

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: HOT ON THE TRAIL OF CAMELS

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

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

- Riding camels
- Camel species
- Raising camels

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. Why do some people raise llamas or alpacas?
2. Is it hard to ride a camel?

Activity Ideas

- Choose one of the “true” camels or one from the camel “family”, such as an alpaca, and write a report about it. What makes it different? How is it the same as other camel types? Where does it live? What are its enemies?
- Here's a great video of a girl who raises camels. She provides lots of interesting info about caring for them, as well as basic camel facts.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvkoloNYZE4>

Use the News

- In our high-tech society, we don't often deal with animals other than pets. Can you find any news about animals in the newspaper? There may be farm reports, articles on pets or news about animal products, such as chicken or beef. Read the news and share what you find, or make a list of all the animal references.

Answers to the Quiz

1.) b, 2.) b, 3.) a, 4.) d, 5.) b, 6.) b , 7.) North America, 8.) dromedary, 9.) 9 liters, 10.) 4 liters

Quick Quiz — Camels

1. A camel's hump provides a lot of storage space for the water it drinks.
a. True b. False
2. A camel's hump is mostly _____.
a. water b. fat c. bone d. hair
3. Some people burn camel droppings as fuel.
a. True b. False
4. Camels can go without drinking water for _____.
a. days b. weeks c. months d. all of the above
5. All true camels have two humps.
a. True b. False
6. An adult camel stands about ____ meters tall at the shoulder.
a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4

Vocabulary Comprehension

7. Fossil records show that camels first appeared in _____.
8. Arabian camels are also called _____ camels.

Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)

9. If a camel drinks 3 liters of water in 2 minutes, how many liters will it have drunk in 6 minutes?
10. If a camel drank 20 liters of water in 5 minutes, how many liters did it drink per minute?