



Comprehension Pack

Songs:

The Greatest Show

This is the song played at the start and end of the film. Inspired by the imagination of P.T. Barnum, The Greatest Showman is an original musical that celebrates the birth of show business and tells of a visionary who rose from nothing to create a spectacle that became a worldwide sensation. This song encapsulates the show Barnum had created.

A Million Dreams

P.T. is singing to Charity about what he dreams for his future when they're kids. They sing together as adults later on. This beginning also shows the course of his life with his father until his father dies and then when he had to make a living for himself at a young age. This is crucial because later in the movie this is what motivates him to try to impress Charity and her parents and to show the world that he does have something to give. They sing of hope and imagination. They sing of optimism and positive outlook on life instead of looking for the bad in life, seeing the good. They don't say what the world should be but what it could be and that their dreams if they work for it, will come true.

Come Alive

Barnum sings this song as he helps the others in the circus prepare for the show and not be afraid of the people's reactions. In this song, he encourages normal people to discover new aspects to everyday life and to use the imagination that transforms something ordinary into something amazing.

The Other Side

Barnum convinces Phillip Carlyle to leave his privileged, uptown life to join his circus and lead a free and exciting life as an "over-privileged apprentice."

Never Enough

The Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind makes her American debut promoted by P.T. Barnum with a performance of this song. The appearance of the song itself – an "I Want" Song – in the film underscores some of the character arcs. It is appropriate for Barnum, who has thus far been unsatisfied his station in life – despite success with his circus, it's "never enough" for him. It also reflects Anne and Phillip's budding romance, which may not be enough to overcome their differences. The lyrics also reflect Jenny herself, who is lonely and wants companionship despite her fame and reputation as one of the greatest singers in Europe.

This is me

“This Is Me” is a song empowering those who are ostracized by society for being different. It’s a fight song for the underdog. In the scene after Jenny Lind’s performance, there is an after party that the circus troupe attempts to attend, but when they ask to join, Barnum reveals his shame at being associated with them in the midst of the social elite. The Bearded Lady then bursts into song.

Rewrite The Stars

The song is an aerial duet between two of the characters: Philip Carlyle, a rich, white man, and Anne Wheeler, a poor, African-American girl. The two are in love, but destiny seems to keep pulling them away from each other.

Tightrope

Charity Barnum sings about the excitement she feels as the wife of P.T. Barnum, an inveterate risk-taker. This song takes place while he is with Jenny Lind on a tour, and not with her and their daughters at home.

From Now On

After a devastating fire destroys the circus' building, a depressed P.T. Barnum has his spirits lifted by the performers who declare that home wasn't a place, and as long as they had each other they could feel loved, accepted, and happy. This encourages P.T. Barnum to race back to Charity and explain himself while vowing to become a better man.

The Greatest Show

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkjhqJ55l1I>

Lyrics:

Ladies and gents, this is the moment you've waited for (whoa)
Been searching in the dark, your sweat soaking through the floor (whoa)
And buried in your bones there's an ache that you can't ignore
Taking your breath, stealing your mind
And all that was real is left behind

Don't fight it, it's coming for you, running at ya
It's only this moment, don't care what comes after
Your fever dream, can't you see it getting closer
Just surrender 'cause you feel the feeling taking over
It's fire, it's freedom, it's flooding open
It's a preacher in the pulpit and your blind devotion
There's something breaking at the brick of every wall it's holding
All that you know, so tell me do you wanna go?

Where it's covered in all the coloured lights
Where the runaways are running the night
Impossible comes true, it's taking over you
Oh, this is the greatest show
We light it up, we won't come down
And the sun can't stop us now
Watching it come true, it's taking over you
Oh, this is the greatest show

(Whoa) colossal we come these renegades in the ring
(Whoa) where the lost get found and we crown them the circus kings

Don't fight it, it's coming for you, running at ya
It's only this moment, don't care what comes after
It's blinding, outshining anything that you know
Just surrender 'cause you're calling and you wanna go

Where it's covered in all the colored lights
Where the runaways are running the night
Impossible comes true, intoxicating you
Oh, this is the greatest show
We light it up, we won't come down
And the sun can't stop us now

Watching it come true, it's taking over you
Oh, this is the greatest show

It's everything you ever want
It's everything you ever need
And it's here right in front of you
This is where you wanna be (this is where you wanna be)
It's everything you ever want
It's everything you ever need
And it's here right in front of you
This is where you wanna be
This is where you wanna be

Where it's covered in all the colored lights
Where the runaways are running the night
Impossible comes true, it's taking over you
Oh, this is the greatest show

We light it up, we won't come down
And the sun can't stop us now
Watching it come true, it's taking over you

This is the greatest show
Where it's covered in all the colored lights
Where the runaways are running the night
Impossible comes true, it's taking over you
Oh, this is the greatest show
We light it up, we won't come down
And the walls can't stop us now
I'm watching it come true, it's taking over you
Oh, this is the greatest show

'Cause everything you want is right in front of you
And you see the impossible is coming true
And the walls can't stop us (now) now, yeah

Questions to Consider:

What gives us the impression a show is about to begin? The singer starts with Ladies and Gents.

What does gents mean? Gentlemen

Why has the singer shortened this words? To keep in time with the rhythm of the song

What do you think the 'moment' is? The show

Who is the person who is singing? The Ringmaster (PT Barnum)

How do you know? The ringmaster would usually introduce and start a show.

