

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: SHEDDING SOME LIGHT ON BLACKBEARD

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

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

- The history of Blackbeard
- How did his flintlocks work?
- Are there modern-day pirates?

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 killed Blackbeard?
2. Who were other famous pirates?

Activity Ideas

- Here's an excellent look at the legacy of Blackbeard the pirate. It's a documentary about how he became a pirate, and how he died. After watching it discuss how your previous ideas about pirates differ from those of the filmmakers.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQ5i1ut-fGA> (1 hr 37min)
- Pirates often fought with swords and flintlock pistols. How does a flintlock work? Take a look at this video to see the process necessary to load and fire one. The first video shows the loading and shooting of a pistol. The second video shows the loading and shooting of a flintlock rifle using a pre-made cartridge.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhw8YGRojlg>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpeeQMYaM44> No wonder Blackbeard carried around six pistols for a battle!

Use the News

- Do pirates still exist? Research the news online to find articles about modern-day pirates. Where are most of them located? Who do they attack? What is being done about it?

Answers to the Quiz

1.) b, 2.) c, 3.) b, 4.) b, 5.) b, 6.) a , 7.) pistol, 8.) Concorde, 9.) \$150, 10.) \$60

Quick Quiz — Blackbeard

1. Blackbeard was a fierce fighter, but not very big.
a. True b. False
2. Blackbeard lived during the _____.
a. 700s b. 1300s c. 1700s d. 1900s
3. Blackbeard's flag showed a treasure chest and a skeleton.
a. True b. False
4. Blackbeard's real name may have been Edward _____.
a. Roberts b. Teach c. Sparrow d. Michem
5. Blackbeard was supposed to have carried six swords with him into battle.
a. True b. False
6. Blackbeard is said to have put _____ under his hat to appear fierce.
a. cannon fuses b. cannon balls c. snakes d. knives

Vocabulary Comprehension

7. A flintlock _____ was used by many pirates.
8. Blackbeard captured a large French slave ship called "La _____."

Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)

9. If pirates stole 50 sacks of sugar worth \$30 each, how much would the total be?
10. How much money would each pirate get if 12 pirates divided up \$720?