A Good Question Gets a Good Answer
Information literacy 9-12
Time required 40 minutes

The Big Ideas:
Essential Understandings:

- Defining how to ask a question is key to effectively and efficiently researching the answer
- Information for an academic project should be authoritative and reliable
- Success in college depends on students being able to adequately define information needs and locate authoritative information in a timely and competent way

Essential Questions:

- How do I narrow a topic?
- What do I need to know?
- What do I want to know?
- What do I know already?
- What reference help is available to me "after hours"?
- How do I use the help available to me?

AASL standards for the 21ˢᵗ century learner addressed:
1: Inquire and think critically to gain knowledge
1.1.3 Develop and refine a range of questions to frame the search for new understanding.

Common Core standards addressed:
English (Writing)
cc9-10 w7 (Writing 9/10 grade) Research to build and present knowledge
(also appears in 11/12 curriculum as well as the elementary standards)

NETS standards from ISTE addressed
4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making
Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.
      a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
5. Technology Operations and Concepts
 Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations.
Students:
    a. understand and use technology systems.

Evidence of Student Understanding (Assessment) in this Lesson:
Evidence of student understanding will be based on the completion of the graphic organizer and the chat transcript from ASK HERE PA.

Lesson Preparation: Prior to this lesson, students will have been introduced to the online reference sources available to them; (POWER Library, Locally held databases, online catalogs etc.). Students will be able to perform a simple search using these resources. Students will have an assigned topic to work on. This can either be from a general list of questions (Try these sites: Rio Hondo Community College Library: http://library.riohondo.edu/Research_Help/Research_Topics/index.htm, or this one from CSU at Long Beach http://www.csulb.edu/library/subj/Paper_Topics/hottopics/index.html for help with a list) or the lesson can be integrated with the beginning of a research paper and the topics can be ones the students will write about.

Materials required: Computer Lab, interactive whiteboard, Internet, graphic organizers and PowerPoint (provided)

Specific Purpose(s) or Objectives:
As a result of this lesson, students will understand how to assess information needs. The student will learn how to narrow a broad topic and how to use ASK HERE PA. Collectively this class activity illustrates the importance of knowing how to narrow a topic and use Internet reference sources in an appropriate manner.

Lesson Sequence
Anticipatory set or hook: (10-15 minutes)
Using the interactive whiteboard and the graphic organizer (attached), model how a broad topic such as immigration can be narrowed through the use of " reporters' questions": who, what, when where, why. Give two examples for each "w" and show them how to "mix and match selections" to get good questions and narrow the topic. Students should give at least three questions about the broad topic from the list that you provide or the broad topic they will be researching for a paper.
Hands on activity (10-15 minutes)
Give each student a blank handout to complete. This may be typed on the computer using the .pdf form which can be posted on a web site or network drive or filled in with a pen and pencil. Students should give at least three questions about the broad topic from the list that you provide or the broad topic they will be researching for a paper. Have each student print their results. Collect the questions.
Introduction to ASK Here PA (10 minutes)
Using the PowerPoint provided, go over the "etiquette" and how to find the service.
Talking points:

- Don't ask the same question twice because it took too long for someone to answer you the first time.
- Tell the Ask Here Librarian if you have already "checked" out some sites. This is useful as they don't spend time doing the same or similar search.
- Give an email address so that librarians can email articles or follow up to you. Ask Here librarians sometimes have access to subscription databases that aren't available to you and persistent links don't work. (Good opportunity to explain the difference between a session cookie and a persistent link)
- Be patient as research can take time
- Support for projects is there 24 X 7 by a trained researcher who knows how to judge authoritative sites

- True homework questions like solve for X or reading comprehension questions like "What wouldn't Daniel Webster do that the Devil asked?" should be discouraged.
- Be polite, when the service gives you the answer you need, please indicate that. Don't just cut the connection.
- Give the reference librarian an idea of how much information you need. If it is only a definition, this is different then asking for help on a 3-5 page paper or a debate topic.

Follow up activity: From the list of questions submitted by each student, select one for the student to ask as a class ASK HERE PA. This is a homework assignment and must be done on a individual basis. Ask students to forward the chat transcript they receive to your email box. When you have received the transcripts, go over them a class as ask what worked and what didn't.

Alternative follow up: Make an appointment with ASK Here PA. This is the link. Divide your students into airs and have them pose one of the questions and collect the transcript via email. (15-20 minutes of class time)

Materials included with this lesson plan

- Graphic organizer, .pdf and alternate pdf form (type in the blanks) (please note this form maybe placed on a wiki or a network drive, once the form is filled in it must be printed, as it can not be saved with the student's information).
- Sample of a graphic organizer using immigration as a broad topic
- Rubric for lesson
- PowerPoint for lesson