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Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail

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16th February, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail

A dolphin in a Japanese water park, who couldn't swim because it had no tail, has been given a new lease of life after being fitted with an artificial fin. Fuji, the 36-year-old bottlenose dolphin, suffered a life-threatening disease which caused her tail to rot four years ago. Rather than let the disease spread to the rest of her body, veterinarians at the Churaumi Aquarium in Okinawa, Japan, decided to amputate her tail fin. The result was a very depressed dolphin who could no longer frolic in the water with her aquatic pals. Having no tail also meant Fuji was unable to exercise. This meant she started putting on the kilos, which caused a further threat to her life. Just when doom and gloom surrounded the future of Fuji, in stepped an unlikely saviour –the Japanese tyre manufacturer Bridgestone.

Bridgestone is more commonly associated with Formula One racing technology than artificial dolphin fins. However, it seems dolphin fins and racing car tyres have more in common than we believed. Bridgestone saved Fuji's life by pouring around US\$83,000 dollars into creating the replacement fin. The new prosthesis is made from the same kind of rubber that is used for Formula One car tyres. Fuji wears her new tail fitting for just two to three hours everyday. Her trainer hopes Bridgestone can make an improved version that can be worn for longer, as part of the new fin wears out quickly. This means Fuji will experience pain and discomfort if she uses the fin for a long time, and she'll end up getting hurt. Her trainer said: "Thanks to the new prosthetic creation Fuji is now able to lead a normal life."

WARM-UPS

1. DOLPHIN LIFE: You are a dolphin. With your “dolphin” partner(s), talk about life as a dolphin. What has life been like recently? What do you worry about? Who are your friends in the oceans? Do you know anyone in an aquarium?

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

dolphins / new lease of life / fins / life-threatening diseases / being depressed / Formula One / car tyres / rubber / pain and discomfort / leading a normal life

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. ANIMAL HEADLINES: With your partner(s), imagine what stories are behind these headlines. Share the stories you made up with new partners.

- Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail
- Bactrian camels develop a third hump
- African elephants becoming carnivorous
- The world's dogs refusing to be pets
- The great disappearing ant mystery – none to be found
- Spiders suddenly reproducing in ten times greater numbers
- Cows stop producing milk
- Kangaroos invade Australian cities

4. NEW PARTS: Look at the “new parts” in the table. With your partner(s), talk about what life would be like if you had or used them. Rate them: 10 is “it would have a huge effect on my life”, 1 is “it would have no effect on my life”.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| • wig / toupee | • glass eye |
| • pacemaker | • hearing aid |
| • false eyelashes | • replacement hip |
| • artificial leg | • false teeth (UK) / dentures (US) |
| • bionic hand | • organ transplant |

5. QUICK DEBATE: Students A believe it's OK to keep dolphins in aquariums and make them jump for fish. Students B believe dolphins belong only in the world's oceans. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

6. DOLPHINS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with dolphins. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A dolphin used by the Japanese navy gets a new, super fast tail. T / F
- b. The dolphin who got an artificial tail is 36 years old. T / F
- c. The dolphin needed a new tail because its previous one was cut off. T / F
- d. A car tyre manufacturer developed and made the new tail. T / F
- e. The new tail cost less than eighteen thousand US dollars to make. T / F
- f. The tail is made from silicon and plastic. T / F
- g. The dolphin experiences no pain or discomfort with the new tail. T / F
- h. The dolphin leads a normal life now it has the artificial tail. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| a. artificial | cut off |
| b. rot | have |
| c. amputate | death |
| d. frolic | synthetic |
| e. doom | substitute |
| f. associated | play |
| g. replacement | soreness |
| h. version | decay |
| i. discomfort | model |
| j. lead | linked |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. ...has been given a new lease | threatening disease |
| b. suffered a life- | common than we believed |
| c. let the disease spread | gloom surrounded the future of Fuji |
| d. frolic in the water with her | can be worn for longer |
| e. doom and | of life |
| f. more commonly | aquatic pals |
| g. have more in | a normal life |
| h. an improved version that | to the rest of her body |
| i. she'll end | associated with Formula One |
| j. Fuji is now able to lead | up getting hurt |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail

A dolphin in a Japanese water park, who couldn't swim because it had no tail, has been given a new _____ of life after being _____ with an artificial fin. Fuji, the 36-year-old bottlenose dolphin, suffered a _____-threatening disease which caused her tail to _____ four years ago. Rather than let the disease spread to the rest of her body, veterinarians at the Churaumi Aquarium in Okinawa, Japan, decided to _____ her tail fin. The result was a very depressed dolphin who could no longer frolic in the water with her aquatic _____. Having no tail also meant Fuji was unable to exercise. This meant she started putting on the _____, which caused a further threat to her life. Just when doom and _____ surrounded the future of Fuji, in stepped an unlikely saviour –the Japanese tyre manufacturer Bridgestone.

