



## Sully the Pilot Whale • Study Guide

A pilot whale is stranded on a beach on the tropical Caribbean island of Curaçao. He is rescued and rehabilitated by biologists from the Curaçao Sea Aquarium, and named Sully. Once he has been nursed back to health, they try to release him to the wild, but he won't go. So he makes a 2,000 mile journey to Sea World San Diego in an airplane. At Sea World they learn the secret of his reluctance to leave human care.

### Objectives

1. Introduces viewers to how marine mammals live and are rehabilitated.
2. Discusses many life habits and biology of pilot whales.

### Questions for before watching the program

1. What are some reasons that a marine mammal might strand on a beach?
2. How do marine mammals like dolphins and pilot whales find their food? (Hint: generally not with their eyes).
3. How important is hearing to a whale or dolphin?
4. Pilot whales are *pelagic* species. What does this mean? Would they normally be close to a beach?

### Discussion for after watching the program

1. Marine mammals need water but can't drink the water in the sea. How do they get their water? Why can't they drink sea water?
2. What are some attributes of mammals? Name some mammals that live in the ocean.
3. Pilot whales use *echolocation* to find food down deep in the ocean where it's dark. Sully is hard of hearing. How would this make it hard for him to catch prey?
4. How did the staff at the Curaçao Sea Aquarium train Sully to follow the boat? Why did they want him to learn to follow the boat?
5. Why did Sully go to Sea World?
6. Internet research: how large could Sully get to be when fully grown?