

# THE TRUMAN SHOW

More points for discussion

**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 does Truman's relationship with his perceived world differ from that of a normal human being?

**3.** When referring to the Fiji Islands, Truman says

*"You can't get any further away before you start coming back. You know that there are still islands there where no human being has ever set foot."*

This shows a desire in Truman for something more than his ordinary day-to-day life. In the world Truman lives in, the influx of perceptions into him are heavily controlled and restricted. This adventurous side of Truman is potentially very dangerous to the interests of the television network, which is in complete control of Truman's environment. Where did these ideas that Truman has come from? Do you think that Truman was allowed to read works that might potentially invoke these ideas?

**4.** During an interview, Christof says

*"We accept the reality with which we are presented. It is as simple as that."*

In Plato's Allegory of the Cave, a few subjects are chained where all that they could see were shadows of real objects on the wall in front of them. According to Plato, these subjects come to accept the shadows as ultimate reality. Plato saw the physical universe in this way, merely as a lacking representation of the Forms, the ultimate reality to be found in a higher realm. In what ways might Plato's Allegory of the Cave relate to Christof's above statement?

**5.** Throughout the film, there are shameless advertisements and product placements presented as part of Truman's life. Is it moral to use Truman's life as a means to monetary gain?

**6.** 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?

**7.** 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?

**8.** The final scene of the film contains the following dialogue:

Christof: *Truman, you can speak. I can hear you.*

Truman: *Who are you?*

Christof: *I am the creator of a television show that gives hope, joy, and inspiration to millions.*

Truman: *Then who am I?*

Christof: *You're the star.*

Truman: *Was nothing real?*

Christof: *You were real. That's what made you so good to watch. Listen to me Truman. There is no more truth out there than there is in the world I created for you. Same lies. Same deceit. But in my world, you have nothing to fear.*

**9.** Is Christof on target when he says that there is no more truth in the real world than there is in Seahaven? What school of thought would Christof fall into with this statement?

**10.** When Truman finally exits Seahaven, what do you think it is that he expects to find on the other side of the door?