

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: AN UNFILTERED LOOK AT COFFEE

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

Subject Areas: The following information regarding coffee will be discussed:

- The cost of coffee
- From field to store
- How popular is caffeine

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. What is "Fair Trade" coffee?
2. What is espresso? How is it made?

Activity Ideas

- How much does a cup of coffee cost? Make a class chart listing the price of a cup of coffee from many different places. What's the difference in price from fast food restaurants such as McDonald's and specialty shops such as Starbucks? Record only similar size portions, ex. Small or medium. Make a note if the drink contains extra ingredients, such as chocolate, flavors, extra milk/cream, etc. Can you figure out how much a cup of coffee brewed at home costs?
- What is the typical story of how coffee goes from field to cup? Read this interesting news article following what happens to the coffee beans and the various people involved in the coffee industry from the bean fields in Africa to the coffee house in England.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2005/sep/16/food.foodanddrink>

Use the News

The presence of caffeine in coffee is one of its selling points. Other popular drinks have caffeine also. Write a newspaper-style article about caffeinated drink usage by students your age. Take a survey or interview a few students. What drinks do they like? Do they contain caffeine? Would they drink a decaffeinated version of that drink? Etc.

Answers to the Quiz

1.) b, 2.) d, 3.) a, 4.) a, 5.) a, 6.) a, 7.) fermented 8.) berry, 9.) 10 , 10.) specialty

Quick Quiz — Coffee

- Coffee is traded around the world more than oil.
a. True b. False
- Coffee plants are believed to have originated in _____.
a. Brazil b. Egypt c. Colombia d. Ethiopia
- Most coffee beans are still picked by hand.
a. True b. False
- About _____ of the world's coffee beans are grown in Brazil.
a. 1/4 b. 1/3 c. 1/2 d. all
- North Americans drink more than 400 million cups of coffee each day.
a. True b. False

6. Each coffee-plant berry contains _____ beans.
a. 2 b. 4 c. 8 d. 12

Vocabulary Comprehension

7. Coffee beans were sometimes _____ and made into wine.
8. The fruit of a coffee plant is called a _____.

Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)

9. If 20 beans were used to create one cup of coffee, how many cups of coffee could you make with 200 beans?
10. Which costs more, 3 cups of specialty coffee at \$5.20 per cup, or 7 cups of regular brew at \$1.90 per cup?