



### Segment 10 (Units 17–20)

#### *Meet the trainers*

**Genre:** Travel program

*Viewing Time: 2:05*

#### **Background Information**

Travel programs have been popular on TV for many years. They give a glimpse of places around the world, pointing out famous sites and natural wonders. This travel program focuses not only on the places being visited, but on some of the unusual activities and professions that are found there.

#### **Vocabulary for Comprehension**

*Preview the vocabulary with your students.*

beast: *an animal, especially a wild or dangerous one*

cargo: *the goods being carried on a ship, plane, truck, etc.*

control: *the power or ability to make someone or something do what you want*

grab a bite: *to have a quick meal*

load: *a large quantity of something that is carried by a person, vehicle, etc.*

noble: *morally good or generous*

prod: *something you poke animals with in order to make them move in a particular direction*

vegetation: *plants in general, especially all the plants in one particular area*

#### **Answer Key**

*Previewing* (Answers may vary—as long as they are appropriate guesses, accept them for now.)

1. Young boys (elephant trainers), tourists, and elephants.
2. They are in the jungle / in Thailand.
3. The elephants are being trained by mahouts, taking tourists for a ride, and eating.
4. It's about working elephants and how they are trained.

#### *In-Depth Viewing*

1. T
2. F—An elephant will only work for its trainer.
3. T
4. F—Elephants can eat up to 200 kilograms of food every day.
5. F—There is only one training center for baby elephants in Thailand.



### Video Script

**Narrator:** . . . One of my favorite things about my trip to Thailand was riding on an elephant—and meeting her trainer! For thousands of years, these working animals have carried heavy loads—including people, cargo, and even trees that have been cut down from the forest.

But elephants are intelligent and sensitive creatures who won't work for just anyone. They only work for their "boss." Their boss, or trainer, is called a "mahout." Successful mahouts have good control over their elephants.

It takes many years to become an expert mahout. Training begins when the elephant is just a baby and lasts until the elephant retires—and that can be up to 35 years! These young mahouts are learning *along with* the elephants they are training.

The mahouts train their elephants to do many helpful tasks. For example, elephants learn to carry heavy loads, like tourists, on their backs. The mahouts push their feet into the elephant's sides to move the animal in one direction or another. They also use voice commands and elephant prods, or sticks.

The mahouts have to work hard to make sure the elephants get enough to eat. And a hungry elephant needs lots of food—up to 200 kilograms of vegetation and 120 liters of water every day! Sometimes working elephants even grab an extra bite along the way.

In years past, there were many elephant trainers in Thailand. Today it is a dying profession. There are only about 2,000 elephants in the country. Since there are very few forests left, elephants are not needed to take down and move trees. And modern trucks transport most of the cargo in the country.

In fact, there's only one center left in the whole country for training baby elephants. However, elephants are still very popular with tourists. Visitors can go to elephant camps to meet these noble beasts and their mahouts face-to-face. Elephant ride, anyone?