

Teaching notes

This is a film about Gifford's Circus, presented by Buchi. We see some of the performers in rehearsal and Buchi interviews one of them about life in the circus.

Background information

Gifford's Circus is a small family circus founded by Toti and Nell Gifford. This company of painted wagons tours around the UK, performing on village greens. The performances feature live music, dancers, clowns, jugglers, acrobats, horses and much more.

A village green: a field which is officially used for fairs, markets and sports events and circuses.

Horse trainer: a person who teaches horses to perform tricks.

Before you watch

- 1 Warm up** Before starting the activities, ask students if they have ever been to the circus. Ask them what they saw. Tell students that the vocabulary in Exercise 1 will help them understand the video. Divide students into pairs and ask them to do Exercise 1. Check answers.

While you watch

- 2** Ask students to read the fact file and predict the type of words that complete the gaps. Explain *village green*. Then ask students to do Exercise 2. Play the first part of the video (0:49:36–0:50:19), pausing to allow students to write the answers.
- 3** Give students time to look at the stills and to describe what they see. Ask questions such as *What's the name of the show? What time does it start?*, etc. Explain the term horse trainer. Ask students to watch the whole video and do Exercise 3. Show the video from beginning to end without interruption (0:49:36–0:52:22). If necessary, show video a second time, pausing to allow students to check their answers.

- 4** Give students time to read the sentences. Explain the meaning of *violin*, *double bass* and *moustache*. Ask students to do Exercise 4 and play the second part of the video (0:50:55–0:51:24). Check answers.

- 5** Give students time to read the sentences. Explain the meaning of *juggling*, *band* and *audience*. Ask students to predict the answers to questions 1–8. Tell students that they need to watch and listen carefully. Play the last part of the video (0:51:24–0:51:42), pausing to allow students to check their predictions.

After you watch

- 6a** Divide the class into pairs. Tell students that they are going to interview their partner about a show or circus they've seen. Ask students to ask and answer the questions in Exercise 6a. Then ask students to write a paragraph about their partner's answer.

Optional activity

If students haven't seen a show or a circus, ask them to research information on a show or circus of their choice for homework. Ask them to write a paragraph about this show and bring it into the next lesson. Alternatively, the research can be done in class time if there's access to computer facilities.

- 6b** Ask students to volunteer to read their text to the class. The class votes for the show or circus performance they would most like to watch.

Key

Before you watch

- 1 juggler 6 tent 1 musicians 2 clown 5 lorry 3 wagon 7

While you watch

- 2 2 summer 3 1999 4 towns 5 tent
- 3 2 It's a musical circus...
3 ...the life of legendary horse trainer Jasmine Smart.
4 The performance starts at five o'clock.
5 Gifford's Circus combines traditional circus skills...
6 ...with comedy, dance and music.

- 4 1 T 2 T 3 F 4 F 5 T 6 T

- 5 2 behind 3 writing 4 four thirty, arriving
5 enjoys 6 lots of 7 everybody
8 the next day

After you watch

6a Students' own answers.

6b Students' own answers.

Video script

- 1 **Buchi on the steps of a wagon** 0:49:36–0:49:57

Buchi For hundreds of years, circuses and fairs have travelled all around the country to put on their shows. These days most circuses are big business and they travel from city to city in huge lorries.

- 2 **Circus camp** 0:49:59–0:50:19

But for three months every summer, Gifford's Circus keeps the old tradition alive. Toti and Nell Gifford started their circus in 1999. And their circus visits small towns and villages in wagons. And in each new place, they set up their white tent on village greens.

- 3 **Introducing a new show** 0:50:22–0:50:28

Today Gifford's Circus has set up in Barrington in Gloucestershire. And this year's show is called Yasmine.

- 4 **Circus preparations** 0:50:28–0:50:36

It's a musical circus about the life of legendary horse-trainer Yasmine Smart.

- 5 **Buchi by an old lorry** 0:50:38–0:50:44

The performance starts at five o'clock. And there's lots to do before the show begins!

- 6 **Circus preparations** 0:50:46–0:50:53

Gifford's Circus combines traditional circus skills with comedy, dance and music.

- 7 **Interview with Sarah** 0:50:55–0:51:24

Sarah's a performer in the show, and she tells us what it's like to be in the circus.

Sarah Circus life is... to me, it's the best life you can have. It's colourful, it's international, it's for all ages, everybody is needed, and everybody can do something special and so everybody finds his place in the circus.

- 8 **Buchi tries juggling** 0:51:24–0:51:42

Buchi This year's company includes two jugglers from Ethiopia, Bibi and Bichu. They gave me a juggling lesson. It's a lot more difficult than it looks.

- 9 **The circus tent** 0:51:47–0:51:52

It's now half past four and people are arriving for the performance.

- 10 **The end of the show** 0:52:16–0:52:22

And tomorrow, they'll move on to another village and another show.