What is being searched for in the dark? Light, excitement, something different and breathtaking.

Which emotion do you think the singer is referring to when he talks about sweat soaking through the floor? Excitement, anticipation or even nervousness.

What do you think the ache buried in your bones refers to? The longer for wonder and amazement.

Why does the singer use this metaphor? It describes this need to be something beyond choice.

Can you think of another phrase to describe the impact of the show alongside taking your breath, stealing your mind?

What does the singer mean by all that was real is left behind? The real thing left behind is normal life.

How does this further contribute to the anticipation of the show? The show is full of dreams and things that blow us away.

What is the singer referring to when he uses the pronoun it? The feeling of being part of something special.

Can you think of an event in your life when you felt like this?

What word has the singer repeated from the first verse? Moment

Why repeat this word? It emphasises the importance of the show being a moment you can't miss.

Why doesn't he care what comes after? It is more important to live in the moment which is happening now.

What is a 'fever dream'? A fever dream is a term used to describe vivid dreams you have when your body temperature is elevated. For many people, these dreams can be disturbing and unpleasant.

Why might the singer have used this metaphor? To show the whole range of emotions you experience during the show. Sometimes fear can be thrilling and exciting.

Can you think of another example of this? Rollercoasters.

Can you find another word for 'giving in'? Surrender

Why might people be resistant to this show? In the 1850s, when the film is set, Barnum's circus was filled with people who were seen as anomalies and "disgraces" to respectable society such as people of color, unusual height or weight, and those with genetic abnormalities or deformities.

What technique does the singer use in this verse? Alliteration

Can you find some examples?

This feeling is likened to a fire and flood, can you explain why the singer does this? Both are dangerous, big, they can easily spread and grow.

What is a pulpit? A pulpit is a raised stand for preachers in a Christian church.

Why might the singer use the metaphor of a preacher? He wants to compare his show to that of a religion.

What does the word devotion mean? Love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person or activity.

Why might the the singer describe the devotion as blind? 'Blind devotion' is devotion without any consideration of reality or consequences. As stated earlier the show features people who are different. This might reference that you can still enjoy it even though it isn't right to use people like that.

What is covered in all coloured lights? The stage for the show. It is interesting to note that colour is a motif repeated throughout the musical. It represents the imagination, hope and all the circus stands for.

Who are the runaways? These are the performers in the show.

Why has he called them runaways? "Run away and join the circus" is a common expression/idiom used when someone doesn't have a solid plan for their future or is planning something ludicrous. So the circus itself is comprised of these very people.

In what ways might the impossible come true? You will see things you've never seen before, acts that you think are impossible. Plus for the performers, their life before was once spent hidden away and ashamed – within the circus they found a courage they didn't have before.

Why isn't the sun stopping them? As discussed before, the show is like a dream so even when the sun is here and we no longer are sleeping it doesn't stop the dream.

On a scale of 1-5, how big is colossal?

Who are the renegades? The performers

Why are they described as renegades? A renegade is a person who behaves in a rebelliously unconventional manner and goes against the norm. As most of the performers are different from the normal, this makes them renegades.

What is the ring? Circus' were usually performed in ring with seats all around.

How are the lost found in the show? People like the bearded lady felt lost as they were different to everyone else. By being part of the show they found similar misfits and found acceptance.

On a scale of 1-5, how effective is this song in building excitement and anticipation for the show? Please explain your reasons.

A Million Dreams

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDjTQNOvyTg>

Lyrics:

I close my eyes and I can see
The world that's waiting up for me
That I call my own
Through the dark, through the door
Through where no one's been before
But it feels like home

They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy
They can say, they can say I've lost my mind
I don't care, I don't care, so call me crazy
We can live in a world that we design

'Cause every night I lie in bed
The brightest colors fill my head
A million dreams are keeping me awake
I think of what the world could be
A vision of the one I see
A million dreams is all it's gonna take
A million dreams for the world we're gonna
make

There's a house we can build
Every room inside is filled
With things from far away
The special things I compile
Each one there to make you smile
On a rainy day

They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy
They can say, they can say we've lost our
minds
I don't care, I don't care if they call us crazy
Runaway to a world that we design

Every night I lie in bed
The brightest colors fill my head
A million dreams are keeping me awake
I think of what the world could be
A vision of the one I see
A million dreams is all it's gonna take
A million dreams for the world we're gonna
make

However big, however small
Let me be part of it all
Share your dreams with me
You may be right, you may be wrong
But say that you'll bring me along
To the world you see
To the world I close my eyes to see
I close my eyes to see

Every night I lie in bed
The brightest colors fill my head
A million dreams are keeping me awake
A million dreams, a million dreams
I think of what the world could be
A vision of the one I see
A million dreams is all it's gonna take
A million dreams for the world we're gonna
make

For the world we're gonna make

Questions to consider:

How can Barnum see if he closes his eyes? He is talking about his future and using his imagination.

What else does this tell us about Barnum? His ability to ignore criticism and open, not only his eyes, but also his imagination to a whole new world of possibilities and dreams for his future. It also represents how he does not see with his eyes the “freakish” exterior of those who join his show, but instead sees their potential and true talents,

What do you think he sees? He sees a future where he is successful in life.

Why might he close his eyes to use his imagination? Everything around him shows the struggles and obstacles in his way.

