

Work: video B

St Jean-de-Sixt in the Haute-Savoie. René Duc has twelve dogs that he works with. René is what they call a 'musher'.

René: "And now we're heading for the Great North!"

Nat: "What kind of work do you do?"

René: "Well, I'm a professional musher."

Nat: "What is a musher?"

René: "Musher means... Musher comes from the word 'Marche' (walk). So when the French went off to discover... Canada during the great Gold Rush, they set out with their dogs and would say to their dogs 'marche... Marche' (walk... Walk). The word was anglicised, meaning the word 'marche' became the word 'mush'. So the Musher drives the dog sled. I am a sled-driver. A musher."

Nat: "And so today, what are you doing?"

René: "Well today I am preparing all of my kit, putting the dogs through what we call a 'stakeout'. Yeah? And then I have a client coming this afternoon to do a first run. And on a first run, I'll have people in my sled and take them out to experience the countryside and what I do."

Nat: "Your work as musher, how do you...what is it like?"

René: "My work as a musher is firstly...it's a job that needs passion and I am passionate about it. And it is...it is also a job where you teach a skill to people, eh, because, primarily, we are educating people about a sport, and sledding is a sport. That's it."

Nat: "Have you been doing this for a long time?"

René: "Well I've... I've been doing this kind of work for three years for other mushers and then I set up on my own on the 2nd January 2006."

Nat: "So it's all new?"

René: "Correct, so because I've only recently graduated, you've got a brand new musher here! I'm a young graduate, having qualified in December 2005."

Nat: "And during the summer do you have another job?"

René: "I do have another job during the summer. I look after a beach on Lake Annecy so... which also means that I can have my son with me where I work so he can also enjoy the beach. And that's an important consideration."

Nat: "Very good."