**“Cultivating Failure” Reading Questions**

**Warning**: This essay is written for a well-educated, sophisticated audience, so have your dictionary (or Google search engine) handy when you read it and give yourself plenty of time.

1. Although Flanagan claims that Alice Walters is not the real culprit behind the misguided trend toward school gardens, she spends a fair amount of space criticizing Waters personally. Could some of this be considered an example of the ***ad hominem* fallacy**? Find specific passages to defend your answer. Consider **tone** as well as content.
2. **Ethos:** Flanagan discusses her stake in the matter of school gardens rather late in her argument. What does she say about that, and where? Why do you think she delays this? What might she have brought in earlier? Why might she decide to not mention that she was born and raised in Berkeley?
3. Part of any ethos appeal also involves showing you have done your research and that you can draw reasonable conclusions from the evidence—in other words, that you can make good **logos** appeals. Where does Flanagan do this? Is it persuasive? Why or why not?
4. The **pathos** appeals in this essay focus primarily on the values of the audience. Consider especially how Flanagan deals with attitudes about race and class, and how this relates to the American Dream, beliefs about education, different attitudes about growing food (“gentlemen farmers” versus “sharecroppers,” or she might have said “campesinos”).
5. In **evaluating** the Edible Schoolyard project in particular and the school garden movement in general, Flanagan focuses on pragmatic concerns: will this experience and curriculum give students the skills/knowledge they need. What does she think they need? Why does she object to this kind of teaching? (You will also find her ***kairos*** here, why she felt compelled to tackle this issue.)
6. Where is the clearest statement of her **thesis**? If you could boil down her supporting arguments into **premises**, what would they be? (If it helps to think of them as “because clauses,” that’s fine, too.)
7. Flanagan is discussing the school system that most of you have grown up in. Do you think she is misrepresenting it when she calls it “fundamentally broken and rudderless”? Discuss.