What do you think the dark represents? The dark can represent the challenges and negativity he will face along the way, people’s opinions, views, jealousy etc.

Who are ‘they’? The people who don’t believe him or in him, people like Charity’s family, who don’t think he is worthy or capable of achieving great things based on his status.

Can you find a word that means to plan? Design

What might the brightest colours be? Yellow

What emotions do we link to the colour of yellow? Happiness.

Notice there is another reference to colours, which was referenced in the Greatest Show song.

What other words describe Barnum? Determined, hopeful, positive.

Look at verse two. Can you find three things of the dream Barnum has? To build a house with Charity. To travel the world - fill the house with things from different places. To make Charity happy even on the rainy (tough) days.

What is different between the first and second pre chorus? The pronoun changes from I to us.

What does this show? It shows that he sees her in his future now, that being with her is a part of his “million dreams”

On a scale of 1-5, how much does Charity love Barnum? 5

Why? She is willing to give up the luxurious life she had to follow him. She says however big or small she just wants to be with him.

What do the following words mean: Optimistic and Pessimistic? Optimism is when a person is more likely to look at the positives in a situation. Pessimism is when a person is more likely to look at the negatives in a situation.

Do you think Barnum is optimistic or pessimistic? Optimistic

Why?

Why might children be more optimistic than grown ups?

Do you think it is important to have dreams?

What is your dream? How will you go about achieving it?

Come Alive

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDd9dejw2HY>

Lyrics:

You stumble through your days
Got your head hung low
Your skies' a shade of grey
Like a zombie in a maze
You're asleep inside
But you can shake away

'Cause you're just a dead man walking
Thinking that's your only option
But you can flip the switch and brighten up
your darkest day
Sun is up and the color's blinding
Take the world and redefine it
Leave behind your narrow mind
You'll never be the same

Come alive, come alive
Go and ride your light
Let it burn so bright
Reaching up
To the sky
And it's open wide
You're electrified

When the world becomes a fantasy
And you're more than you could ever be
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide
open
And you know you can't go back again
To the world that you were living in
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide
open
So, come alive!

I see it in your eyes
You believe that lie
That you need to hide your face
Afraid to step outside
So you lock the door
But don't you stay that way

No more living in those shadows
You and me we know how that goes

'Cause once you see it, oh you'll never, never
be the same

We'll be the light that's turning
Bottle up and keep on shining
You can prove there's more to you
You cannot be afraid

Come alive, come alive
Go and ride your light
Let it burn so bright
Reaching up
To the sky
And it's open wide
You're electrified

When the world becomes a fantasy
And you're more than you could ever be
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide
open
And we know we can't be go back again
To the world that we were living in
'Cause we're dreaming with our eyes wide
open
So, come alive!

Come one!
Come all!
Come in!
Come on!
To anyone who's bursting with a dream
Come one!
Come all!
You hear
The call
To anyone who's searching for a way to break
free
Break free!
Break free!

When the world becomes a fantasy
And you're more than you could ever be
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide
open
And we know we can't be go back again
To the world that we were living in
'Cause we're dreaming with our eyes wide
open
(Hey!)
When the world becomes a fantasy
And you're more than you could ever be
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide
open
And we know we can't be go back again
To the world that we were living in
'Cause we're dreaming with our eyes wide
open
'Cause we're dreaming with our eyes wide
open
So come alive! (Come alive!) (Yeah!)

Questions to consider:

What verb does Barnum use in the first line? Stumble

Can you show me what this looks like?

Why has he used this word? He uses it to show that most people are just about getting through life with no real purpose or plan.

What happens if you have your head hung low? You don't see the wonderful world around you.

If your sky is grey, what emotion does this evoke? It is dull, boring and sad.

What simile does Barnum use? Like a zombie in a maze.

Can you explain this? A zombie has no brain so wouldn't be able to get out of a maze. So he is explaining that most people are just going through the motions of life and not really living.

Why does he describe the public as dead men walking? They are living to die, not really experience the wonders and beauty of life.

What happens when you flip the switch? You turn a light on and brighten the dull life you lead.

What do you think is going to brighten the darkest day? Experiencing something new, the show, which is different and breathtaking.

How has the sky changed in this verse? The sun is out

How does the sun impact our emotions? The sun produces a hormone in our bodies that make us happy.

Notice again the link to colours.

What does the word redefine mean? It means to change or give new meaning to something.

What words means the same as small? Narrow

What does it mean to have a narrow mind? If you are narrow minded you are a person with a limited outlook who is unwilling to consider alternative ideas, perspectives or thoughts.

Why does Barnum use the metaphor of light? Without light we can't see new wonderful things.

What does it mean to be electrified? It means having a sudden sense of great excitement; thrilled.

What is a fantasy? It means imagining something impossible.

What happens if you dream with your eyes open? Dreams happen when we are asleep so dreaming with our eyes open means our dreams are coming true.

Up to this point in the song, who is Barnum speaking to? The public.

In the second verse, who is Barnum addressing? The performers in his show.

How might they be feeling before the first show? Nervous

Why? Most of these people have spent their lives being shamed for being different. They feel unloved and don't think the audience will accept them.

What does Barnum see in their eyes? Their fear

What is the lie? The lie that because they are different they can't be happy or successful.

Why have the performers being living in the shadows? Hiding away in shame.

How does that go? It doesn't make them happier.