rot
fitted
gloom
pals
lease
amputate
kilos
life

Bridgestone is more _____ associated with Formula One racing technology than artificial dolphin fins. However, it seems dolphin fins and racing car tyres have more in _____ than we believed. Bridgestone saved Fuji's life by _____ around US\$83,000 dollars into creating the replacement fin. The new _____ is made from the same kind of rubber that is used for Formula One car tyres. Fuji wears her new tail _____ for just two to three hours everyday. Her trainer hopes Bridgestone can make an improved version that can be worn for longer, as part of the new fin _____ out quickly. This means Fuji will experience pain and _____ if she uses the fin for a long time, and she'll end up getting hurt. Her trainer said: "Thanks to the new prosthetic creation Fuji is now able to _____ a normal life."

prosthesis
discomfort
fitting
common
commonly
pouring
lead
wears

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail

A dolphin in a Japanese water park, who couldn't swim because it had no tail, has been given _____ after being fitted with an artificial fin. Fuji, the 36-year-old bottlenose dolphin, suffered _____ disease which caused her tail to rot four years ago. _____ the disease spread to the rest of her body, veterinarians at the Churaumi Aquarium in Okinawa, Japan, decided to _____. The result was a very depressed dolphin who could _____ in the water with her aquatic pals. Having no tail also meant Fuji was unable to exercise. This meant she started putting on the kilos, which _____ to her life. _____ surrounded the future of Fuji, in stepped an unlikely saviour –the Japanese tyre manufacturer Bridgestone.

Bridgestone is more _____ Formula One racing technology than artificial dolphin fins. However, it seems dolphin fins and racing car tyres have _____ we believed. Bridgestone saved Fuji's life _____ US\$83,000 dollars into creating the replacement fin. The new prosthesis is made from the same kind of rubber that is used for Formula One car tyres. Fuji _____ for just two to three hours everyday. Her trainer hopes Bridgestone can make an improved version that can be worn for longer, as part of the _____ quickly. This means Fuji will experience pain and discomfort if she uses the fin for a long time, and _____ hurt. Her trainer said: "Thanks to the new prosthetic creation Fuji is now able to lead a normal life."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'artificial' and 'fin'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "DOLPHIN" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about dolphins.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lease• rot• decided• pals• further• unlikely	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• commonly• in common• pouring• wears out• end up• lead
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DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Do you think this is an interesting story?
- c) Do you prefer dolphin stories to war, business and political stories?
- d) Do you think a dolphin with an artificial tail can live normally?
- e) What do you think of dolphins?
- f) Which would suffer more, a dolphin without a tail or an elephant without a trunk?
- g) Would you like to work with dolphins?
- h) Why do you think Bridgestone helped Fuji?
- i) What do you think life would be like without an important part of your body?
- j) What else do you think tyre manufacturers and dolphins might have in common?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think about what you read?
- c) Do you think spending over \$80,000 on a dolphin tail is a waste of money?
- d) Do you think it's OK to keep dolphins in aquariums?
- e) Would you like to play and swim with dolphins in the ocean?
- f) Which is a better way for Bridgestone to spend \$80,000 on raising its profile - helping Fuji the dolphin, or buying TV ads?
- g) What other animals do you think this kind of technology could help?
- h) Why are dolphins such popular creatures around the world?
- i) What do you think life as a dolphin is like?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

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SPEAKING

CREATURE SYMBOLS: In pairs / groups, decide on what each of the animals below represent. Decide on which world organization could use the creature in its logo, and why.

Creature	What it represents	World organization	Why?
Dolphin			
Scorpion			
Eagle			
Koala			
Ant			
Your choice _____			

Change partners and share your ideas. Try to agree on whose idea is better.
Give a presentation of your ideas to your classmates.

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail

A dolphin in a Japanese water park, who couldn't swim because it had no tail, has been given a new lease of life after being (1) _____ with an artificial fin. Fuji, the 36-year-old bottlenose dolphin, (2) _____ a life-threatening disease which caused her tail to rot four years ago. (3) _____ than let the disease spread to the rest of her body, veterinarians at the Churaumi Aquarium in Okinawa, Japan, decided to amputate her tail fin. The result was a very depressed dolphin who could no longer frolic in the water with her (4) _____ pals. Having no tail also meant Fuji was unable to exercise. This meant she started putting on the kilos, which caused a (5) _____ threat to her life. Just when doom and (6) _____ surrounded the future of Fuji, in stepped an unlikely saviour –the Japanese tyre manufacturer Bridgestone.

