

## **3rd grade**

### **Asking questions about Africa, the continent**

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.7** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

### **Essential question: What do you wonder about Africa?**

In this lesson, the goal was to have students create research questions about Africa. In order to create a modicum of background information, I showed a 2 min introductory video from TrueFlix. As a whole group, we created a web of categories of what kinds of questions we could ask about a continent. We came up with land, animals, plants, history, geology, people, customs, and countries. This type of conceptual thinking is important to make explicit at every juncture of the research process. Why? It develops a sense of organization of knowledge, which is key to informational writing.

The next step was to add a level of engagement and fun into the process. I gave them dice of the question words as a support and as a way to engage.

Reflection: Sometimes the questions were too focused on specific images of the video. I tried to encourage a bit of competition by finding the group with the most questions and challenging the other groups to outdo them. That was successful and “woke” the kids up to work a bit faster and more focused.

Next step:

Rewrite the overly responsive questions to the movie as general questions using the categories. For example, what was the woman doing with the stick into, “How do people in villages prepare food?”

Sort questions by category. This will aid them in figuring out what they are most curious about and give them a focus for their research.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Not there yet	Almost there	You got it!
Deep questions that lead to research			
Able to identify what topic each question was			
Used proper question words, punctuation, and capitalization			

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