



**Right Question  
Institute**

**Southeast Regional Seminar on  
Best Practices in the Question Formulation Technique**



**August 2, 2018  
Chesterfield County Career Technical Center  
13900 Hull Street Road  
Midlothian, VA 23112**

We are excited that you are here with us in Midlothian, VA for the Southeast Regional Seminar on Best Practices in the Question Formulation Technique. We are looking forward to working and learning with you, and we are excited for the new discoveries this seminar will yield.

Sincerely,

Dan Rothstein, Andrew Minigan, and the RQI Team

## **Seminar Agenda**

<b>8:30 - 9:00 am</b>	<b>Registration</b>
<b>9:00 - 9:10 am</b>	<b>Welcome and Community Building</b> Lynne Bland, Curriculum Specialist, Chesterfield County Public Schools
<b>9:10 - 10:40 am</b>	<b>Collaborative Learning with the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) &amp; Classroom Examples</b> Dan Rothstein, Co-Director, Right Question Institute Andrew Minigan, Director of Strategy, Right Question Institute
<b>10:40 - 10:50 am</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>10:50 - 12:00 pm</b>	<b>The Art and Science of the QFT: A Deep Dive into Planning and Designing the QFT</b>
<b>12:00 - 12:30 pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>12:45 - 1:45 pm</b>	<b>Workshop Session #1</b>
<b>1:45 - 2:00 pm</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>2:00 - 3:00 pm</b>	<b>Workshop Session #2</b>
<b>3:00 - 3:30 pm</b>	<b>Optional: Informal Conversation and Reflection with RQI</b>

# Workshop Descriptions

## **Build Math Skills & Excitement with the QFT // Room: D108, Session: 1**

Presenter: Jaime Brookman, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Discover how the QFT and student questions can be used to jumpstart meaningful math instruction. Learn how one elementary math instructor used the QFT to build a culture of questioning in her classroom and reinvigorate her math instruction. In small groups, work to plan how you can use the QFT to drive your math content and get students deeply invested in mathematical investigation."

## **Create an Inquiry Mindset Culture Wave in Your School: Using QFT in Collaboration with Your School Librarians // Room: D107, Session: 1**

Presenter: Lori Donovan, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Learn how key lessons from the school library on creating an inquiry mindset through the use of authentic research to uncover student passions and data analysis to gauge student growth can also benefit your classroom. Discover how to create authentic research assignments using the QFT and the new AASL National Library Standards integrated with your content standards. Takeaways of this session will include how inquiry-based learning can maximize student achievement of curricular goals and how to create an inquiry mindset culture within your classroom and school library. This session is suitable for all... not just librarians!

## **Facilitate Change with the Question Formulation Technique // Room: D108, Session: 2**

Presenter: Lynne Bland, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Albert Einstein once said, "*The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.*" Anyone who has ever attempted to make changes in their world on any scale with a group of people has most likely encountered some level of resistance. One way to minimize opposition is to empower those affected by change to ask questions! This session will appeal to risk takers ready for an innovative, initial approach to implementing change by providing a practical way to use the Question Formulation Technique.

## **Inquiry Beyond the Question // Room: D107, Session: 2**

Presenter: Peyton Anderson, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Inquiry is defined as asking for information. The QFT is the beginning of inquiry. Finding how asking questions can lead to finding information is essential. We will explore and create approaches to Project Based Learning projects/units, and more importantly, instructional practices that have the QFT at the heart of inquiry and exploration. We will also explore and create powerful conditions for the QFT to enable professional learning, and leading through inquiry as a catalyst for change. Together we will find "Inquiry beyond the question."

## **It's Elementary! Using the QFT With Primary Students // Room: D109, Session: 1**

Presenter: Laurie Surles, Chesterfield County Public Schools

Can younger students learn to use the Question Formulation Technique? Yes, they can! Learn how to scaffold the use of the QFT with younger students while helping them to notice details in primary and secondary source images. You will be amazed at the details they see and the questions they ask!

## **Lessons from the Field: The QFT with Special Student Populations: // Room: D109, Session: 2**

Presenter: Andrew Minigan, Right Question Institute

Join us in learning about how educators from around the country have modified and scaffolded the QFT for English Language Learners (ELLs), students with learning disabilities, and early elementary learners. In this session, you will work in small groups to explore available resources, discuss, and plan what may work best for your students. This session will be useful for classroom teachers, parents, tutors, and learning specialists.

## Presenters

**Peyton Anderson** is a PBL Training Specialist and Scrum Coach and Agilist at Chesterfield County Public Schools. He believes in the deliberate turbulence through constant inspection of what we do to serve others. Peyton is also an active practitioner of the QFT in leading the charge of PBL through continual training and support of teachers and his school division. He believes we must ask more questions to truly walk the path to inquiry in all that we do to make this world a better place. Follow him on Twitter @PBL\_Peyton or on his website <https://sites.google.com/view/peytonanderson/>



**Lynne Bland** is currently the secondary social studies curriculum specialist in Chesterfield County Public Schools, VA. Lynne taught middle school social studies for 16 years, worked in community mental health for two years, and has been a central office social studies curriculum and instruction leader for ten years. Lynne has conducted multiple QFT workshops with teachers and staff in her school district and at conferences such as: *Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; American Association of School Librarians National Conference and Exhibition; Virginia Council for Social Studies; Coalition for Essential Schools Conference; Curiosity, Learning, and Democracy: 2017 International Conference on Best Practices in the QFT; and Learning Forward 2016 Preconference – Teaching Students to Ask Their Own Questions*. Lynne also introduces pre-service teachers to the QFT in her methods course at the University of Richmond where she serves periodically as an adjunct instructor. She is currently writing her dissertation on the topic of performance assessments as she completes her Doctorate of Education in Curriculum Leadership at the College of William and Mary.



