



## Professional Learning Plan For Exploring Where and Why

Professional development, now more commonly referred to as Professional Learning, is viewed as a way to improve teacher practice and impact student learning (Somers, Sikorova, 2002; Reese, 2010, Polly, 2010). Research states that professional learning is essential to effective classroom implementation. Therefore, we are committed to providing teachers with a professional learning plan that will actively engage them in the learning and implementation process of Exploring Where and Why. We are committed to providing that training over an extended period of time.

We offer a blended learning approach to professional learning. This approach allows us to meet your professional learning needs while keeping mandatory meeting times to a minimum. Our plan offers flexibility for both the district and its teachers. Blended learning combines the best of face-to-face learning and online learning.

### Professional Learning Options

#### Options that come with every purchase:

**Self-guided online courses:** We offer 4 online courses for Exploring Where and Why. Each session is designed to be approximately 30-45 minutes in length.

- **Exploring Where and Why 101 session 1: Overview**  
This session provides you with an introduction to the resources that are included in your Exploring Where and Why program. It introduces you to the basic design of our Teacher's Guide and lessons, providing you with the background knowledge you need to get started.
- **Exploring Where and Why 101 session 2: Hands-On, Minds-On Learning**  
Exploring Where and Why is a hands-on learning program for students K-5. The program contains items that students write on with wet erase markers, providing them with real world experiences. It encourages students' success by providing learning in all of the modalities.
- **Exploring Where and Why 101 session 3: Cross-Curricular Instruction**  
Exploring Where and Why is a cross-curricular learning experience for students. Embedded in our activities students engage in social studies, math, reading and other subjects and in addition to those experiences students are also provide opportunities to extend the lesson into other disciplines.
- **Exploring Where and Why 101 session 4: Literacy Library**  
Each Exploring Where and Why program comes with a Literacy Library—12 books specifically selected to correlate to the program itself, as well as to the developmental needs of students based on grade level. The books are both fiction and non-fiction. Included in the Literacy Library Teacher's Guide is a host of ways through which teachers might utilize the books in their classrooms.



**Webinars:** are offered periodically on such topics as: Vocabulary building, growth mindset, or brain based learning. Webinars will be no long than 45 minutes and will conclude with an assignment.

- **Vocabulary Building:**  
According to researchers, such as Robert Marzano approximately 55% of the vocabulary needed to be successful in school comes from social studies. Our focus on Vocabulary Building Strategies will improve student retention of key terms essential for academic success. .
- **Growth Mindset**  
Based on the work of Carol Dweck we will examine the differences between a Growth Mindset and a Fixed Mindset and brainstorm ways to strategically target changing Fixed Mindsets into Growth Mindsets.
- **Brain Based Learning**  
Following the teaching of David Sousa and Carol Ann Tomlinson regarding Differentiation and the brain we will examine how Exploring Where and Why helps meet the needs of differentiation.

### **Optional Professional Learning Offerings:**

**Onsite options:** The opportunities afforded during onsite sessions is dynamic and an important part of the adult learners' experience. Training is the most common form of professional development. The best training sessions according to Guskey, are designed with specific participant outcomes in mind, which is why we will partner with you to determine those goals in advance of training (Guskey, 2000).

- **Onsite trainings-** These sessions provide opportunities for teachers to gain knowledge about the functionality and content in *Exploring Where and Why*, to share and discuss their implementation with colleagues, all with guidance from a Certified *Exploring Where and Why* Facilitator. One onsite training is defined as: One Certified Facilitator for 7 hours with a maximum of 30 participants per session. A session can vary from a full day (7 hours), ½ day (Two-3 hour segments) or mini sessions (Three-2 hour sessions).
- **Onsite visits-** Visits create an array of learning options. This options can include: short Q&A's during planning periods, classroom Demonstrations, coaching and after school training sessions. All of which will be executed by a Certified Facilitator. One trainer for one seven period hour defines this onsite visit.
- **Onsite meetings-**These experiences prove to be quite valuable not only to the district leaders, but their teachers as well. It allows the professional learning staff from Nystrom Education to meet with district leaders to brainstorm and plan professional learning, to assist with correlating district and state standards to Exploring Where and Why activities and to support district leaders in their implementation of Exploring Where and Why.

**Pacing Guides:** -we will provide you with custom pacing guides that correlate to your curriculum frameworks to ensure correlation with district goals and standards.