Why might this encourage the performers to perform? If they are unhappy hiding away, what do they have to lose if they perform.

What do you think Barnum means to 'come alive'?

What 5 things in your life brings you the same feelings described in the song?

The Other Side

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GimrxP2U0ZE>

Lyrics:

Right here, right now
I put the offer out
I don't want to chase you down
I know you see it
You run with me
And I can cut you free
Out of the drudgery and walls you keep in
So trade that typical for something colorful
And if it's crazy, live a little crazy
You can play it sensible, a king of
conventional
Or you can risk it all and see

Don't you wanna get away from the same old
part you gotta play
'Cause I got what you need, so come with me
and take the ride
It'll take you to the other side
'Cause you can do like you do
Or you can do like me
Stay in the cage, or you'll finally take the key
Oh, damn! Suddenly you're free to fly
It'll take you to the other side

Okay, my friend, you want to cut me in
Well I hate to tell you, but it just won't happen
So thanks, but no
I think I'm good to go
'Cause I quite enjoy the life you say I'm
trapped in
Now I admire you, and that whole show you
do
You're onto something, really it's something
But I live among the swells, and we don't pick
up peanut shells
I'll have to leave that up to you

Don't you know that I'm okay with this uptown
part I get to play
'Cause I got what I need and I don't want to
take the ride
I don't need to see the other side
So go and do like you do
I'm good to do like me
Ain't in a cage, so I don't need to take the key
Oh, damn! Can't you see I'm doing fine
I don't need to see the other side

Now is this really how you like to spend your
days?
Whiskey and misery, and parties and plays

If I were mixed up with you, I'd be the talk of
the town
Disgraced and disowned, another one of the
clowns

But you would finally live a little, finally laugh a
little
Just let me give you the freedom to dream
And it'll wake you up and cure your aching
Take your walls and start 'em breaking
Now that's a deal that seems worth taking
But I guess I'll leave that up to you

Well it's intriguing, but to go would cost me
greatly
So what percentage of the show would I be
taking?

Fair enough, you'd want a piece of all the
action
I'd give you seven, we could shake and make
it happen
I wasn't born this morning, eighteen would be
just fine
Why not just go ahead and ask for nickels on
the dime
Fifteen
I'd do eight
Twelve
Maybe nine
Ten

Don't you wanna get away to a whole new
part you're gonna play
'Cause I got what you need, so come with me
and take the ride
To the other side
So if you do like I do
So if you do like me
Forget the cage, 'cause we know how to
make the key
Oh, damn! Suddenly we're free to fly
We're going to the other side
So if you do like I do
(To the other side)
So if you do like me
(We're going to the other side)
'Cause if we do we're going to the other side
We're going to the other side

Questions to consider:

Go through the lyrics and highlight which parts are sang by Barnum and which are sang by Phillip Carlyle.

Who needs who's help? Barnum needs Carlyle to help him fund the circus.

Who has the higher status at the beginning? Carlyle

Who is richer? Carlyle

How does Barnum make it clear this is a one time offer? He says right here, right now.

What does Barnum think Carlyle sees? The excitement of living a life with him and his circus.

How does Barnum describe Carlyle in the first verse? As a prisoner

How do you know? He says he can cut him free.

What is he a prisoner of/to? Society and the boring and mundane life he leads. Even though he is wealthy it is boring.

What does the word drudgery mean? Hard menial or dull work.

What word means the same as exchange? Trade

What is he trading? The typical boring life for something brighter and different.

There is another mention of colour, what does Barnum mean by colourful? The idea of the "Colourful" is one that is repeated throughout the soundtrack and is mainly used to represent the ideas and imagination which inspire Barnum in his journey. Here, he quite literally invites Carlyle to join him in his "colourful" pursuits.

How is this verse linked to the song - A Million Dreams? "They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy..." which Barnum sings as a child, not caring what others think of him or his dreams. He loses this sentiment as he grows up, until he snaps back to his younger mindset and creates the circus. He then wishes to pass this feeling onto Carlyle, who does initially care a lot about what society and his family think of him, to convince him to join himself in the circus business.

What words means the same as normal? Conventional

Why does he refer to him as the king? The further emphasise how boring his life would be.

Does Barnum guarantee success with his offer? No

Explain why you think this? He calls it a risk, he is trying to tempt Carlyle to take a chance but isn't necessarily guaranteeing it will work.

Do you think you're sensible or a risk taker? Can you think of an example to prove this?

What technique does Barnum use in the first line of the chorus? A rhetorical question.

What is the meaning behind this line? Barnum is asking him if he wants to leave the role in society he has. Barnum is telling Carlyle to leave the mold he lives in, and basically calling him a puppet.

This is also a play on words, given Carlyle is a playwright.

What is interesting about the line 'I got what you need'? Despite being the one who is trying to get something from Phillip Carlyle, Barnum pitches it as if he's the one offering Phillip the chance of a lifetime.

Can you think of some words to describe Barnum? Convincing, determined, a good salesman.

What do you think is the other side? The "other side" is referring to both the other side of the stage and the other side of society that doesn't abide by "norms". Since Phillip is a playwright, he is never in stage, but joining the circus would give him the opportunity to become part of the show.

On a scale of 1-5, if you were Carlyle how convinced would you be by Barnum?

Can you find examples to show Carlyle like Barnum? He calls him a friend and says he admires him.

