

# 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: BUTTING HEADS WITH THE GOAT**

For release the week of: February 18, 2013

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

**Subject Areas:** The following information about goats will be discussed:

- Goats as pets
- What makes mountain goats such good climbers
- Goat's milk versus cow's milk

**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 is a mountain goat not considered a true goat?
2. Is goat wool better than sheep wool for clothes?

## **Activity Ideas**

- Do goats make good pets? Is there a certain breed that is more tame and manageable than others? What unique characteristics do goats have that should be considered as a pet owner? Research and report on keeping goats as pets.
- How does a mountain goat keep from falling off the cliffs it lives on? Do they ever fall? Why don't their hooves slip on the rock? Research and write a description of how mountain goats negotiate their way on cliffs.

### **Use the News**

- Why can some people digest goat's milk better than cow's milk? Research this topic and write a brief article explaining the issue. It could be written as a health article informing people that have problems with cow's milk on an alternative source of milk.

## **Answers to the Quiz**

1.) b, 2.) a, 3.) b, 4.) d, 5.) a, 6.) c , 7.) kid, 8.) beards, 9.) 54 kg, 10.) 480 ft.

## **Quick Quiz — Goats**

1. Goats have three hoofed toes on each foot.  
a. True b. False

2. The largest species of goat is the \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. ibex b. mountain goat c. Pakistani d. mohair
3. Goats have strong teeth on their upper and lower jaws.  
a. True b. False
4. The wool produced by an angora goat is called \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. goat hair b. merino c. cashmere d. mohair
5. Most species of goats have horns.  
a. True b. False
6. The largest species of goat can weigh up to about \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. 50 lbs. b. 100 lbs. c. 300 lbs. d. 500 lbs.

## **Vocabulary Comprehension**

7. A young goat is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Both male and female goats have \_\_\_\_\_ on their chins.

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

9. How much would six goats weighing nine kilograms each weigh in total?
10. If a goat climbed up and down a 40-ft. cliff 6 times, how many feet will it have traveled?