

Advanced Circus History and Technical Specs

Circus Arts · Answer Key · 12 Questions

1. In what year did Philip Astley open his original 'Amphitheatre' in London, an event widely credited with establishing the format of the modern circus ring?

- A) 1768**
- B) 1774
- C) 1782
- D) 1791

2. What is the exact standard diameter of a modern circus ring in meters, as established by Philip Astley to optimize the centrifugal force for riders?

- A) 10.5 meters
- B) 12.8 meters**
- C) 13.5 meters
- D) 15.2 meters

3. Jules Léotard is historically credited with performing the first flying trapeze act in 1859. At which specific Parisian venue did he debut this innovation?

- A) Cirque Olympique
- B) Cirque d'Hiver
- C) Cirque Napoléon**
- D) Cirque Fernando

4. As of the 2024 records, what is the highest number of back somersaults landed by a human in a single 'triple somersault' flying trapeze catch?

- A) 2
- B) 3**
- C) 4
- D) 5

5. In 1919, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus completed a significant merger. Which circus did they officially acquire to form the 'Greatest Show on Earth'?

- A) Forepaugh-Sells
- B) Adam Forepaugh and Sells Brothers**
- C) Barnum & London
- D) Howes Great London

6. What is the minimum height requirement in meters for a high-wire rigging apparatus to be officially classified as a 'high-wire' act by the International Circus Federation?

- A) 5 meters
- B) 7 meters
- C) 9 meters**
- D) 11 meters

7. Who was the first woman to successfully perform a triple somersault on the flying trapeze in 1982?

- A) Antoinette Concello**
- B) Katie Sandwina
- C) Lu Yi
- D) Gladys 'Poodles' Hanneford

8. The 'Wall of Death' motorcycle stunt typically requires a minimum speed in miles per hour (mph) to maintain enough centrifugal force to stay vertical. What is this speed?

- A) 20 mph
- B) 35 mph**
- C) 45 mph
- D) 60 mph

9. In which year did the Cirque du Soleil debut its first production, titled 'Le Grand Tour', in the town of Baie-Saint-Paul?

- A) 1980
- B) 1984**
- C) 1986
- D) 1988

10. What is the maximum weight in kilograms allowed for an elephant during a performance under strict modern regulatory standards in the European Union?

- A) 3,500 kg
- B) 4,000 kg
- C) 5,000 kg
- D) 6,000 kg**

11. How many performers are required to execute a traditional 'seven-person high' pyramid in a professional troupe?

- A) 7
- B) 12
- C) 15**
- D) 21

12. The term 'Circus Maximus' refers to an ancient Roman chariot racing stadium. What was its approximate seating capacity at its peak in the 4th century AD?

- A) 50,000
- B) 100,000
- C) 150,000
- D) 250,000**