

CIRCUS



VIRTUAL field trip

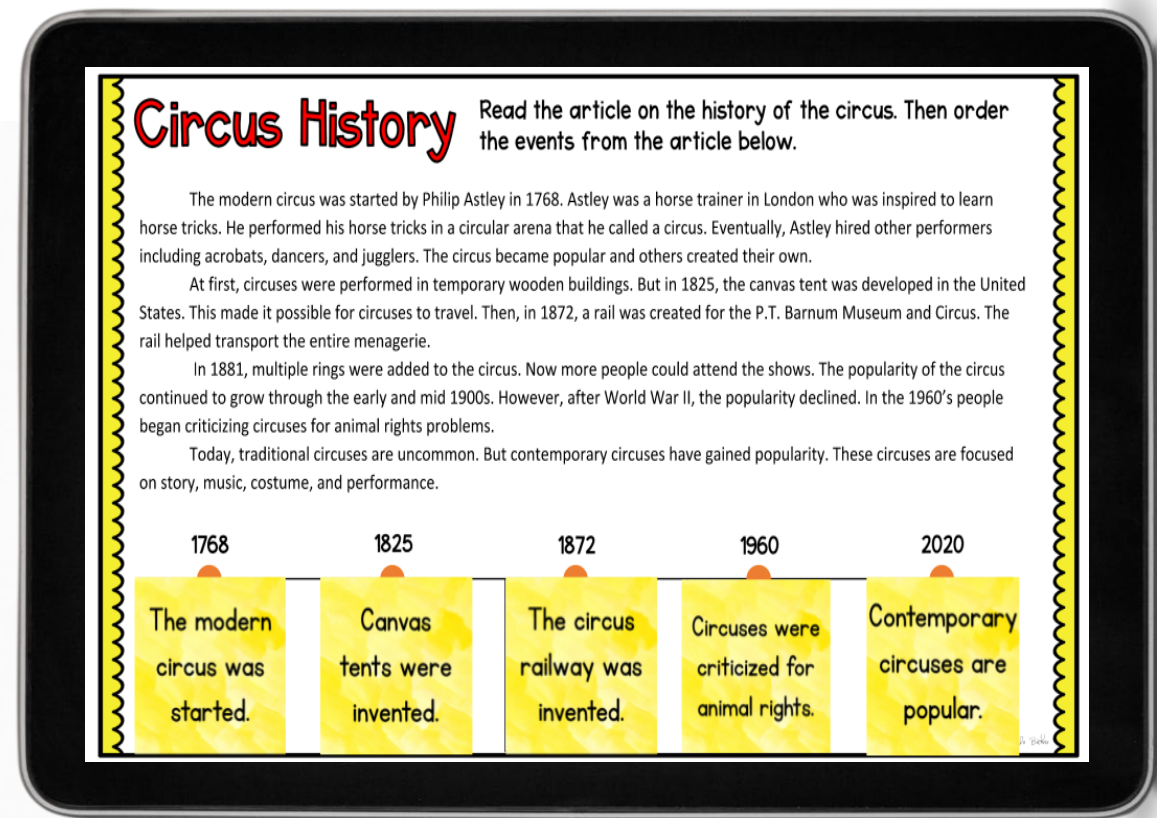
SOCIAL STUDIES

Learn about the history
behind the circus.



INTEGRATES READING

Short nonfiction passages
on content integrate key
comprehension skills.



Circus History Read the article on the history of the circus. Then order the events from the article below.

The modern circus was started by Philip Astley in 1768. Astley was a horse trainer in London who was inspired to learn horse tricks. He performed his horse tricks in a circular arena that he called a circus. Eventually, Astley hired other performers including acrobats, dancers, and jugglers. The circus became popular and others created their own.

At first, circuses were performed in temporary wooden buildings. But in 1825, the canvas tent was developed in the United States. This made it possible for circuses to travel. Then, in 1872, a rail was created for the P.T. Barnum Museum and Circus. The rail helped transport the entire menagerie.

In 1881, multiple rings were added to the circus. Now more people could attend the shows. The popularity of the circus continued to grow through the early and mid 1900s. However, after World War II, the popularity declined. In the 1960's people began criticizing circuses for animal rights problems.

