

Circus Arts: Innovations and Milestones

Circus Arts · Practice Test · 15 Questions

1. Who is credited with inventing the modern circus ring, standardizing it to 42 feet in diameter?

- A) Philip Astley
- B) P.T. Barnum
- C) Jules Léotard
- D) James Anthony Bailey

2. In 1859, who invented the flying trapeze, performing the first public act on the apparatus in Paris?

- A) Charles Blondin
- B) Jules Léotard
- C) Arthur Concello
- D) Tony Steele

3. Which circus performer was the first to successfully cross Niagara Falls on a tightrope in 1859?

- A) Philippe Petit
- B) The Great Wallendas
- C) Charles Blondin
- D) Maria Spelterini

4. What innovation did P.T. Barnum introduce to the circus industry in 1872 to allow for larger audiences?

- A) The three-ring circus
- B) Electric lighting
- C) The use of canvas tents
- D) Automated ticket sales

5. Which circus act was the first to perform a triple somersault on the flying trapeze in 1897?

- A) Ernie Clarke
- B) Alfred Codona
- C) Leno Colley
- D) Clyde Beatty

6. What type of circus structure was patented by Joshua Purdy Brown in 1825, marking a shift away from wooden arenas?

- A) The telescopic grandstand
- B) The canvas tent
- C) The permanent circular amphitheater
- D) The revolving stage

7. Which performer is widely recognized as the first woman to successfully execute a triple somersault on the flying trapeze?

- A) Antoinette Concello
- B) Clyde Beatty
- C) Lavinia Warren
- D) Katie Sandwina

8. The first recorded use of electric lighting in a circus performance occurred in 1878 at which establishment?

- A) The Ringling Bros. Circus
- B) The Hippodrome in Paris
- C) The Barnum & Bailey Circus
- D) The Moscow State Circus

9. Who is credited with the 'invention' of the lion tamer act in its modern form, famously entering a cage with lions in 1833?

- A) Isaac Van Amburgh
- B) Clyde Beatty
- C) Gunther Gebel-Williams
- D) Frank Buck

10. In which decade was the 'Globe of Death', a spherical cage for motorcyclists, first developed and utilized?

- A) 1880s
- B) 1910s
- C) 1950s
- D) 1920s

11. What technical circus innovation was introduced by the Ringling Brothers in 1919 to speed up the setup of tent cities?

- A) The motorized stake driver
- B) The hydraulic lifting platform
- C) The portable sound system
- D) The canvas waterproofing process

12. The first documented instance of a 'human cannonball' act, using a spring-loaded catapult, took place in London in which year?

- A) 1855
- B) 1877
- C) 1901
- D) 1925

13. Which circus family pioneered the use of the 'safety net' in the late 19th century, allowing for more dangerous acrobatic stunts?

- A) The Wallendas
- B) The Codonas
- C) The Flying Jordans
- D) The Farfans

14. Who was the first person to walk on a high-wire between the twin towers of the World Trade Center in 1974?

- A) Philippe Petit
- B) Karl Wallenda
- C) Nick Wallenda
- D) Jade Kindar-Martin

15. Which circus organization was the first to feature a fully integrated aerial show in 1984, ushering in the 'nouveau cirque' movement?

- A) Cirque du Soleil
- B) Cirque Eloize
- C) Ringling Bros.
- D) Big Apple Circus