**The Cove**

**Flipper**



1. Richard “Ric” Barry caught and trained female dolphins for the *Flipper* TV show. What first gave him the impression that dolphins were self-aware and exceptionally intelligent?
2. The fish house of many aquariums that house dolphins administer drugs like Tagamet for ulcers. Relate the acoustic nature of dolphins to the stress they encounter in captivity.
3. How do Taiji fishermen use the acoustic nature of dolphins as a tool to catch them? What happens to the caught dolphins?
4. What experience did Ric have with Kathy, the dolphin that most often played Flipper?

**Commercial Whaling**

1. A tremendous amount of money is behind the hunting at Taiji. How much is a dead dolphin worth as meat? What is a live show dolphin worth?
2. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) is a United Nations recognized body set up to regulate the hunting and capture of all cetaceans. There is currently a moratorium on commercial whaling. What exception is written into this moratorium that Japan takes advantage of?

**The Cove**

1. Ric describes the attempts to document and expose the dolphin hunting practices at Taiji as a “game of cat and mouse”. Explain what he means by that.
2. How is the secret killing lagoon like a natural fortress?
3. Describe three tools developed by the crew to record what occurs in the lagoon.
4. Fishermen in Taiji describe dolphin hunting as a tradition. What counter-argument do the conservationists present?

**Mercury Poisoning**

1. One analysis of dolphin meat conducted for the documentary showed a contamination of 2000 parts per million (ppm). Why is dolphin meat more likely to contain mercury than other species?
2. Within a population, who is most vulnerable to the effects of mercury poisoning?
3. What are some of the symptoms of mercury poisoning in adults?

**Controlling the System**

1. At one point, the fishermen were offered a subsidy that would have matched their pay for hunting the dolphins. What reason did they give for turning down this offer?
2. Explain how Japan has used small developing countries to manipulate the decision-making of the IWC.
3. What form of propaganda is employed by the dolphin fishery in Taiji that the two city council members object to?
4. Describe the footage captured by the hidden cameras around the cove.

**Epilogue and Criticism**

1. Describe three changes claimed as a result of the filming of the documentary.
2. David Cox, a reviewer for the United Kingdom newspaper the Guardian, describes the movie as “evangelism” and suggests that those in western countries are hypocrites due to their similar treatment of cattle.

Read his review at **http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/filmblog/2009/oct/26/the-cove-documentary**
and summarize his criticisms. Which arguments do you feel are valid? Do these change your opinion of the documentary and the actions of the fishermen?

1. Ilan Kapoor, writing for the Bright Lights Film Journal, says “…to twist Gayatri Spivak's famous phrase, it's a case of (mostly) 'white men saving cute dolphins from yellow men.” Read the full review at **http://brightlightsfilm.com/68/68thecove.php**.

Does this documentary stereotype the Japanese? What groups or organizations does the author believe the documentary should have interviewed to be more balanced?

1. How was the top-down affect demonstrated in this film?