

Name _____

Beyond the Waves: Exploring the Lifespan of Dolphins

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Factors that influence the lifespan of dolphins include environmental conditions, predation, food availability, and human impacts. Environmental factors such as pollution, habitat degradation, climate change, and exposure to toxins can pose significant threats to dolphin populations, affecting their overall health and survival. Predation by sharks, killer whales, and other large predators, competition for food resources, accidental entanglement in fishing gear, and human activities such as habitat destruction, overfishing, bycatch, marine pollution, and boat strikes further impact dolphin populations.
2. One threat faced by dolphins in the wild is pollution, which can negatively impact their health and habitat. Marine pollution, including plastic debris, chemical pollutants, oil spills, and noise pollution, poses significant threats to dolphin populations worldwide.
3. Human activities impact dolphin populations by contributing to habitat destruction, overfishing, bycatch, marine pollution, and boat strikes. These anthropogenic factors can disrupt dolphin populations, reduce their available habitat and food sources, and increase their vulnerability to disease and other stressors.
4. Conservation measures such as marine protected areas, habitat restoration, sustainable fishing practices, and public education campaigns aim to mitigate the impacts of human activities on dolphin populations and their habitats. These efforts seek to protect and conserve dolphin populations by reducing threats such as habitat destruction, pollution, overfishing, and boat strikes, and promoting coexistence between humans and dolphins in their shared environments.

