

NEWS BREAK

Wednesday's News Break selects an article from **Tuesday, April 5** of The Seattle Times e-Edition for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions. **Please remember to always preview the content of the article before sharing with your students.**

End to orca breeding distresses researchers (Main News, **page A4**).

Pre-Reading and Vocabulary

1. Why do you think it is important for scientists/researchers to study the breeding (reproduction) of animals? What types of things do you think researchers can learn about animals based on when and how often they reproduce?
2. **Vocabulary: Match the words to the numbered definitions in the chart below.**

A. accessible	1. a person who disapproves of someone or something
B. activist	2. a place or thing that provides something useful
C. capacity	3. the act of careful watching and listening : the activity of paying close attention to someone or something in order to get information
D. captivity	4. a person who uses or supports strong actions (such as public protests) to help make changes in politics or society
E. critics	5. a group of people or animals of a particular kind that live in a place
F. dwindle	6. extremely important
G. geriatric	7. to gradually become smaller
H. observation	8. the act of stopping something gradually over a period of time in a planned series of steps
I. phase out	9. able to be used or obtained
J. physiological	10. the state of being kept in a place (such as a prison or a cage) and not being able to leave or be free
K. population	11. a poisonous substance and especially one that is produced by a living thing
L. resource	12. the ways that living things or any of their parts function
M. toxins	13. the largest amount or number that can be held or contained
N. vital	14. an old person

Comprehension

1. SeaWorld made the decision to end orca breeding and phase out its world-famous killer-whale performances by 2019 following years of what?
2. Research biologist Dawn Noren was studying up close how female killer whales pass _____ to their calves through their _____. **(Fill in the blanks)**
3. How many mother-and-calf pair did research biologist Dawn Noren get to observe before the end of the breeding program at SeaWorld was announced?
4. What did Dawn Noren say it was going to be difficult to do?
5. As the SeaWorld population dwindles, what will researchers lose the chance to collect?
6. Scientists say that as the animals age, research will be limited to _____ orcas. **(Fill in the blank)**
7. What did SeaWorld's critics say that SeaWorld had failed to do even though they have had the largest population of orcas?
8. What do researchers outside SeaWorld argue they need its facilities and 1,500 employees in animal care to answer questions about?
9. SeaWorld parks hold all of the orcas in captivity in the U.S. - **true or false?**

Additional Activities

1. **Answer the following questions about the article you just read:**
 - A. Who or what is this article about?
 - B. Why do you think this article is important?
 - C. What is the most important or interesting fact you learned from this article?
2. If possible have students watch the film Blackfish in the classroom. (Age: 13+; MPAA Rating -- PG-13; Documentary; 2013, 81 minutes; Color. Available from Amazon.com.) Then have students discuss what they learned from the movie and how they now feel about animals living in captivity. Specifically have them discuss how they think living in captivity affects the orcas. Then have students discuss what responsibility humans have to protect animals and do what is in their best interest and is/has Sea World done what is in the best interest of the orcas that live in captivity there. (If it is not possible to watch the film – students can still discuss the questions.)

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Answer Key to Vocabulary

- A. 9
- B. 4
- C. 13
- D. 10
- E. 1
- F. 7
- G. 14
- H. 3
- I. 8
- J. 12
- K. 5
- L. 2
- M. 11
- N. 6

Answer Key to Comprehension Questions

1. They made the decision to end orca breeding and phase out its world-famous killer-whale (orca) performances following years of protests and a drop in ticket sales at its parks.
2. toxins, milk
3. She got to observe only one mother-and-calf pair before the end of the breeding program was announced.
4. She said it was going to be really difficult to publish (her research) after observing only one pair (with only one).
5. They will lose the chance to collect health data.
6. geriatric
7. They said that SeaWorld failed to do useful research even though they had the opportunity to.
8. Questions about wild-orca behavior.
9. False – they hold all but one of the orcas in the U.S.