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# AFRICAN ADVENTURE



STAR-TELEGRAM/PAUL MOSELEY

Baba Kwasi takes students at The Montessori Academy on an imaginary journey to Africa. He introduced the students to a variety of ancient rhythms and songs and "flew" them to Egypt on Friday to search for the world's oldest drum.

## Lecturer gives kids a virtual tour

By Amanda Rogers

Special to the Star-Telegram

ARLINGTON - They giggled, they wiggled, they pointed, squealed and danced -- and all before recess. African-American storyteller Baba Kwasi took an enthusiastic group of students at The Montessori Academy in Arlington on a virtual tour of Africa on Friday, letting them experience a taste of the culture without leaving the school. "I try to make it an edu-taining experience," said Kwasi, an Arlington resident also known as Charles Harris. "Fasten your seat belts, close your laptops, and turn off your cellphones." Kwasi called to the group of excited 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds as he "flew" them to Egypt to search for the world's oldest drum.

Along the way, he introduced the students to a variety of ancient rhythms, songs and words from Egypt and Ghana with a side trip to Brazil to meet another drum. Later, he took the school's first-through third-graders and then the fourth- through sixth-graders on age-appropriate virtual adventures.

"It's about inspiring the children," said Kwasi, a storyteller and lecturer with the Ayubu Kamau Kings and Queens African Drum and Dance School. "Programs like this help to offset false notions."

Principal Pam Dunbar agrees.

"We're kind of a mini-United Nations," she said of her school, which had a 40.5 percent minority-student population last year.

"When parents come walk in, and they're from another country and they see this, it shows that we honor, respect and are willing to learn about other countries," she said.



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Baba Kwasi (Charles Harris)  
storyteller