

# A New Tail

## Dolphin Rescue

**Scientists make a new tail for a dolphin.**

Meet Winter. Winter is a 4-year-old dolphin. She lives at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium in Clearwater, Florida. Unlike other dolphins, Winter has a **prosthetic** tail that was made just for her. A prosthetic body part is a fake part that is used in place of a real one.



AP Images

Dolphins move their tails up and down to swim. Winter had to swim side to side. Now that she has a new tail, she can swim as other dolphins do.

Why did Winter need a new tail? In 2005, she got caught in a **crab trapline** and needed to be rescued. A crab trapline is a cord used to lift a crab trap out of the ocean. The cord damaged Winter's tail and made it fall off. She was only 3 months old. Many people thought she would not survive. Dolphins need to move their tails up and down to swim.



Age fotostock/SuperStock

A crab trap is used to catch crabs in the ocean. The traps can be a danger to dolphins and other ocean animals.

## Making a New Tail

Scientist Kevin Carroll heard about Winter. He makes prosthetic parts for humans. "I thought to myself, 'That poor dolphin,' " says Carroll. "Then I thought, 'That's what we do. We replace missing body parts. Why not a dolphin?' "



AP Images

Winter plays with another dolphin at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Carroll and his team tried many ideas. Finally, they made a tail that worked. It is made of a special material that works well with Winter's sensitive skin. The tail is placed over a

gel-like material that helps hold it in place. The new tail lets Winter move quickly through the water. She is now able to swim like a dolphin again!



Winter's prosthetic tail includes **flukes**. Flukes are the parts at the end of the tail.

Clearwater Marine Aquarium

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1.** What is a prosthetic body part?

- A) a fake body part that is used in place of a real one
- B) a real body part that is used in place of a fake one
- C) a fake body part that is used along with another fake one
- D) a real body part that is used along with another real one

**2.** In 2005, Winter's tail was damaged and fell off. What was the effect of Winter losing her tail?

- A) Winter could swim faster.
- B) Winter could not swim at all and had to stay still.
- C) Winter had to swim differently.
- D) Winter could swim better.

**3.** Read these sentences from the text.

"In 2005, [Winter] got caught in a crab trapline and needed to be rescued. [...] The cord damaged Winter's tail and made it fall off. [...] Many people thought she would not survive. Dolphins need to move their tails up and down to swim."

Based on this information, what can you infer about the importance of a dolphin's tail?

- A) A dolphin's tail is not important to its ability to survive.
- B) A dolphin's tail is important to its ability to survive.
- C) A dolphin's tail is not important to its ability to swim.
- D) A dolphin's tail is important to its ability to be rescued.

**4.** Read these sentences from the text.

"Carroll and his team tried many ideas. Finally, they made a tail that worked. It is made of a special material that works well with Winter's sensitive skin. The tail is placed over a gel-like material that helps hold it in place. The new tail lets Winter move quickly through the water."

Based on this information, what can you infer about the ideas Carroll and his team tried before they made a tail that worked?

- A) These ideas probably allowed Winter to swim like a dolphin again.
- B) These ideas probably held Winter's new tail in place.
- C) These ideas probably did not let Winter move quickly through the water.
- D) These ideas probably worked well with Winter's skin.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A) Scientists made a new tail for a dolphin that had lost her tail.
- B) Scientists proved that prosthetic body parts are better than real ones.
- C) Crab traplines are dangerous to dolphins.
- D) Dolphins need to move their tails up and down to swim.

6. At the end of the passage, there is an illustration of Winter's prosthetic tail. Why might the author have included this illustration?

- A) to show readers how Winter's prosthetic tail is better than a real tail
- B) to show readers how a real tail is better than Winter's prosthetic tail
- C) to show readers what Winter's prosthetic tail looks like
- D) to show readers what all prosthetic tails look like

7. Read these sentences from the text.

"When making Winter's tail, Carroll and his team tried many ideas. Finally, they made a tail that worked."

What word or phrase could replace the word "Finally" without changing the meaning of the sentence?

- A) Before
- B) Initially
- C) Even though
- D) At last

8. What does Winter's new tail let her do?

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9. Winter's prosthetic tail includes flukes. Give two more details from the text about the materials that Carroll and his team included in Winter's prosthetic tail.

Support your answer with evidence from the text and images.

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**10.** Carroll and his team tried many ideas before finally making a tail that worked. Based on the text, make an inference about one thing Carroll and his team had to think about when making a tail that would help Winter swim like a dolphin again.

Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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