On a scale of 1-5, how much does he like Barnum? 3, admire isn't as strong as love.

Who do you think the 'swells' are? "Swells" is old time slang for the upper-class folks.

Why does he mention picking up peanut shells? "Peanut shells" is in reference to the "peanut gallery", the cheapest seats in the theatre in the 19th century. Inhabitants are usually lower-class, and the snacks they'd get are peanuts.

Can you think of a word to describe how Carlyle feels about his life based on his chorus? He emphasises he is content with his life and role in society.

Thinking deeper, do you think he really is content? No, the tone of his voice at this point, and the fact he just spent a verse already saying this, I think the boy doth protest too much.

What words would you associate with a party? Fun, laughter, happiness.

Why does Barnum link parties to the word misery? Barnum realises that the upper class people working in entertainment (both critics and play writes) never truly enjoy themselves, doing nothing exciting or risky.

Considering Carlyle's response, what do you think is the main reason why Carlyle is reluctant to take Barnum's offer? He reveals that he is more concerned about his public image than his happiness, subtly hinting to the audience and Barnum that Carlyle wants to leave his current job for something that actually makes him happy but society's judging gaze makes him unwilling to do so.

What persuasive technique does Barnum use in the first line of the next verse? Repetition for emphasis.

Which word is repeated? Finally

Why does he do this? He is really coaxing Carlyle into believing that his offer is the only way for him to live a more fulfilled life.

Can you find a metaphor to show Barnum's offer will help Carlyle? Cure your aching.

Can you find a metaphor for Carlyle's life feeling trapped? Take your walls and start breaking them.

What other evidence proves Barnum is a great salesman? That last line "But I guess...to you." is literally forcing Carlyle to make that choice, to voice it so he can't claim that Barnum tricked him into it or something.

What word means 'interesting'? Intriguing

What is intriguing? The offer to join the circus

What does Carlyle want to be a part? A share of the profits.

What does Carlyle mean by he wasn't born this morning? That he knows it is a bad offer and wants more.

What does Barnum mean by ask for 'nickels on a dime'? "Why not just go ahead and ask for nickels on the dime" means "Why not ask for 50%?" as nickels are 5 cents and dimes are 10 cents, so asking for nickels on the dime means you want 5 cents for every 10 cents. Hence "nickels on the dime".

How has the status between the two characters changed? At the beginning of the song, it was Carlyle who had the higher status and Barnum needed something from him, by the end of the song Barnum has convinced Carlyle that he is the one who needs Barnum.

Never Enough

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jZVsr7q-tE>

Lyrics:

I'm trying to hold my breath
Let it stay this way
Can't let this moment end
You set off a dream in me
Getting louder now
Can you hear it echoing?

Take my hand
Will you share this with me?
'Cause darling without you

All the shine of a thousand spotlights
All the stars we steal from the night sky
Will never be enough
Never be enough
Towers of gold are still too little
These hands could hold the world but it'll
Never be enough
Never be enough

For me
Never, never
Never, never
Never, for me
For me
Never enough
Never enough
Never enough
For me
For me
For me

All the shine of a thousand spotlights
All the stars we steal from the night sky
Will never be enough
Never be enough
Towers of gold are still too little
These hands could hold the world but it'll
Never be enough
Never be enough

For me
Never, never
Never, never
Never, for me
For me
Never enough
Never, never
Never enough
Never, never
Never enough
For me
For me
For me
For me

Questions to consider:

Why is the singer holding her breath? She want everything to stop.

Why does she not want to make this moment end? The moment is making her happy and she wants to stay that way.

What do you think the dream is? To be loved by someone.

What does the word echoing imply? That this dream keeps going and going.

Who do you think the singer is singing about?

Does this singer feel like this love is reciprocated? No

Why? She asks the person to share the moment. If you knew the person felt the same, you wouldn't need to ask.

What do you think the spotlights refer to? Fame

What does she mean by stealing stars?

What does she mean by towers of gold? Being rich

What does she mean hold the world with these hands? She can have anything she wants.

What is the message of this song? It's not that the world is not enough to the singer: it's that without her love, nothing would compare. She wants to share her life with her lover; without the object of her affection, nothing else could possibly matter. If she doesn't have him (or her), nothing is ever enough to fill that void.

This is me

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjxugyZCfuw>

Lyrics:

I am not a stranger to the dark
Hide away, they say
'Cause we don't want your broken parts
I've learned to be ashamed of all my scars
Run away, they say
No one'll love you as you are

But I won't let them break me down to dust
I know that there's a place for us
For we are glorious

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them
out
I am brave, I am bruised
I am who I'm meant to be, this is me
Look out 'cause here I come
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum
I'm not scared to be seen
I make no apologies, this is me

Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh

Another round of bullets hits my skin
Well, fire away 'cause today, I won't let the
shame sink in
We are bursting through the barricades and
Reaching for the sun (we are warriors)
Yeah, that's what we've become (yeah, that's
what we've become)

I won't let them break me down to dust
I know that there's a place for us
For we are glorious

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them
out
I am brave, I am bruised
I am who I'm meant to be, this is me
Look out 'cause here I come
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum
I'm not scared to be seen
I make no apologies, this is me

Oh-oh-oh-oh

Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh
This is me

and I know that I deserve your love
(Oh-oh-oh-oh) 'cause there's nothing I'm not
worthy of
(Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh)

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them
out
This is brave, this is proof
This is who I'm meant to be, this is me
Look out 'cause here I come (look out 'cause
here I come)
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum
(marching on, marching, marching on)
I'm not scared to be seen
I make no apologies, this is me
When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them
out
I'm gonna send a flood
Gonna drown them out
Oh
This is me

Questions to consider:

What does it mean to be a stranger to the dark? She likes to hide, in the shadows.

