

Advanced Circus Arts and Performance Theory

Circus Arts · Practice Test · 20 Questions

1. Which of the following describes the 'cradle' apparatus in aerial circus arts?

- A) A static horizontal bar used for hand-to-hand acrobatics
- B) A suspended framework used by a flyer to be caught by a porter
- C) A harness system for vertical rope climbing
- D) A kinetic sculpture used for rhythmic floor work

2. In biomechanics, what is the 'centre of gravity' adjustment required for a performer executing a back somersault in a tuck position?

- A) The body mass must shift to the distal ends of the limbs
- B) The radius of rotation must be decreased to increase angular velocity
- C) The performer must extend the arms to increase the moment of inertia
- D) The performer must remain rigid to maintain a linear trajectory

3. Who is credited with inventing the modern circus ring's standard diameter of 42 feet (13 meters) to accommodate horses at a canter?

- A) Philip Astley
- B) Jean-Baptiste Auriol
- C) Jules Léotard
- D) Giuseppe Chiarini

4. What is the primary function of the 'swivel' in aerial rigging?

- A) To increase the static load capacity of the anchor point
- B) To allow the apparatus to rotate without twisting the suspension line
- C) To provide a secondary safety brake in case of hardware failure
- D) To measure the tension force applied during dynamic movements

5. Which term refers to the 'hand-to-hand' circus discipline where a base supports a flyer primarily using grip strength and shoulder stability?

- A) Icarian games
- B) Adagio
- C) Tumbling
- D) Contortion

6. In Chinese pole acrobatics, what is the 'flag' movement defined by?

- A) A rapid vertical climb using only the forearms
- B) A horizontal position held perpendicular to the pole
- C) A seated balance atop the pole base
- D) A backflip performed from the base of the apparatus

7. What defines the 'Russian Bar' apparatus?

- A) A long, flexible pole held by two porters for a flyer to perform aerial tricks
- B) A set of parallel bars used for synchronized tumbling
- C) A weighted rope system used for training high-wire balance
- D) A stationary platform for aerial silks mounting

8. What is the 'safety factor' (or working load limit) standard for aerial circus rigging cables in most professional environments?

- A) 2:1
- B) 5:1
- C) 10:1
- D) 1:1

9. In the history of circus, what significant invention did Jules Léotard introduce in 1859?

- A) The unicycle
- B) The flying trapeze
- C) The human cannonball
- D) The trampoline

10. What physiological phenomenon is 'spotting' primarily designed to prevent during rapid rotational movements?

- A) Hypoxia
- B) Vertigo and disequilibrium
- C) Muscle atrophy
- D) Tendonitis

11. Which circus discipline specifically utilizes 'plumes' (weighted leather bags) as part of a performance?

- A) Juggling clubs
- B) Diabolo
- C) Rope spinning
- D) Tightwire walking

12. What is the technical name for the thick, protective mat used specifically under aerial apparatus to absorb impact?

- A) Landing zone
- B) Crash mat
- C) Tumbling strip
- D) Safety webbing

13. What is a 'fly' in the context of stage rigging for circus acts?

- A) An aerial performer who has left the apparatus
- B) The vertical movement of sets or performers using a counterweight system
- C) A specific type of knot used for high-tensile loads
- D) A hand-balancing technique performed on vertical blocks

14. Which act is characterized by the use of a 'cushion' on the performer's shoulder to support the weight of a partner?

- A) Hand-to-hand balancing
- B) Banquine
- C) Risley
- D) Acrobatic bike riding

15. In the study of physics applied to the tightwire, what is the primary purpose of the long balancing pole?

- A) To decrease the total mass of the performer
- B) To lower the centre of mass and increase the moment of inertia
- C) To increase the tension in the wire
- D) To provide a visual marker for the audience

16. Which of the following best defines 'Risley' circus work?

- A) A performer juggling items with their feet while lying on their back
- B) A partner throwing a flyer into the air for acrobatic feats
- C) A high-wire act performed without a safety net
- D) A static strength hold on a suspended hoop

17. What is the primary material component of modern high-performance aerial silks (tissu)?

- A) Low-stretch polyester
- B) High-stretch tricot nylon or polyester blend
- C) Heavy-duty cotton canvas
- D) Braided hemp rope

18. The 'Cyr Wheel' is structurally defined by which geometric properties?

- A) A single-hoop circular frame slightly larger than the user's reach
- B) A double-hoop frame designed for two-person balance
- C) A triangular frame used for asymmetric motion
- D) A rectangular lattice structure for vertical climbing

19. In contortion, what is the 'backbend' often referred to as in technical terminology?

- A) Triple fold
- B) Bridge or chest stand
- C) Dorsal flexion
- D) Pike extension

20. What is the 'factor of safety' in rigging calculation?

- A) The ratio of the breaking strength of a component to its maximum working load
- B) The total weight of the performer plus the weight of the apparatus
- C) The number of knots used to secure a load
- D) The frequency of inspection required per month