

Feeling sporty?

The Olympic Games is the biggest sporting event in the world! The Games take place every four years, in a different city each time. Over 10,000 athletes, from more than 200 countries, take part in almost 400 different events.

In 2016 the Olympics will be held in Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil. With its world-famous beaches, beautiful bays and carnival processions, Rio will be a spectacular host for the Games.



On your marks, get set, go – it's Rio in 2016

It's ancient history!

But the Olympics aren't a modern invention. They actually began thousands of years ago, in a place called Olympia in Ancient Greece. Sportsmen came from across Greece and from the other countries that Greece ruled at the time.

There were lots of sports that we'd recognise today, such as boxing, wrestling and horse-racing – but many of them were a lot rougher than they are today! There were some big differences, though. All the competitors were men and they didn't wear clothes to take part.



The ancient site of Olympia is in Greece



The ruins of Olympia: where it all began...



An athlete competes in the modern day Olympics

Did you know?

Earthquakes in the 3rd century AD destroyed most of the site of Olympia and the Games came to an end. It wasn't until 1896 that the Games officially started again. We call these the 'modern Olympics'.

The modern Olympics

The modern Olympic movement is inspired by the ancient Games. This movement of people aims to build a 'peaceful and better world' through sport.

The Olympic symbol shows five interlocking rings. Each ring represents one of the inhabited 'five continents' (the Americas are counted as a single continent according to the International Olympic Committee).

New world records are set during every Olympics. In 2012, 32 world records were broken! The Olympic Committee makes sure that everyone 'plays fair'. There are regular tests to make sure that athletes aren't using unfair drugs.



Ancient runner with the sacred fire



Paralympic wheelchair athletes



Ice-hockey at the Winter Olympics



Vinicius and Tom - Rio's mascots

Rituals and ceremonies

In Ancient Greece, a burning torch would be passed from one runner to the next in a relay, with the winner lighting a fire on an altar.

Nowadays, the Olympic torch is lit in Greece, then taken to the city where the games are held, travelling by boat and plane.

The opening and closing ceremonies are also important parts of the Games. And of course, everyone likes to watch the medals being awarded: gold, silver and bronze. In Ancient Greece, the winners would have wreaths placed on their heads.

Paralympic Games

The Paralympic Games are for athletes with disabilities. There are events ranging from archery to wheelchair tennis. The Paralympics first started in 1948, with injured soldiers from the Second World War.

Since 1960, the Paralympics have been held during the official Olympic Games. They're now a vital part of the Games: more than 4,000 athletes took part in 2012.

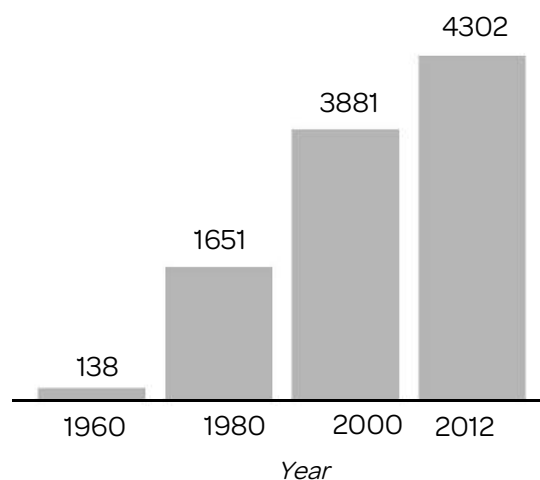
The Winter Olympics

The Winter Olympics are also held every four years, in between the main Olympic Games. These Olympics are for sports that need a very cold climate, like ice-skating, ski-jumping, ice-hockey and bobsleigh.

Did you know?

Olympic mascots are really popular! Rio's mascots are Vinicius and Tom – a joyful, bright mixture of Brazil's animals and plants.

How many people have competed in the Paralympics?



The number of athletes who take part in the Paralympic Games has risen over time.

Key Words:

**Olympics Paralympics Ancient Greece international
record ceremonies mascots**



1. Draw yourself in the circle to become a detective!
2. Answer the questions below to complete your mission.

A. Tick 'true' or 'false' for the statements below.

Statements	True	False
1. The modern Olympics are inspired by the ancient Games.		
2. The five rings in the Olympic symbol represent all continents.		
3. Nowadays, the Olympic torch is lit in Germany.		

B. Circle the correct answer.

4. How many world records were broken in the 2012 Olympic Games?

- a. 400
- b. 32
- c. 5

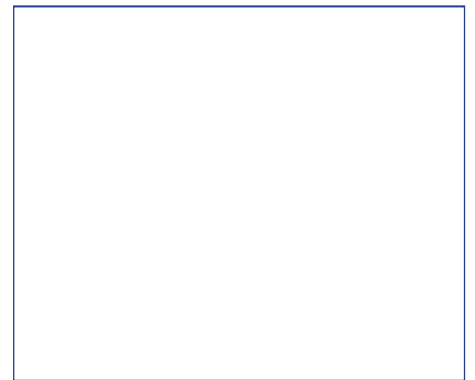
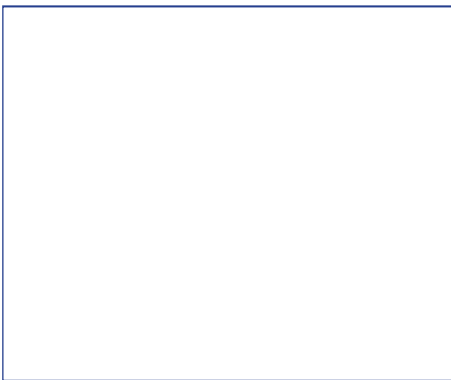
5. Rio's mascots are a mixture of Brazil's animals and...

- a. Culture
- b. History
- c. Plants

6. How many athletes competed in the Paralympic Games in 2000?

- a. 4302
- b. 3381
- c. 2000

C. Draw a quick cartoon to show three different sports that will be played in Rio this summer.



D. How often are the Winter Olympics held?



Observer Odd needs your help!

His mission is to write a report on the facts presented in the *Olympics* text.

Answer the questions below in full sentences so that he can use the information in his report.

1. How often do the Olympic Games take place?

2. Describe where Olympia is located in Greece. Use compass directions in your answer.

3. Does the Olympic symbol represent all continents? Explain your answer.

4. What are the Paralympic Games? Explain why they are important.

5. Rename one of the subheadings given to a paragraph of text.


Inspector Izzi has a new job and needs a hand!

Her task is to write a detailed analysis of the *Olympics* text. She needs you to help her read 'between the lines' and answer the questions below in full sentences.

6. Name three sports that featured in the ancient Olympics and are still part of the Olympic Games today.

7. What do you think are three of the most important pieces of information in this text? Explain your answers.

1.	2.	3.
Because...	Because...	Because...

8. The Olympic Committee tests athletes to make sure they aren't using unfair drugs. Why might athletes take drugs?

9. Based on the bar graph, do you think that the number of athletes taking part in the Paralympics will increase or decrease in future? Explain your answer.

EXTRA MISSIONS:

- Impress your family and friends with your flag knowledge! Learn the flags of the top-performing countries from the 2012 Olympics Games. Use the sheet called *Countries to Watch!*
- Olympic flashcards - learn about countries competing in the Olympic Games. Play against your friends! Use the sheet called *Olympic Flashcards*.
- Master the Olympic country codes, to prepare for watching the Olympic Games. Use the sheet called *Olympic Country Code Master*.