Today, traditional circuses are uncommon. But contemporary circuses have gained popularity. These circuses are focused on story, music, costume, and performance.

1768	1825	1872	1960	2020
The modern circus was started.	Canvas tents were invented.	The circus railway was invented.	Circuses were criticized for animal rights.	Contemporary circuses are popular.



STEAM:

Performers in the circus need an understanding of scientific concepts! This resource makes a connection between STEAM and real-life.

Let's Explore!: The Science of the Circus

Balance is very important for tightrope walkers. They must stay balanced on a wire that is high in the air. Sometimes you will see a tight rope walker holding a long pole. This makes it easier for them to balance! Think of a time you were walking and tripped. People usually stick their arms out to the side to hold their balance.



Let's Experiment!

1. Draw a thin, straight line of chalk outside. Or use tape to create a thin straight line. The line should be at least 6 feet long.
2. Time yourself walking the line with your arms straight out.
3. Time yourself walking the line with your arms down by your sides.

Time it Took With Arms Out	Time it Took With Arms Down
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>


Which method was fastest? Which method was easiest?

ENGAGING & EDUCATIONAL MEDIA

Entertaining videos helps students think critically.

The Modern Circus

Watch the video of a modern circus called Cirque du Soleil.



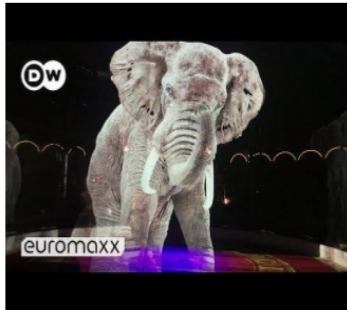
1. How is this modern circus different from earlier circuses?

2. The modern circus is an example of why it is important to change as times progress. In what other ways can circuses develop new and exciting performances?

Modern Circus
TICKET
ADMIT ONE

The Problem with Animal Acts

Some contemporary circuses are thinking of new ways to keep the tradition of animal acts without causing harm to animals.



Animals



Think of your own solution to this problem.

Problem

The circuses traditionally had animal acts.
The treatment of the animals was cruel.



Solution

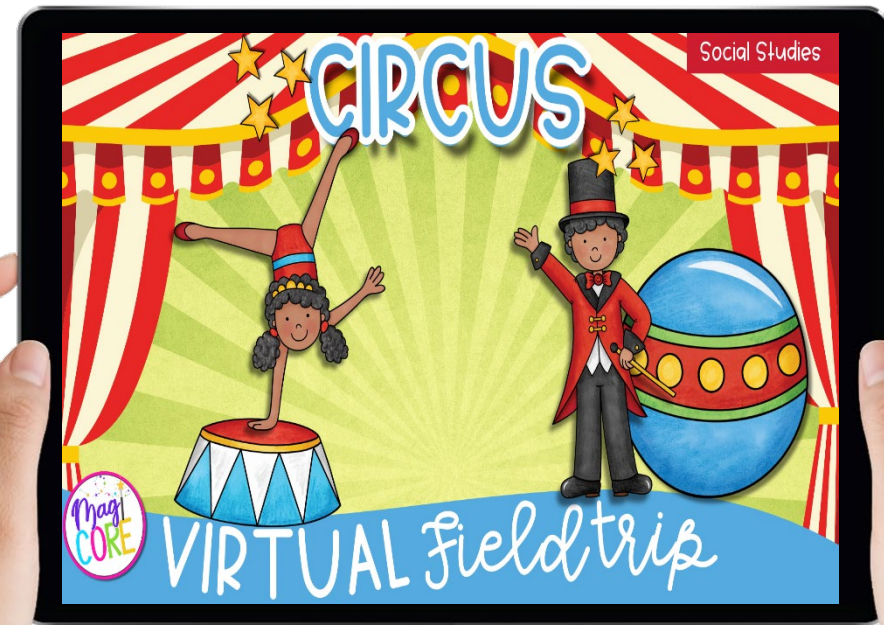
CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Students dive deep into this engaging topic and learn to draw conclusions and make judgements.

Suggested Uses

- Assign in Google Classroom or SeeSaw
- Whole Class Activity
- Small groups or center
- Early Finisher
- Incentive or Fun Friday

Google Slides and SeeSaw



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