Who are 'they' mentioned in the second line? Society, maybe her family

What punctuation mark has been used to show speech? Inverted commas

What are her broken parts? The features that make her 'different'

Can these be fixed? Some things that are broken can be fixed but usually leave a reminder.

What does the word 'ashamed' mean? They feel embarrassed and humiliated

What are her scars? All the things that make her different.

Why has she used the word scars? Scars are something that last a lifetime.

Why does she use the word 'dust' when talking about breaking her down? To create something you have to crush something so much and it then just disappears into nothing.

On a scale of 1-5, how effective is the word glorious?

What is the word 'us' an example of? Pronoun

Why does she use the word 'us'? To show she is no longer alone and there are others who feel the same way.

How does this make her feel? Empowered to know she is not alone, this might be what gives her confidence to speak out.

Looking at the video, when is this film set? In the past.

How were these people treated? Why?

Do you think it is right to treat them they way they were treated? Why?

Do you think we treat people like this today? Can you think of an example?

Which word is spelt incorrectly in the first line? What should it be? Want to

What is the superlative adjective used in the first line? Sharpest

Why has she chosen that adjective? Usually, sharp objects can hurt us so she is describing the words as hurtful.

What does she mean by 'send a flood'? She wants rid of the judgements and negativity, she's going to drown them out.

What does the metaphor in the second line remind you of? Almost like flushing a toilet and getting rid of the horrible mess.

Do you think she is brave? Why?

Why has she used the word bruised when in the first verse she uses scars? Unlike scars, bruising disappears with time. It signifies a change in the attitude of the singer – the words no longer leave a lasting mark on her, but the effect of the hurt becomes more short-lived, more temporal. It speaks of resilience and strength that blossoms from within the singer.

What is 'cause short for? Because

Why does she use the verb 'marching'? Marching tends to be something you do in a group, like an army, and it is a very determined walk.

Why does she march to her beat? She is now taking control of her life and how she is seen by others.

What does it mean to apologise? Say sorry

Do you think she has apologised in the past? Why? Yes because she has let others bring her down.

Why isn't she going to apologise any more? She has nothing to apologise for.

Why was she scared to be seen? They have been treated as outcasts their whole life and tried to hide in the darkness. Now they know their worth through the circus.

Do you think real bullets are hitting her skin? No

What is she using here? A metaphor

What is the metaphor? The bullets are people's words and judgments

Why has she chosen bullets for this? Bullets usually serious hurt or even kill people. She is exaggerating how hurtful and damaging people's comments are.

What word tells us this has happened before? Another

What is a barricade? a barrier to block or stop something

What is the barricade in this song? The barrier stopping the singer being who she really is
How effective is her verb choice of bursting? Very, she's not just going through the barricade she is bursting. When something bursts its usually because it can not hold anything more in - like a balloon. They have taken so much they can no longer keep it in.

Why are they reaching for the sun? This line traces back to the beginning of the song, in which the singer sings that she is "no stranger to the dark", and that all of the circus members have been hiding away in the shadows their whole lives. But here, instead of remaining shackled by the world around them, they choose to burst out of the darkness and into the spotlight, finally embracing who they are.

Do you like this song? Why?

What is the message of this song?

On a scale of 1-5, how effectively does it convey this message? Why?

How would you describe this song in one word?

What lessons can we learn from this song today?

Rewrite the Stars

Video Link - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yO28Z5_Eyls

Lyrics:

You know I want you
It's not a secret I try to hide
I know you want me
So don't keep saying our hands are tied
You claim it's not in the cards
Fate is pulling you miles away
And out of reach from me
But you're here in my heart
So who can stop me if I decide
That you're my destiny?

How do we rewrite the stars?
Say you were made to be mine?
Nothing can keep us apart
'Cause you are the one I was meant to find
It's up to you
And it's up to me
No one can say what we get to be
And why don't we rewrite the stars?
Changing the world to be ours

What if we rewrite the stars?
Say you were made to be mine
Nothing could keep us apart
You'd be the one I was meant to find
It's up to you, and it's up to me
No one can say what we get to be
So why don't we rewrite the stars?
Maybe the world could be ours
Tonight

You know I want you
It's not a secret I try to hide
But I can't have you
We're bound to break and my hands are tied

You think it's easy
You think I don't want to run to you
But there are mountains
And there are doors that we can't walk
through
I know you're wondering why
Because we're able to be
Just you and me
Within these walls
But when we go outside
You're going to wake up and see that it was
hopeless after all

No one can rewrite the stars
How can you say you'll be mine?
Everything keeps us apart
And I'm not the one you were meant to find
It's not up to you
It's not up to me
When everyone tells us what we can be
How can we rewrite the stars?
Say that the world can be ours
Tonight

All I want is to fly with you
All I want is to fall with you
So just give me all of you
It feels impossible (it's not impossible)
Is it impossible?
Say that it's possible

Questions to consider:

On a scale of 1-5, how much does Carlyle like Anne? 5, he starts the song by stating it.