Bridgestone is more (7) _____ associated with Formula One racing technology than artificial dolphin fins. However, it seems dolphin fins and racing car tyres have more in common than we believed. Bridgestone saved Fuji's life by (8) _____ around US\$83,000 dollars into creating the replacement fin. The new prosthesis is made from the same kind of rubber that is used for Formula One car tyres. Fuji wears her new tail fitting for just two to three hours everyday. Her trainer hopes Bridgestone can make an (9) _____ version that can be worn for longer, as part of the new fin wears out quickly. This means Fuji will experience pain and discomfort if she uses the fin for a long time, and she'll end (10) _____ getting hurt. Her trainer said: "(11) _____ to the new prosthetic creation Fuji is now able to (12) _____ a normal life."

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) fitted | (b) fit | (c) fitting | (d) fitness |
| 2. | (a) surfer | (b) suffer | (c) suffered | (d) suffering |
| 3. | (a) Farther | (b) Lather | (c) Prefer | (d) Rather |
| 4. | (a) aquatic | (b) equation | (c) aqua | (d) equator |
| 5. | (a) additional | (b) further | (c) extra | (d) another |
| 6. | (a) boom | (b) groom | (c) doom | (d) gloom |
| 7. | (a) in common | (b) common | (c) commonly | (d) commoner |
| 8. | (a) flowing | (b) pouring | (c) dripping | (d) flooding |
| 9. | (a) improve | (b) improves | (c) improvement | (d) improved |
| 10. | (a) out | (b) in | (c) up | (d) down |
| 11. | (a) Thankful | (b) Thanks | (c) Thank you | (d) Thank |
| 12. | (a) lead | (b) leads | (c) leading | (d) leaded |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about bottlenose dolphins. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. REPLACEMENT PARTS POSTER: Make a poster showing how much of the human body can be replaced. Write a description for each replacement / addition with details of how the body gets the new addition, and the cost.

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about what happened to Fuji the dolphin in the years after she was fitted with the prosthetic tail. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter from Fuji the Dolphin to the Bridgestone tyre manufacturer. Tell Bridgestone three things that changed for the better in your life. Ask Bridgestone three questions. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

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ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. T d. T e. F f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. artificial	synthetic
b. rot	decay
c. amputate	cut off
d. frolic	play
e. doom	death
f. associated	linked
g. replacement	substitute
h. version	model
i. discomfort	soreness
j. lead	have

PHRASE MATCH:

a. ...has been given a new lease	of life
b. suffered a life-	threatening disease
c. let the disease spread	to the rest of her body
d. frolic in the water with her	aquatic pals
e. doom and	gloom surrounded the future of Fuji
f. more commonly	associated with Formula One
g. have more in	common than we believed
h. an improved version that	can be worn for longer
i. she'll end	up getting hurt
j. Fuji is now able to lead	a normal life

GAP FILL:

Japanese dolphin gets world's first artificial tail

A dolphin in a Japanese water park, who couldn't swim because it had no tail, has been given a new **lease** of life after being **fitted** with an artificial fin. Fuji, the 36-year-old bottlenose dolphin, suffered a **life-threatening** disease which caused her tail to **rot** four years ago. Rather than let the disease spread to the rest of her body, veterinarians at the Churaumi Aquarium in Okinawa, Japan, decided to **amputate** her tail fin. The result was a very depressed dolphin who could no longer frolic in the water with her aquatic **pals**. Having no tail also meant Fuji was unable to exercise. This meant she started putting on the **kilos**, which caused a further threat to her life. Just when doom and **gloom** surrounded the future of Fuji, in stepped an unlikely saviour – the Japanese tyre manufacturer Bridgestone.

Bridgestone is more **commonly** associated with Formula One racing technology than artificial dolphin fins. However, it seems dolphin fins and racing car tyres have more in **common** than we believed. Bridgestone saved Fuji's life by **pouring** around US\$83,000 dollars into creating the replacement fin. The new **prosthesis** is made from the same kind of rubber that is used for Formula One car tyres. Fuji wears her new tail **fitting** for just two to three hours everyday. Her trainer hopes Bridgestone can make an improved version that can be worn for longer, as part of the new fin **wears** out quickly. This means Fuji will experience pain and **discomfort** if she uses the fin for a long time, and she'll end up getting hurt. Her trainer said: "Thanks to the new prosthetic creation Fuji is now able to **lead** a normal life."

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - a 2 - c 3 - d 4 - a 5 - b 6 - d 7 - c 8 - b 9 - d 10 - c 11 - b 12 - a