



## **Best Practices in the Question Formulation Technique West Coast Seminar**



**Orange County Department of Education  
200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa, CA  
Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

We're excited to have you with us in Costa Mesa to learn best practices in the Question Formulation Technique (QFT). We are looking forward to working and learning with you and are excited for all the new discoveries this seminar will yield.

Sincerely,  
Luz Santana and Sarah Westbrook

## Seminar Agenda

Wednesday, August 9th, 2017 from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

8:00 Breakfast & Registration

8:30 Welcome

8:40 – 11:40 Collaborative Learning with the Question Formulation Technique (QFT)

- An Experience in the QFT
- Unpacking the QFT and Classroom Examples
- Introduction to Lesson Planning using the QFT
- The Art and Science of the QFT and Facilitation Principles

11:45- 12:30 Lunch

12:30 – 1:20 Workshop Session #1:

- When and Now What? Planning to Use the QFT in Your Classroom | *Connie Williams*
- Become a Resource on the QFT: Designing a Question Focus for Professional Learning | *Sarah Westbrook*

1:30 - 2:20 Workshop Session #2:

- Building Strong School-Family Partnerships: The Right Question School-Family Partnership Strategy | *Luz Santana*
- The QFT Ignites Student Initiated Research and Extreme Relevance | *Glen Warren*

2:30 – 3:40 Advancing the Work: From Conference to Action

3:40 - 4:00 Closing Reflections and Evaluation

**Access Today's Materials Online:**

<http://rightquestion.org/educators/seminar-resources/>

## Workshops and Presenters

### **Building Strong School-Family Partnerships: The Right Question School-Family Partnership Strategy**

*Luz Santana, The Right Question Institute – Cambridge, MA*

Partnering effectively with families is vital for student success and equity in our education system. The Right Question Institute (RQI) has developed an evidence-based strategy that helps families learn key skills to support their children’s education, monitor their progress, and advocate for them when necessary. In an active learning experience based on the book *Partnering with Parents to Ask the Right Questions*, (2016 ASCD, Luz Santana, Agnes Bain, and Dan Rothstein) you will have the opportunity to work closely with co-author Luz Santana to learn the strategy, explore its rationale and plan on how to integrate it into your work with families.



**Luz Santana** is the co-director of RQI and the co-author of *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (Harvard Education Press: 2011). In the late 1980s, as a parent of children in the Lawrence, MA public school system, she began to work with other parents as part of a dropout prevention program. At the time, she was also traveling a path that led from her own personal experiences coming from Puerto Rico and then navigating the welfare and other public systems and continuing on to getting an associate’s degree to a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from Springfield College School of Human Services. One of the founders of RQI, she is now a nationally recognized educational innovator, facilitator, and keynote speaker in English and Spanish who has designed a wide range of participatory learning curricula in many fields, including parent involvement, adult education, social services, health care, immigrant advocacy, neighborhood organizing, and voter engagement.

### **Become a Resource on the QFT: Designing a Question Focus for Professional Learning**

*Sarah Westbrook, The Right Question Institute – Cambridge, MA*

You’ve learned about the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) in the classroom and are now wondering how to design a faculty, department, or team meeting, a professional development presentation, or a training on the QFT. Using examples from RQI’s own work with districts and organizations, we will discuss the delicacies of effective QFocus design for professional learning settings and audiences. Design and “test” your QFocus, troubleshoot, and collaborate actively with others in the room to plan your own professional learning experience. We will explore real examples from the field of both professional development *on* the QFT and professional learning *using* the QFT to enhance work on other teaching and learning goals.



**Sarah Westbrook** is a former high school English teacher who is now RQI’s Director of Professional Learning for education programming and the Million Classrooms Campaign, which aims to expand the use of the QFT to one million classrooms by 2020. During her years of teaching in Boston area public schools, Sarah developed a passion for advancing equity and success for all students and a deep appreciation for the innovative, dedicated work fellow educators do every day that often goes unseen. She holds a M.A.T. in English Education from Tufts University and a B.A. in English from Bryn Mawr College. Follow her on twitter @rightquestion for the most up to date articles, resources, and classroom examples.