Why is this a secret he doesn't want to hide? He believed that being up front had the best chance of winning Anne over.

What is a secret? Something that cannot be shared.

Can you tell me a secret you have had to keep? This should test the children's understanding of the word

Why would he need to keep his feelings a secret? As he is upper class, it would be deemed wrong for him to love someone who is lower class.

Can you find the idiom mentioned? Hands are tied

What does this mean? It means someone is unable to act, help or intervene in the way they want to.

How does this phrase also link to the video? It is an aerial duet. As such, the visuals are showing Anne initially working on the rope, and being pulled away from Phillip. So their hands are literally 'tied' but they're also in a situation that she can't see a way to change.

Why does Carlyle use the word 'claim'? To claim is to state or assert that something is the case, typically without providing evidence or proof. By using it he is showing that this is more of a choice than actual fact.

What are the cards he refers to? These may link to Tarot Cards used by fortune tellers to predict the future.

What does the word fate mean? The development of events outside a person's control, regarded as predetermined by a supernatural power.

What other word does Carlyle use that means the same as fate? Destiny

What measurement does Carlyle use? Miles

Is this a small or long distance? Long

Why use it? To emphasise how far they are apart.

What do you think is pulling them apart? Phillip has lived a privileged, upper class life, performing theatre for and dining with the most esteemed members of New York society in the 1800s. He joins the circus on a whim but certainly could have continued his "uptown part"

Anne is a black woman facing constant discrimination from society and is performing in the circus because it's one of the only ways in which she and her brother can support themselves.

Phillip is unable to see the world from her perspective at this moment and can't understand why she would be reluctant because he hasn't had to face the same obstacles that she has faced.

What does it mean to rewrite the stars? Rewriting the stars is a metaphor for changing your destiny

Linking back to being optimistic and pessimistic. What would you describe Carlyle as?
Optimistic

Why? He has lived a privileged life and hasn't face the same struggles and prejudice that Anne has faced.

How does Anne feel towards Carlyle? Slightly resentful

Why? She says you think it is easy like he doesn't understand because he is so privileged.

What metaphor does she use? Mountains

What do you think these mountains represent? Obstacles that will stop them being together

What do you think these obstacles are? Society dictating class and status, people's opinions towards them.

What does Anne mean by within these walls? Within the safe-space that is the circus, Anne and Phillip can just be who they are, can be in love as who they are and most likely everyone respects and accepts them. However, the fact remains that they are an interracial couple living in the violently racist 19th century America.

How does Anne express that she thinks Carlyle is oblivious to the real world? She explains that in the real world he will wake up to see it is hopeless.

Why do you think Carlyle is more optimistic? Phillip has a much more privileged position and background, but Anne is a black woman and has lived her whole life feeling the brunt of racism. She knows that to get involved with a white man is damn near-impossible, not to mention very dangerous for her, and tries to pull away in self-preservation. Phillip never had to experience any of that, so it makes sense why he's much more optimistic about their future, while Anne doesn't have much faith.

If Carlyle is optimistic, how would you describe Anne? Pessimistic/Realistic

Why? Anne twists Phillip's earlier words, being more realistic in her view and showing the contrast between her pessimistic viewpoint and his optimistic one.

Do you think Anne has always felt this way? Possibly not

What do you think made her feel like this? Being constantly exposed to the racist hatred from that time.

Do you think Anne is right to feel this way?

Do you think Anne loves Carlyle? Yes

How do you know?

What is stopping her from being with him? Anne has clearly considered a relationship with Phillip, but her experience with discrimination gives her more knowledge than Phillip has; she sees that they'll never be able to live without dirty looks and potentially violence.

What do you think is meant by wanting to fly? To experience the highs of life.

What about the falls? The lows which happen but experiencing them with someone you love can help.

What does the word impossible mean? Not able to occur, exist, or be done.

Can you give me an example of something that is impossible?

When they both sing, how do we rewrite the stars, are they both asking the same question?
No

What questions is Carlyle asking? Phillip is quite literally trying to find a way for their relationship to work out.

How is Anne different? Anne is asking the question with cynicism. She is asking, “How do you expect us to change everything?” rather than, “How should we go about changing everything?”

Do you think Anne’s attitude has changed by the end of the song?

Why do you think this?

Tightrope

Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3sVHzOmPWA>

Lyrics:

Some people long for a life that is simple and planned
Tied with a ribbon
Some people won't sail the sea 'cause they're safer on land
To follow what's written
But I'd follow you to the great unknown
Off to a world we call our own

Hand in my hand and we promised to never let go
We're walking the tightrope
High in the sky
We can see the whole world down below
We're walking the tightrope
Never sure, never know how far we could fall
But it's all an adventure
That comes with a breathtaking view
Walking the tightrope
With you, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
With you, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
With you

Mountains and valleys, and all that will come in between
Desert and ocean
You pulled me in and together we're lost in a dream
Always in motion
So I risk it all just to be with you
And I risk it all for this life we choose
Hand in my hand and you promised to never let go

We're walking the tightrope
High in the sky
We can see the whole world down below
We're walking the tightrope
Never sure, will you catch me if I should fall?
Well, it's all an adventure
That comes with a breathtaking view
Walking the tightrope
With you, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
With you, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
With you
With you, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh
With you, ooh-ooh-ooh
With you

Questions to consider:

Can you find a word that means the same as 'want'? Long

What do you think a simple life looks like?

