. He has received many awards including the 2014 Greenius Award and 2014 Green Difference award, and is a 2015 Top Ten Finalist for the \$1m Global Teacher Prize. He has his eyes on the future and is set on expanding the horizons of children everywhere through green initiatives like his Green Room.

Author's Previous Work:

Debut author. Active blog at Huffington Post as well as his TEDTalk Manhattan. A lot of information and videos on his website.

Comparative Titles:

"The 100 Mile Diet: A Year of Local Eating" by Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon. Discusses benefits and feasibility of eating locally grown food. 21 CAD, well-received in Canadian market (Macleans top 10), written by Canadians, published March 2007.

"Ripe for Change: Garden-Based Learning in Schools" by Jane S. Hirschi. Overview of garden-based learning in public K-8 education. 33 USD, well-received in educational market, written by Americans, published April 2015.

Blurb:

"A life-long Bronx resident and educator turned his classroom into a farm, transforming the lives of his students and their community."

-- Posted by Josh Liebman and Ryan Tutton at OftGround via Upworthy on Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Excerpt from "Hero in the Classroom: Stephen Ritz" an article by Katrina Fried in *American Teacher*, Fall 2013:

"My kids can get a handgun quicker than they can get an organic tomato. That said, when they get involved with nature and they learn to nurture, they feel good about themselves. I always tell kids that if they bring their body, their brain will follow. And, if they show up, they grow up." -Stephen Ritz

Rights Available:

World

Special Markets:

Schools (fairs and universities/colleges); gardening, hardware, and co-op stores; farmer's markets.

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