

# 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 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, 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: THE INSIDE STORY OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM**

For release the week of: November 19, 2012

**Objective:** After completing the exercises, students should have a better understanding of the Brothers Grimm.

**Subject Areas:** The following information about the Brothers Grimm will be discussed:

- Fairy tales and legends
- Grimm stories read aloud
- Grimm stories as movies

**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. Were the Grimm's stories too harsh or violent?
2. What's the difference between a fairy tale and a legend?

## **Activity Ideas**

- There are more than 200 Grimm stories. They can be found in your library and on the Internet. Spend some time each day reading aloud to the rest of the class. Each student could choose a story, practice reading it, and then a few read aloud each day until the whole class has had a chance to present one of the Grimms' stories.
- Many of their stories have been made into movies. Choose one to watch as a class. Then, either discuss or write an opinion about which version they liked the best -- the movie or the written story.

### **Use the News**

- Local writers are often available at libraries and book stores for special events. Read your newspaper to see if any authors are reading or autographing their works in your area.

## **Answers to the Quiz**

1.) b, 2.) c, 3.) a, 4.) b, 5.) a, 6.) b, 7.) footnotes, 8.) languages, 9.) yes, 10.) 27 hrs. 30 mins.

## **Quick Quiz — The Brothers Grimm**

1. Jakob and Wilhelm were not really brothers.  
a. True b. False
2. The first edition of their book was called "Children's and \_\_\_\_\_ Tales."  
a. Animal's b. Adult c. Household d. Scary
3. The original fairy tales were not written for children.  
a. True b. False
4. The Grimm brothers also created a \_\_\_\_\_ dictionary.  
a. English b. German c. French d. Russian
5. Sleeping Beauty is one of the Grimms' fairy tales.  
a. True b. False
6. The Grimm brothers published their first edition in \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. 1712 b. 1812 c. 1912 d. 2012

## **Vocabulary Comprehension**

7. Their first book had many \_\_\_\_\_ describing the origin and variations of each fairy tale.
8. "Children's and Household Tales" has been translated into more than 150 different \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)**

9. Could someone read a 5-minute, 35-minute, and then a 20-min story in an hour?
10. If you read for 55 minutes each day, how many hours and minutes would that be after 30 days?