



This session is inspired by Seckou Keita's album *Homeland: Chapter 1*. It considers planet Earth as homeland. It uses a range of world maps to encourage questioning and critical thinking about our planet Earth:

What influences how we see the world?

How does this affect our view of earth?

How does this affect our views or other people's views of our homelands?

Background information

- In general, a globe is a more accurate representation of the Earth than a world map.
- The session draws on this article from BBC Future: *Maps have 'north' at the top, but it could've been different* by Caroline Williams. Available to download from <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20160614-maps-have-north-at-the-top-but-it-couldve-been-different>

The Session

- Start the session by explaining that musician Seckou Keita has released an album on the theme of Homeland. In this session we will be looking at planet Earth as our homeland.
- Ask learners: *'when you think of the Earth as our homeland, what thoughts come to mind?'*
- Give learners a globe in small groups of 4 along with a copy of the framework grid for questioning. This can be adapted and edited to suit the age and abilities of your learners. Younger learners might have a grid that just has the yellow boxes (see right) for example. A simpler template is provided.

Resources

- A framework grid for questioning
- A powerpoint
- Extract of article (for Extension Activity)
- You will also need:
Globes – try to have a mix of 'fixed' globes and inflatable globes. You will need one per group of 4 learners.

	...is	...did	...can	...will	...would	...might
Who?						
What?						
Where?						
When?						
Why?						
How?						

Higher order questions / deeper thinking

Geography Question Grid by Nick Langmead and Gareth Godwine
Geographical Association (2018) *Critical thinking in practice*.



4. Encourage learners to ask questions about the globe using the question grid. They can have many questions or few. They may find some boxes difficult to complete and can leave these blank. Try to encourage children to think critically about the way the globe is portrayed.
5. You and your learners might compare questions between those with 'fixed' globes that imply there is a 'right way up' and those that have inflatable globes that can be rotated in all directions.
6. Ask learners to select one or two questions for further study either together or for home learning.

Extension activity

As a provocation, ask learners to tell you which parts of the globe they think of as 'rich' and which as 'poor'. Listen out for the language they are using. For example, they may imply that 'the top' or 'north' is rich and 'the bottom' or 'south' is poor. Do they refer to the 'West' and the 'East'?

The article *'Maps have 'north' at the top, but it could've been different'* by Caroline Williamson asks *'why are modern maps almost always the same way up?'* It is only in the last few hundred years that north has been thought of as the top of the world and south at the bottom.

On the resources powerpoint, we have included a NASA image of the earth taken by an astronaut in space. The image was flipped before publishing because it was felt that it might confuse people to see it 'upside down'.

Caroline offers some food for thought at the end of the article.

- A. If you work with younger learners, use the article to inform yourself about where our perspectives and biases may be coming from. You can then challenge children when they make generalisations or assumptions.
- B. If you work with older learners, share the extract with them (a copy is provided) and read it together with them. Ask them to highlight any interesting or important parts as you read. Invite them to generate open philosophical questions that might start with, "Should...?" or "What might...?" e.g. Should we agree to turn the map up the other way? Use these questions to generate a discussion. If you are familiar with Philosophy for Children approaches, this article and/or the image on the powerpoint, would be a good stimulus.