

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: A LONG LOOK AT OCEAN LINERS

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

Subject Areas: The following information regarding ocean liners will be discussed:

- Difference between ocean liners and cruise ships
- What happened to the Titanic?
- Ocean liner facts and history

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's the difference between an ocean liner and a cruise ship?
2. How big are the biggest cruise ships?

Activity Ideas

- Museums can provide valuable information by displaying relics and models to observe and learn from. The Ocean Liner Virtual Museum provides an Internet version of a museum with objects too huge to fit into a real museum. Information and pictures about almost any ocean liner you can think of is offered here: Start with the Ocean Liner Story section and click on the Introduction link. After that, browse where your interest lies. This site would make an excellent Webquest for each student to make: just write down information notes and questions other students can search for and answer.
<http://www.oceanlinermuseum.co.uk/lobby.htm>
- The Titanic was thought to be unsinkable. What happened? Why did it sink? Research and write a report about the design and tragic end of this magnificent ocean liner.

Use the News

How does a cruise ship vacation compare to a “land vacation”? Check out popular cruises versus “air/ hotel” vacations in the newspaper. How are the prices different? Are the locations different? Some research at a cruise ship Web site will help further the comparison.

Answers to the Quiz

1.) a, 2.) c, 3.) a, 4.) a, 5.) a, 6.) d, 7.) fastest 8.) airline, 9.) $\frac{1}{4}$, 10.) 232

Quick Quiz — Ocean Liners

1. The Queen Mary 2 is the largest ocean liner ever built.
a. True b. False
2. Many of the first ocean liners were only successful after they offered to transport _____.
a. food b. troops c. mail d. livestock
3. Most astronomers believe there is a super-massive black hole in the center of ocean liners.
a. True b. False
4. During the 1800s, most of the passenger service was offered by ___ companies.
a. British b. American c. Norwegian d. French
5. Most of the ocean liners today are used for short cruises to vacation destinations.
a. True b. False

6. Some shipbuilders made “dummy” _____ to make the ship look more impressive.
a. propellers b. portholes c. anchors d. smokestacks

Vocabulary Comprehension

7. The “Blue Riband” was an award given to the _____ ocean liner to cross the Atlantic Ocean.
8. The use of transoceanic ocean liners began to decline in the 1940s as people began to use the faster _____ services.

Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)

9. If a cruise liner uses $\frac{1}{2}$ of its fuel getting to its first destination, then $\frac{1}{4}$ to its next port, what fraction is left over?
10. If 113 passengers leave a ship of 345, how many are still on-board?