

Especially for young readers



The Mini Page

© 1978 by The Mini Page Publishing Co. All rights reserved worldwide. Syndicated by M.S.C. Features, Inc.



Distinguished Achievement Awards Winner 1975

By BETTY DEBNAM

First the trick . . . then the click!

How to Train a Walrus

San Diego, California—
“Click, click, click.”

That is the sound of Julie Scardina’s clicker at a show at Sea World, a big amusement park.

Julie uses it to signal a 1,500-pound walrus named “Flo” that she is doing just the right trick.

Julie also uses it to signal performing sea lions and otters.

The clicker is called a “bridge,” since it is a bridge between the trainer and the animal.

The tricks that Flo and the other animals do are part of their natural behavior.

Such actions as rolling over, jumping, twisting and back flips are



Sea World Photos

Click — Julie signals Flo to heave out of the water as she holds a clicker in one hand. Flo is trained to respond to the click. She also likes to be touched.

matched to voice commands or hand signals. Then the clicker says that the trick is well done.

After the click, the animals are often awarded a fish or some tasty treat.

If the animals don’t do their tricks, they are given a “time-out” or just ignored.

They learn that the only way to get a reward is to perform well.

Julie went to a special college in California to learn to become an animal trainer.

“I like working with intelligent animals,” she says.

Julie, walruses, sea lions and otters click well together!



Click — A sea lion flips a flipper and Julie rewards it with a click and a treat.

Draw a line to these words in the story:

- amusement
- natural
- pound
- ignored
- together
- voice
- command



Click — A little river otter waves and gets a click. Julie will also reward the little performer with a munchy treat.