

## *The Truman Show Discussion Questions*

1. The movie opens with the following statement from Christof: "We've become bored with watching actors give us phony emotions. We're tired of pyrotechnics and special effects. While the world he (Truman) inhabits is, in some respects, counterfeit, there is nothing fake about Truman himself. No scripts, no cue cards. It isn't always Shakespeare, but it's genuine. It's a life."

What is that Christof means when he states that "there is nothing fake about Truman himself."?

2. In what ways, if any, does Truman's relationship with his perceived world differ from that of a normal human being?
3. During an interview, Christof says "We accept the reality with which we are presented. It is as simple as that." Do you agree or disagree with Christof?
4. During an interview, Christof states the following: "I have given Truman the chance to lead a normal life. The world, the place you live in, is the sick place. Seahaven is the way the world should be." Is Christof correct? What, if any, would be the benefits of living in Seahaven as opposed to the real world? Or is Seahaven "the real world"?
5. When speaking of Truman, Christof states: "He could leave at any time. If this were anything more than a vague ambition, if he was absolutely determined to discover the truth, there is no way we could prevent him." Truman eventually does discover the true nature of his reality despite the strong efforts of Christof and the network. What does Truman's triumph have to say about the free-will/determinism debate?
6. As Truman begins to piece together the falsity of the world that surrounds him, his view of Seahaven is radically altered. He starts to question and analyze all that he encounters. Can you think of a parallel in your own life that has changed the way you process the world?
7. Consider yourself in Truman's position. If presented with the choice to remain in Seahaven, a place where you have been promised that "you have nothing to fear", or to enter into another world that you know little or nothing about, which would you choose?

8. There's The Truman Show that is the TV show the movie is about, and there's the movie called The Truman Show that we see in the theatre or on DVD. We'll call the TV show TS-1 and the movie TS-2. In TS-2, viewers of TS-1 are depicted in various ways. Presumably, they enjoy watching TS-1. What is it about TS-1 that keeps them watching? Why do they like watching? What does this say about them?
  
9. Those watching TS-1 seem to have opinions about the quality of life Truman has on "Seahaven." What are they supposed to think about Truman and his quality of life? How does this compare with Christof's attitude about Truman's quality of life? Now think about how we are supposed to regard Truman's life as we view the film, TS-2. Is there a difference between what we're supposed to think or feel as we watch the movie and what the TV viewers are supposed to think and feel as they watch the TV show? Describe whatever differences you think of.
  
10. What is this movie about? Do you think the filmmakers are making an argument? If so, what is that argument? What is the thesis and what evidence is presented in support of that thesis?
  
11. Truman's level of knowledge of what the world is like changes through the movie. If you had to compare how much knowledge you have of the world to the level of knowledge Truman has of the world, how would you compare? At what point in the movie does Truman's knowledge of the world most match your knowledge of the world?
  
12. Some claim that this film illustrates how a person may be able to acquire knowledge that is important, even when much of his community is determined to deceive him or her. Is this a plausible claim about the film? How could this claim be challenged?