

# 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: THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF WALT DISNEY**

For release the week of: November 16, 2009

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

**Subject Areas:** The following information regarding Walt Disney will be discussed:

- How long do animated movies take to make?
- History of Walt Disney's life and movies
- The many different Disney films

**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. Are there any other Disney theme parks besides the one in California and Florida?
2. The first animated movies were drawn/painted by hand and took a long time to make. "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" took three years. How long to modern animated movies take to make? Much, if not all, of current animated movies are done on computers.

# Activity Ideas

- Take a look at what “Silly Symphonies” was really about with this historical short documentary with Walt Disney himself narrating.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIAUN7poNZ4> There are several other interesting video clips with original Disney animations. Here is a short tribute to Disney with brief historical facts about his creative life.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jmt6diPzhI&feature=fvw>
- Disney movies are some of the most popular in the history of cinema. Research and display the information a list of all the Disney company movies from the beginning to present day. Next, tally the number of students that either have seen or heard of each movie. Finally, choose one to view as a class.

## Use the News

What movies are currently playing at your local theaters? Are any of them Disney productions? If you're not sure, look them up on the Internet. [Www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com) is a good source for movie information.

# Answers to the Quiz

1.) b, 2.) a, 3.) a, 4.) d 5.) a, 6.) a 7.) symphonies 8.) cartoon, 9.) 90, 10.) 4 (Don't forget about Snow White.)

# Quick Quiz — The Wonderful World of Walt Disney

1. Disney won his first Academy Award with “Snow White.”  
a. True b. False
2. Disneyland is located in \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. California b. Chicago c. Florida d. New York
3. Mickey Mouse was originally going to be named Mortimer Mouse .  
a. True b. False

4. \_\_\_\_\_ made his debut in the 1934 film "The Wise Little Hen."  
a. Goofy b. Mickey Mouse c. Bambi d. Donald Duck
5. Walt Disney started a company called the "Laugh-O-Gram Company."  
a. True b. False
6. \_\_\_\_\_ was created before Mickey.  
a. Oswald b. Donald c. Goofy d. Minnie

## Vocabulary Comprehension

7. Disney's company made short animated films called "Silly \_\_\_\_\_."
8. Walt produced a series of short films that featured a live-action girl named Alice who interacted with \_\_\_\_\_ characters .

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

9. If a movie lasts  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours, how many minutes is that?
10. If Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs went for a walk, but half of the group got lost, how many would that be?