

# 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.

**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: VISITING THE ZOO**

For release the week of: June 22, 2009

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

**Subject Areas:** The following information regarding zoos will be discussed:

Popular zoo animals

Zoo games

Going to the zoo (for real or virtually)

**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**

In your opinion, should wild animals be kept in zoos?

What is the most popular type of animal in zoos?

## **Activity Ideas**

- Is it easy to manage a zoo? You've got to feed the animals, and clean and care for them. The animals should be arranged in a setting that's good for them, but also provide an space interesting for the public to observe them. If you can download programs to one or several school computers, you can play the trial version of Zoo Tycoon to get an idea of what running a zoo might be like. Here's the link to download the free trial version:  
<http://zootycoon.com/Downloads/demos.htm>

Have you ever been to a zoo? If possible, a class trip to a local zoo would be great! However, there are many "zoo cams" online that will allow you to see what various animals are currently doing in zoos from around the world. Here's one to get you started: [online-zoo.com](http://online-zoo.com)

### **Use the News**

Many people are fascinated by wild animals. We often use their names for sports teams: e.g - tigers, bears, etc. What product advertisements can you find in the newspaper with animal names?

### **Answers to the Quiz**

1.) a, 2.) a, 3.) a, 4.) c, 5.) a, 6.) b, 7.) zoological, 8.) wild, 9.) 4,500 , 10.) 100

### **Quick Quiz — Zoos**

1. The Berlin Zoo is one of the largest zoos in the world.  
a. True b. False
  
2. The Vienna Zoo in Austria is often considered to be the \_\_\_\_\_ zoo in the world  
a. oldest      b. largest  
  
c. smallest      d. newest
  
3. Some zoos use moats to separate animals from zoo visitors.  
a. True b. False

Around 1100 B.C., King Wen of China created a zoo called the "Garden of \_\_\_\_\_."

a. Creatures    b. Fantasy

c. Intelligence    d. Life

5. The Aztecs built huge zoos.

a. True    b. False

6. One of the first zoos in the world was created by Queen Hatshepsut of \_\_\_\_\_.

a. England            b. Egypt

c. Iran                d. China

### ***Vocabulary Comprehension***

7. The word zoo is short for the term "\_\_\_\_\_ garden."

8. It is usually best to let wild animals live in the \_\_\_\_\_.

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

9. If there are 3 animals per acre in a 1,500-acre zoo, how many animals are in the zoo?

10.  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the animals in a 300-animal zoo would be how many?