**Jaime Brookman** has taught mathematics at both the elementary and middle school levels. She holds a M.A.T. in Elementary Education and has just completed an M.S. in Education with a concentration in Math Specialist. As part of her M.S. in Education research project, she studied the impact of using the Question Formulation Technique on open-ended problem solving. She will begin a Ph.D. program starting this fall in Integrative STEM Education. Currently, she is working a K-5 STEM Teacher and is looking forward to incorporating the QFT into the STEM classroom.





**Lori Donovan** is a National Board Certified Librarian and is the K-12 Library Services Specialist for Chesterfield County Public Schools, VA. She holds a master's degree in education with a specialty in school library media programs and a Graduate Professional Endorsement in Educational Leadership from Longwood University. Lori has used the QFT with her librarians as part of their professional development and has presented on the QFT at the Virginia Association of School Librarians' fall and regional conferences. Lori and Lynne Bland presented at a concurrent session titled, "Using Student Generated Questions to Shift Inquiry Practices Beyond the Horizon," at the American Association of School Librarians National Conference November 2017 in Phoenix, AZ.



**Andrew P. Minigan** is the Right Question Institute's (RQI) Director of Strategy for the Education Program. As a part of Andrew's work with RQI, he is a Co-PI on a National Science Foundation funded research grant to develop a strategy so doctoral students and early career researchers can learn how to formulate better, more transformative research questions. He also leads the John Templeton Foundation funded Million Classrooms Campaign. Through the work of the campaign and by learning with educators in the field, he has helped to scale up a pedagogical innovation on a global level. Andrew has written on the topics of question formulation and curiosity for *Social Education*, *Educational Leadership*, *Education Week*, and *The New England Journal of History*. He conferred an Ed.M. in Human Development & Psychology from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a B.A. in Psychology from the University of New Hampshire where he was a Student Fellow in the College of Liberal Arts.



**Dan Rothstein** is Co-Director of the Right Question Institute and co-author of *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions*. Dan's work focuses on honoring the work of educators who are driving a movement to help all students learn to ask better questions. His keynotes and seminars have engaged many audiences, including the Library of Congress, Harvard Medical School, Brandeis University, Google, and Microsoft. His work has been featured on NPR, Education Week, and Educational Leadership. Dan's earned his B.A. at Harvard College and his doctorate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education where he also was a Teaching Fellow and an Editor of the Harvard Educational Review. Dan was a Fulbright Scholar and one of very few non-academics to be chosen as a National Academy of Education Spencer Fellow.



**Laurie Thompson Surles** is a native Richmonder and a lifelong learner. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Mary Washington College and a Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus in Instructional Technology from Virginia Commonwealth University. She has served as a classroom teacher, a technology coordinator, an instructional technology integrator, and a teacher consultant. Currently, she is the elementary curriculum specialist for the Department of History and Social Studies for Chesterfield County Public Schools. She provides professional learning opportunities on many topics including the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) and has presented the QFT at conferences such as VASCD and VCSSE.



# Acknowledgements

We are delighted to be here in Midlothian, Virginia at Chesterfield County Career Technical Center. We would like to thank Chesterfield County Career Technical Center for graciously sharing their space with us and Lynne Bland and Tina Ramkey for their work behind the scenes which made this event possible. Thank you also to the presenters who shared their expertise and creativity.

We are deeply grateful for the generous support from the following funders who have helped make this seminar possible:

The John Templeton Foundation      The Whitman Institute      The Hummingbird Fund

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All of the work of the Right Question Institute across many fields and communities is made possible by the strong support of RQI's Board of Directors:

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## **RQI 2018 Summer Fellows**

Monique Crowley  
Erin Kim  
Sara Shapiro

We would also like to acknowledge the valuable role played by Harvard Education Press (HEP) and ASCD in making the QFT available to a wide audience through the publication of *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (HEP, 2011) and *Partnering with Parents to Ask the Right Questions* (ASCD, 2016).



The Right Question Institute launched The Million Classrooms Campaign in 2015, and the campaign is part of a larger project made possible with the support of a generous grant from the John Templeton Foundation. The aim of the campaign is to learn and work with educators in the field to promote the adoption of the QFT in over a million classrooms by 2020. Now, educators in over 140 countries around the world are facilitating student curiosity and creating space for students to develop their thinking skills by using this simple, powerful strategy. We are grateful for the enthusiasm and energy of over 300,000 educators worldwide who use and share the strategy. They not only helped us to reach our goal, but they helped us surpass it more quickly than we could have imagined. We continue to learn every day from their innovation, creativity, and dedication. Learn more about the Million Classrooms Campaign: <http://rightquestion.org/mcc/>