

# 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 St. Patrick's Day 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: REMEMBERING ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

For release the week of: March 8, 2010

**Objective:** After completing the exercises, students should have a better understanding of St. Patrick's Day.

**Subject Areas:** The following information regarding St. Patrick's Day will be discussed:

- The shamrock
- Green foods and treats
- Local festivities

**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. Why was Maewyn Succat made a saint? What is a saint?
2. Locate Ireland, Scotland, and England on a map.

## **Activity Ideas**

- Shamrocks are an important symbol for Ireland. They symbolized something for the ancient druids before St. Patrick's time, and they became a new symbol of St. Patrick's teachings about God. Research and summarize the two meanings of the shamrock.
- Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with some fun and traditional Irish food. "Green" examples could include: green grapes, pickles, hard-boiled green eggs, Irish soda bread, green mashed potatoes, corn beef, etc. Green food coloring can be added to many dishes. Here's a Web page with lots of ideas: [http://childrens-party-food.suite101.com/article.cfm/st\\_patricks\\_day\\_childrens\\_party\\_food\\_ideas](http://childrens-party-food.suite101.com/article.cfm/st_patricks_day_childrens_party_food_ideas)

## Use the News

Parades and festivities often occur in many places in North America on St. Patrick's Day. What's happening in your area? Cut out ads and articles about March 17<sup>th</sup> to post in your classroom.

# Answers to the Quiz

1.) b, 2.) d, 3.) b, 4.) b, 5.) a, 6.) c, 7.) Celtic, 8.) shamrocks, 9.) 3, 10.) \$2.70

## Quick Quiz – St. Patrick's Day

1. St. Patrick was Irish.  
a. True b. False
2. St. Pat first came to Ireland as a \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. missionary b. priest c. soldier d. slave
3. He helped Ireland by removing all the snakes.  
a. True b. False
4. Many things are dyed \_\_\_\_\_ on St. Patrick's Day.  
a. red b. green c. yellow d. gold
5. The shamrock is the national emblem of Ireland .  
a. True b. False
6. One of the first St. Patrick's Day parades took place in New York City in \_\_62 .  
a. 12 b. 14 c. 17 d. 19

## Vocabulary Comprehension

7. He was captured by \_\_\_\_\_ raiders when he was 16.
8. St. Patrick's Day postcards made from dried \_\_\_\_\_ were popular in the late 1800s.

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

9. If you collected 21 shamrocks for 7 people, how many would each person get?
10. If a St. Pat's Day dinner cost \$17.30, and you paid with a \$20 bill, how much change would you get back?