

What Geographers Do: Bill Schmoker, Grosvenor Teacher Fellow

My name is Bill Schmoker and I teach Earth Science at Centennial Middle School in Boulder, Colorado. In February I got a most pleasantly surprising call from National Geographic asking if I'd like to go to Iceland and Greenland. I immediately flashed back to the application I had filled out the previous fall for their Grosvenor Teacher Fellowship (<http://bit.ly/19GE98z>) and somehow managed to stammer out a yes! In April the 14 GTF teachers for 2013 met at National Geographic headquarters in Washington, DC for training and orientation.

The meeting left me even more inspired and excited about incorporating geo-literacy in my science curriculum and sharing its importance with a wider audience of fellow educators and the community at large.

My expedition was titled Along the Viking Trail, following the path and exploring the settlements of 10th-century Norse pioneers who crossed the north Atlantic from Iceland to Greenland and ultimately Newfoundland. Greenlandic Inuit culture was equally amazing to see and learn about firsthand. Natural history and science observing opportunities abounded, and the scenery was beautiful beyond description. Throughout the expedition I interacted with 8 keen young explorers aged 7-17, the top-tier naturalist and photography staff, and the fascinating diversity of adult guests. We boarded the National

Geographic Explorer at Reykjavik, Iceland and spent a day sailing up the west coast before crossing the Denmark Strait to Skjoldungesund, Greenland. Our path next took us down Greenland's southeast coast and then through the fjords of Prins Christian Sund cutting the island's southern tip before heading northward along the southwest coast, calling at Nanortalik, Hvalsey, Qaqortoq, Batthalid, and Nuuk. We concluded our 10-day voyage just across the Arctic Circle at Kangerlussuaq, located at the end of a 190 km-long fjord. If you'd care to see some trip highlights I have a slide show up at (<http://youtu.be/cRtUhylUv0c>). The experience was phenomenal, truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that will positively influence my teaching for the rest of my career, and for that I'd like to emphatically thank National Geographic and Lindblad Expeditions.