## The QFT Ignites Student Initiated Research and Extreme Relevance

*Glen Warren, Encinitas Union School District – San Diego County, CA*

This session will address systems of meaningfully infusing the personal curiosities of each student into all disciplines, from kindergarten through college and career, through the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) and the transferable skills it ignites including the research process and responsible design thinking. The session will demonstrate how the QFT researching skills and design thinking not only apply to all content areas including the students own personal interests; they also reveal the integration and interdependence of the disciplines.



**Glen Warren** is the Encinitas Union School District Director of Literacies, Outreach, and Libraries. In other words, he is the LOL Director. Glen believes in the true personalization of student learning through the integration of multiple literacies including information literacy, media literacy, digital literacy, design thinking, and digital citizenship. He co-wrote the California Model School Library Standards addressing information and digital literacy outcomes for K-12 public education students. He also co-wrote the California Career Technical Education (CTE) standards for the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector. With twin Master's degrees in educational leadership and librarianship, as well as expertise in educational technology, Glen straddles the worlds of the classroom and the library as well as the worlds of educational technology and information literacy. The ultimate goal for his work is to revive and advance the LOVE of learning!

## When and Now What? Planning to Use the QFT in Your Classroom

*Connie Williams, NBCT Teacher Librarian – Sonoma County, CA*

This session will dive into some of the most common questions educators new to the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) often wonder: First, when do I use the QFT and how often? Second, what are possible next steps with student questions? Together, we will work actively to brainstorm answers to both questions, strategize around some of the "nuts and bolts" of incorporating the QFT, explore classroom examples and lesson ideas, and plan on how to easily integrate the QFT into your existing curriculum and teaching.



**Connie Williams**, NBCT, was Teacher Librarian for Petaluma City Schools both in junior high and high school for 28 years. She is currently an Adjunct at Santa Rosa Junior College and an on-call librarian for Sonoma County Libraries. She blogs at [Knowledge Quest](#) and is a frequent contributor to the [Right Question educator blog](#). She discovered the QFT after reading Warren Berger's "A More Beautiful Question" and implemented it immediately in her classes in high school and in her instruction at the College. Working with her colleagues in the high school she helped bring a questioning and inquiry approach to many classes.

## Acknowledgements

We are delighted to be here in Costa Mesa, CA at the Orange County Department of Education. We would like to thank OCDE for graciously sharing their space with us and to Rob Vicario, Annabel Arreola, Julie Hull, and Naomi Stanaland for their support and guidance which made this event possible. We would also like to thank our own Siyi Chu and the 2017 RQI Summer Fellows for all of their work behind the scenes in planning this seminar.

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

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We are also very grateful for strong support of the Right Question Institute over the years that has been provided by:

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Katherine Cabral, Bates College  
David Shin, Amherst College  
Rachel Sokolov, University of Michigan



We would like to acknowledge the valuable role played by Harvard Education Press (HEP) in making the QFT available to a wide audience through the publication of *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (2011). We'd like to thank ASCD for their role in sharing the full Right Question Strategy and publishing our book *Partnering with Parents to Ask the Right Questions* (2016).



We would also like to thank Nathan Rothstein and Project Repat (projectrepat.com) for their generous support of our work this year.

The Right Question Institute launched The Million Classrooms Campaign in 2015, which aims to expand the use of the QFT to develop students' thinking abilities and spark curiosity in one million classrooms by 2020. The Million Classrooms Campaign is part of a larger project made possible with the support of a generous grant from the Sir John Templeton Foundation for "Activating and Demonstrating Greater Curiosity by Learning to Ask Questions."



We are deeply grateful for the enthusiasm and energy of over 250,000 educators worldwide who are using and sharing the QFT. They have made this goal possible more quickly than we could have ever predicted. Every day, we continue to learn from their innovation, creativity, and dedication to teaching students how to ask their own questions. Learn more about the Million Classrooms Campaign: <http://rightquestion.org/mcc/>

Finally, we send a very special thanks to Glen Warren and Connie Williams for sharing their expertise with all of us here. We are grateful to have them leading our program today.