

Teaching Guide to *Shortcuts* by Jeff Harris

Introduction

Shortcuts by Jeff Harris is a beautifully illustrated, fact-packed page that makes learning fun. Each week, *Shortcuts'* multicultural cast (Juanita, K., Roland, Junior and James) offers facts, riddles, jokes and puzzles to help kids learn about science, geography, animals, food, history and holidays.

Each teaching guide provides ideas for expanding the lesson and creating discussion and learning activities for your students. The grade level for the guides is usually 3rd to 4th, but they can be adapted for use at other levels. The guides are broken down into four areas:

1. Questions for Discussion and Further Study

Designed to help students think and research, not just give one-word answers

2. Activity Ideas

Designed to allow students to be creative and teach themselves

3. Use the News

Designed to have students use the news in studying each topic

4. Quick Quiz

Designed to be adaptable to several grade levels, evaluate students' comprehension and build vocabulary and math skills

You might use the teaching guides in the following ways:

Questions for Discussion and Further Study: Engage the entire class by asking each question aloud and listing the students' answers on the board. Or have them use reference resources to give their own answers to the questions. Allow them to discuss other students' answers after they've researched the topics. Key words or phrases that can help students search for more information are italicized.

Activity Ideas: Give the students a time limit to research their projects, using library or study time. By having the students cite their resources you can check their work; or, alternatively, tell them which resource(s) you prefer them to use.

Use the News: These can be worked on individually but we suggest they work in groups to learn teamwork skills.

- **Quick Quiz:** We suggest you review the quizzes ahead of time and change the phrasing or difficulty level based on the students' abilities.

Shortcuts: DISCOVERING PHARAOHS

For release the week of: October 31, 2011

Objective: After completing the exercises, students should have a better understanding of pharaohs.

Subject Areas: The following information about pharaohs will be discussed:

- Why were pyramids used?
- What was in King Tut's tomb?
- Who were the women rulers of Egypt?

Evaluation: Students may be evaluated using the following point scale:

Four points: Information is accurate, organized, shows creative thought/use of materials

Three points: Information is accurate and organized

Two points: Information is mostly accurate; organization needs some work

One point: Significant inaccuracies; lacks organization

Topics for Discussion and Further Study

1. Who was the last pharaoh?
2. Why were some pharaohs buried in pyramids and others not?

Activity Ideas

- What kinds of artifacts were found in King Tut's tomb? Research and report on the contents of this famous pharaoh's final resting place. Was it thought to be similar to other pharaohs' tombs? Where are the contents of the tomb today?
- Who were the four female rulers of Egypt? Were they called pharaohs? Research and present the information you find about them to the class. PowerPoint presentations, posters, oral reports, or even webpages could be used to inform the rest of the class.

Use the News

- Can you find humor in Egyptian history? Try to create a newspaper comic strip concerning: pharaohs, pyramids, tombs, robbers, mummies, etc.

Answers to the Quiz

1.) b, 2.) a, 3.) b, 4.) d, 5.) a, 6.) c, 7.) dynasty, 8.) Zoser, 9.) 1000 BC, 10.) 1,600 ft.

Quick Quiz — Pharaohs

1. Only men were allowed to rule ancient Egypt.
a. True b. False
2. Ancient Egyptians believed the pharaoh was their “ _____ ” god.
a. sky b. sun c. earth d. war
3. The largest pyramid was built for King Tut.
a. True b. False
4. The word “pharaoh” comes from the Egyptian word for “great _____.”
a. light b. god c. warrior d. house
5. Pharaohs had many wives.
a. True b. False
6. Historians often divide the history of ancient Egypt into ____ dynasties.
a. 5 b. 10 c. 30 d. 100

Vocabulary Comprehension

7. A _____ is a series of rulers who come from the same family.
8. The first pyramid was built for King _____.

Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)

9. If the period when Egypt was the strongest nation in the world started in about 1500 BC, and lasted 500 years, approximately what year would it have ended?
10. If the base of a square pyramid is 400 feet on one side, how far is it all the way around (the perimeter)?