



Dolphin Trainers!

Researchers believe that positive reinforcement is a more effective motivator than negative reinforcement, but personally... I don't buy it.

Overview

- ★ # of Participants: **Ideally 6-16, can do 4-25**
- ★ Where to Play: **Indoors/Outdoors**
- ★ Age of Participants: **Elementary School / Middle School / High School**
- ★ Approximate Time to Play: **20 to 30 minutes**
- ★ Materials: **At least one spray bottle per team**

Summary

- ★ Give at least one spray bottle and assign one dolphin per team
- ★ When the dolphins leave the room, choose a trick for them to perform
- ★ Spray the dolphins if they perform an incorrect trick
- ★ The team whose dolphin performs the trick first, receives a point.

How to Play

Divide players into teams of 2-5 people and give one spray bottle to each team. Have each team pick one person to be the dolphin for the round, while all other team members will be dolphin trainers. Next, all dolphins will leave the room while you and the dolphin trainers decide what trick they'd like the dolphins to perform. The "trick" should be some sort of simple task: laying down on their stomach, putting both of their hands in the air, jumping up in the air, etc. Whichever team's dolphin completes the trick first will receive one point.

The dolphin's job is to figure out what action they're supposed to perform. Unfortunately for the dolphins, the trainers can only communicate with *negative* reinforcement, aka spraying their dolphin with water. Once the dolphins return to their teams, they will start attempting to perform the trick, and trainers will provide feedback by spraying them whenever they make an incorrect motion. It is similar to a game of hot and cold. For example, if the trick is to jump up and down, and the dolphin raises their hands above their head, they would get sprayed because they're getting further away from what they should be doing. But, if the dolphin starts to crouch down like they're going to jump, then they won't get sprayed. You should have at least one spray bottle per team, but the more spray bottles, the better!

In the first couple of rounds, it is best to start with easy tasks (e.g. put a hand on your head, clap your hands, or stick your tongue out). As the players become more familiar with the game, you can make the tasks more difficult.

Tips!

After the players get the hang of things, you can assign harder tricks like "Do a push-up" or "Do a jumping jack". You can also throw in some props as red herrings to distract the dolphins from their training!

Watch the
Video Explanation Here!