What do you think a planned life looks like? You conform to the normalities of society, get a job, get married, have children.

Do you think you would want a simple and planned life?

What do you think the singer thinks of this type of life? Boring

What does the metaphor of tied in a ribbon symbolise? It is in a perfect condition, not harmed or damaged in any way.

What are the dangers of sailing the sea?

Why would anyone sail the sea?

What do you think she means by this line? Some people are willing to take risks in life to experience something wonderful

Can you think of another example to show how nothing great is gained without taking a risk? Some people won't dance in the rain as they're scared to get wet.

Can you find the link to the song 'A Million Dreams'? This "world of [their] own" is portrayed as something incredibly valuable throughout this song and A Million Dreams; Charity and Barnum have built their "world" around their hopes and dreams, and it means everything to the both of them.

When do you think they promised to never let go? When they got married

Why has she chosen to liken her marriage to a tightrope? "Tightrope" is something that is exhilarating and exciting – the life that she has with her husband. Walking the tightrope is something that is dangerous as well. This may allude to another aspect of their life together – anytime they may teeter over the edge and fall off, or if they balance well, they will succeed.

What do you think is the breathtaking view? The memories they make along the way.

Why does she use the metaphor of mountains and valleys? She recognises that married life has its ups and downs and that is part of the journey.

How did Barnum pull her in? With the song a million dreams he promised her all these adventures and an exciting life.

What did she risk? She risked the wealth she had when she was younger.

How does the second chorus change from the first? The pronouns we change to you and I

What does this show? She starts to feel like the marriage is falling apart.

Who does she think is to blame for this? Him

Why? Charity feels that Barnum has abandoned her, and there is no longer anyone to fall back onto. She is falling alone, and worries that he has forgotten her.

Do you think she believes it is over? No, she is still optimistic.

Do you think this is a happy song or sad song? The song is not simply a happy song reminiscing about the relationship between Barnum and Charity, but that it is really a melancholy song that questions the solidity of the relationship.

From Now On

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyIDxpUJ10Q>

Lyrics:

I saw the sun begin to dim
And felt that winter wind
Blow cold
A man learns who is there for him
When the glitter fades and the walls won't
hold
'Cause from then, rubble
What remains
Can only be what's true
If all was lost
There's more I gained
'Cause it led me back
To you

From now on
These eyes will not be blinded by the lights
From now on
What's waited 'til tomorrow starts tonight
Tonight
Let this promise in me start
Like an anthem in my heart
From now on
From now on

I drank champagne with kings and queens
The politicians praised my name
But those are someone else's dreams
The pitfalls of the man I became
For years and years
I chased their cheers
The crazy speed of always needing more
But when I stop
And see you here
I remember who all this was for

And from now on
These eyes will not be blinded by the lights
From now on
What's waited 'til tomorrow starts tonight
It starts tonight
And let this promise in me start
Like an anthem in my heart
From now on
From now on
From now on

And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home

And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home (Yes)
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
From now on
These eyes will not be blinded by the lights!
From now on!

What's waited 'til tomorrow starts tonight!
It starts tonight!
Let these promise in me start
Like an anthem in my heart
From now on
From now on
From now on
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
And we will come back home
And we will come back home
Home, again!
From now on
From now on
Home, again! (Oooo uuuu)
From now on
From now on
Home, again!

Questions to consider:

What does the word dim mean? Not shining brightly or clearly.

How does Barnum use pathetic fallacy to express his feelings? We associate the sun with warmth and happiness. This is dimming as the circus has burnt down and Barnum has lost everything. We associate the winter with cold and dark which is what he feels now.

What has Barnum learned from hitting rock bottom? He realises who cares when all his fame is gone and he isn't on top, he learns that the people he was with in the first place loved him more than any of the people that practically praised his name when he was held above the "losers"/ circus crew.

What has remained from the building burning down? What remains is the bonds that he formed with the circus oddities.

What has Barnum gained from this experience? Perspective of what is really important. He gains wisdom and realises that he is nothing without them and that he should have never let money rule his life.

What does he mean by being blinded by the lights? All of his life, P.T. Barnum had been reaching for the light, as he had been cast into the shadows from a young age. When he began the circus and finally found that spotlight that he had been yearning after for so long, he started to lose sight on what was really important—his family and the well-being of the rest of the circus.

What has had to wait until tomorrow? His responsibilities as a husband and father, his desire for fame made him push away his duties as a Dad.

On a scale of 1-5, how determined is Barnum to change his ways? 5

Why? He makes a promise from his heart.

What are politicians? A person who is professionally involved in politics, especially as a holder of an elected office.

What was someone else's dream? To be validated by those of the upper class.

How might this relate to the world we live in today? Some people crave fame or to be a celebrity or seek validation by people on social media.

Do you think this dream brings true happiness? No

Why? It is all superficial.

What brings true happiness? The love of those people special to you.

Why do you think Barnum had this dream? When he was younger, Barnum was overlooked by society as another straggler. So when he finally had the chance to get the attention he never had as a child, he ended up getting obsessed with publicity, fame, and the desire to always have more.

Can you think of a word to describe Barnum's dream? Addiction, obsessed.

Who does Barnum reference by 'you'? His family and friends from the circus.

What do you think is the overall message of this song?

How do you think Barnum lived the rest of his life based on the lyrics of this song?