

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: TAKING NOTE OF STEEL DRUMS

For release the week of: June 7, 2010

Objective: After completing the exercises, students should have a better understanding about steel drums.

Subject Areas: The following information about steel drums will be discussed:

- History of the steel drum
- Making your own steel drum
- What is it like to see and hear steel drums?

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. Where are the countries of Trinidad and Tobago?
2. Why was the steel drum created out of “found items” instead of molded and formed like other instruments? What is its history?

Activity Ideas

- Here's a link to instructions on how to make your own simple steel drum from a coffee can. It won't have the same sound as a real steel drum, but it can be used to create your own basic tunes. http://kidscrafts.suite101.com/article.cfm/how_to_make_a_steel_drum
- Ever heard or seen a steel drum band? Check out these videos of a real steel drum. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-bTMbePj0A&feature=related>. Here's one explaining the basics of the steel drum (or steel pan). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nT4D0-6pHTM&feature=fvw>. There are many more to watch and enjoy unique steel drum music.

Use the News

. What concerts are being performed in your area? Check the newspaper for listings of various concerts or music reviews. What kinds of music are available to listen to? What do the reviews say about recent performances? What kinds of comments do they make about the music? Share and discuss the information you find.

Answers to the Quiz

1.) a, 2.) a 3.) b, 4.) c, 5.) a, 6.) b, 7.) pan, 8.) bamboo 9.) 7min 5sec, 10.) 12inches

Quick Quiz – Steel Drums

1. Elliott Mannedette created a steel drum from an oil drum.
a. True b. False
2. The six bass uses six drums played by _____ musician(s).
a. one b. two c. four d. six
3. Steel pans are not really drums.
a. True b. False
4. The steel drum is the national instrument of _____.
a. Africa b. Indonesia c. Tobago d. Cuba
5. Large bulges on a steel drum produce lower tones.
a. True b. False
6. In 1946, Ulric Springer was the first player to use _____ sticks.
a. 1 b. 2 c. 4 d. 6

Vocabulary Comprehension

7. A steel drum is also called a steel _____ .
8. Before the steel drum was made out of metal, the instrument was made out of _____.

Math Comprehension (subtraction, division, addition, fractions)

9. If one drum song lasted 2 minutes and 31 seconds and another lasted 4 minutes and 35 seconds, how long did it take to play both?
10. If the diameter of a drum is 24 inches, what is the radius?