

The Incredible Dolphin

1 Many people say dolphins are very **intelligent**. They seem to be able to think, understand, and learn things quickly. But are they **smart** like humans or more like cats or dogs? Dolphins use their brains differently from people. But scientists say dolphin intelligence and human intelligence *are alike* in some ways. How?

FACT 1: Talk to Me

10 Like humans, every dolphin has its own “name.” The name is a special whistle. Each dolphin chooses a **specific** whistle for itself, usually by its first birthday. Actually, scientists think dolphins, like people, “talk” to each other about a lot of things, such as their age, their feelings, or finding food. And, like humans, dolphins use a **system** of sounds and body language to communicate. But understanding their **conversations** is not easy for humans. No one “speaks dolphin” yet, but some scientists are trying to learn.

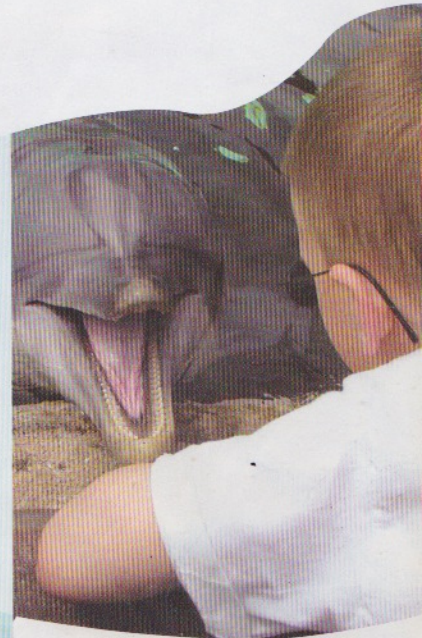
FACT 2: Let's Play

20 Dolphins are also social animals. They live in groups called *pods*, and they often join others from different pods to play games and have fun—just like people. In fact, playing together is something only intelligent animals do.

FACT 3: Fishermen's Helpers

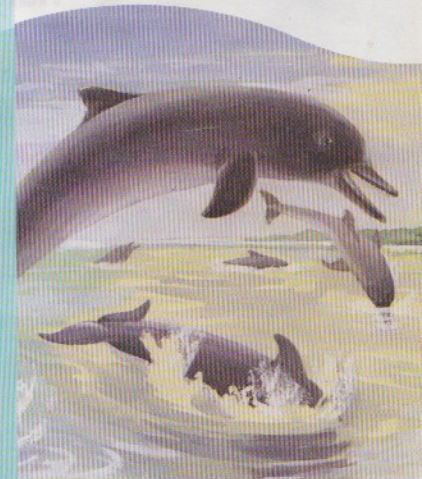
25 Dolphins and humans are similar in another way: both make plans to get something they want. In the seas of southern Brazil, for example, dolphins use an interesting **strategy** to get food. When fish are near a boat, dolphins signal¹ to the fishermen to put their nets in the water. Using this **method**, the men can catch a lot of fish. What is the **advantage** for the dolphins? Why do they **assist** the men? The dolphins get to eat some of the fish.

¹ If you **signal** to someone, you make a gesture or sound to tell them something.



▲ Dolphins communicate using sounds and body language.

▼ Like humans, dolphins play games together.



Musical Elephants

Did You Know?

Every November, thousands of people watch elephants dance and play soccer at the Surin Elephant Round-Up Festival in Thailand.

1 In the town of Lampang in northern Thailand, there is an unusual¹ group of musicians. They play many different kinds of music—everything from traditional Thai songs to music by Beethoven. Both children and adults love this group. What makes them so popular? Is it their music? Their looks?² Yes, it's both of these things, but it's also something else: they're elephants.



15 These musical elephants started at the Thai Elephant Conservation Center (TECC) in Lampang. The TECC protects elephants. It teaches people to understand and care for these huge, but gentle, animals. And, like many zoos around the world, the TECC encourages elephants to paint.

▲ Sangduen Chailert helps elephants at a nature park near Chiang Mai, Thailand.

20 Richard Lair works with the TECC. He knows a lot about elephants. He says some of the animals' paintings are very good. But, in fact, elephants hear better than they see. And so he had an idea: if elephants are intelligent and they have good hearing, maybe they can play music. To test his idea, Lair and a friend started the Thai Elephant Orchestra.³ During a performance, the elephants play a variety of instruments, including the drums and the xylophone. The animals also use their voices and trunks to make sounds.



30 But can elephants really make music properly? Yes, says Lair. They're very creative. Humans encourage the animals to play, but the elephants make their own songs; they don't just copy their trainers or other people. There are now CDs of the group's music, which earn money for the TECC. And the music these artists create is pretty amazing.

¹ If something is **unusual**, it does not happen very often or you do not see it or hear it very often.

² When you refer to someone's **looks**, you are referring to how beautiful or ugly they are.

³ An **orchestra** is a large group of musicians who play a variety of instruments together.