



Sarah WESTBROOK

Biography

Sarah Westbrook is a former high school English teacher who is now the Right Question Institute's Director of Professional Learning. During her over ten years in education, including seven years of teaching in Boston, MA area public schools, Sarah developed a deep appreciation for the innovative work educators do every day for students that often goes unseen and unrecognized. She now partners with schools and districts around the country to design professional learning on the Question Formulation Technique (QFT) and collaborates with classroom teachers to highlight their work and identify new opportunities for professional growth. She has presented on the QFT for a range of audiences including sessions at national conferences such as NSTA, NCSS, NCTE, Learning Forward, and ASCD, the Iowa and Hawaii State Departments of Education, Chicago Public Schools, San Francisco Public Schools, and New York State BOCES districts. She also leads the design and facilitation of the Right Question Institute's online professional learning course hosted by the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Workshop Description

Title: Spark Curiosity, Fuel Innovation, and Drive Learning: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions

Question-formulation is an increasingly vital skill for critical thinking, information literacy, problem-solving, navigating uncertainty, and self-advocacy. Yet, it is rare that the skill of question formulation is deliberately taught to students. How can we build the capacity for all students to take greater ownership in their educational journey through question-asking? In this hands-on, active learning experience, participants learn the Question Formulation Technique (QFT), a simple yet powerful evidence-based strategy to teach students how to ask, improve, and use their own questions. The QFT is a universal learning tool that supports instruction in every subject area from kindergarten through higher education and promotes greater student agency, ownership, and intellectual flexibility. Participants leave with a deep understanding of the strategy and the ability to apply it immediately in classrooms.