

Years 5–6

Sporting Heritage scheme of work for primary history

Unit: The history of the ancient Olympic Games

The logo for Sporting Heritage, featuring the words "Sporting Heritage" in white and yellow text on a dark blue background with a yellow curved shape to the right.

About this unit

This unit is designed flexibly as either a chronological or a thematic study. As such, its editable core PowerPoint resources can be used as a depth or extended overview topic in relation to:

- Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and the Greeks' influence on the Western world. This is the core element of the study, but can also potentially be linked to or integrated with:
- The legacy of Greek culture for later periods in British history, including the present day.

The unit is predicated on the central activity of designing a 'museum exhibition' in the classroom, corridor or hall to tell the story of the Olympics in Ancient Greece – and, if and as desired, to integrate this with other elements of study in relation to the legacy of Greek culture, as reflected in comparisons and contrasts with the modern Olympics.

In doing so, pupils will:

- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world and the nature of ancient civilisations and their achievements
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as civilisation and legacy
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, similarity and difference, and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts and create their own structured accounts and narratives
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used

As a result, pupils will develop chronologically secure knowledge and understanding, establishing a clear narrative within and across the period or periods studied. They will be able to note connections and contrasts over time and consider historically valid questions about change, similarity and difference. They will construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information from a range of sources.

Unit structure

The unit is structured around the central activity of designing a museum exhibition in the classroom, corridor or hall to tell the story of the Olympic Games from their origins in Ancient Greece – and, if and as desired, to integrate this with other elements of study in relation to the legacy of Greek culture, by drawing comparisons and contrasts with the modern Olympics.

Pupils will make ‘curatorial’ decisions around the organisation of their knowledge and understanding in relation to:

- chronology
- themes
- comparisons and contrasts

The key questions that pupils will consider in doing so are:

- Why and how did the Olympic Games start in Ancient Greece?
- What were the main features of the Games?
- Why were the Games so important to the people of Ancient Greece and for so long?
- What can the Games tell us about life, society and culture in Ancient Greece?
- Why and how are the ancient Olympic Games still relevant to the modern Olympics and our society today?
- What are the similarities and differences between the ancient and modern Olympic Games?

How this unit links to the National Curriculum for primary history

This unit is designed to be used flexibly as either a chronological or a thematic study. As such, it can be used flexibly as a depth or extended overview topic in relation to:

- Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and the Ancient Greeks’ influence on the Western world. This is the core element of the study, but it can also potentially be linked to or integrated with:
- Changes in an aspect of social history, such as crime and punishment from the Anglo-Saxons to the present, or leisure and entertainment in the twentieth century – but in this case, the importance of sport in society, as reflected in the comparative significance of the modern Olympic Games.
- The legacy of Greek or Roman culture (art, architecture or literature) for later periods in British history, including the present day, as reflected in similarities and differences between the ancient and modern Olympics.

Enquiry 1: Why did the Olympic Games start originally in Ancient Greece?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	KEY CONTENT AND SUGGESTED LESSON IDEAS	SUGGESTED RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why and how the Olympic Games started in Ancient Greece 	<p>Slides 1–20 offer a flexible approach to introducing the core activity and engaging pupils in the enquiry.</p> <p>There are three suggested introductory pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using slides 2–7: Simply using the stimulus/excitement of the museum exhibition activity. Slide 3 shows the new Qatar Museum of Sport and the Olympic stadium in Doha. Using slides 2–13: Creating interest and excitement through the story of Milo of Croton, which can be read and/or introduced by the video on slide 12. Using slides 2–7 and then 14–17: Creating curiosity through the reference to the symbolism of modern-day Olympic opening ceremonies. <p>From slide 18 onwards, the different introductory pathways then converge into a single structure to address each key question via the exploration of key ‘exhibits’ for their display to tell the story of the Games.</p> <p>This first key question is addressed through slides 18–30.</p> <p>Pupils identify the first exhibits for their display to illustrate the origins of the Games – slide 30.</p> <p>There are related extension opportunities to explore Greek mythology, the Greek gods and religion, using the ‘Thinking deeper’ activities and links on slides 24–25.</p>	<p>PowerPoint slide pack with embedded videos and links to websites for extension work. Slides can be deleted, amended or re-ordered, depending on the chosen introductory pathway. Slides 1–30 address the first key question.</p>	<p>Pupils’ selection and recording of ‘exhibits’ demonstrate understanding of the key reasons why the Games started and their links to Greek religion.</p>

Enquiry 2: What do the Olympic Games tell us about life in Ancient Greece and what was their significance then and today?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	KEY CONTENT AND SUGGESTED LESSON IDEAS	SUGGESTED RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the main features of the Games were • Why the Games were so important to the people of Ancient Greece and for so long • What the Games can tell us about life, society and culture in Ancient Greece • How and in what ways the ancient Games are still relevant to the modern Olympics and society 	<p>Slides 31–90 enable pupils to now build their exhibition by selecting ‘exhibits’ to address each of these four subsequent key objectives about the nature and wider significance of the Games as they developed over time. Sections cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the chronological development of the Games • the Olympic Truce • the spectator experience • links to culture and society • sports and the athletes • the decline of the Games <p>Comparisons with the modern Games are referenced through the slides, enabling pupils to draw out similarities and differences, which can be revisited and extended in the final activity.</p> <p>Slides 35–38 offer an extension opportunity in relation to the Olympic Truce and its modern application by the IOC and UN – along with the potential for a wider discussion about sport and politics.</p> <p>Slide 80 offers an extension opportunity for pupils find out about more athletes through independent research. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theagenes of Thasos • Diagoras of Rhodes • Polydamas of Skotoussa • Melankomas of Caria 	<p>PowerPoint slide pack with embedded videos and links to websites for extension work. Slides can be deleted, amended or re-ordered, depending on chosen emphases. Slides 31–90 address these four key learning objectives.</p>	<p>Pupil selection, rationale and communication of exhibits</p>

Enquiry 3: What are the similarities and differences between the ancient and modern Olympic Games?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	KEY CONTENT AND SUGGESTED LESSON IDEAS	SUGGESTED RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The similarities and differences between the ancient and modern Olympic Games	<p>Final activity: Using slides 91–98, pupils are able to reflect on the initial purpose of the enquiry and the key questions that their exhibition was designed to address. They should self-evaluate how effectively their display tells the story and significance of the Games, reflecting on key points of chronology, theme and comparison/contrast – with the opportunity to include a final section in their exhibition explicitly focused on similarities and differences between the ancient and modern Games.</p>	<p>PowerPoint slide pack – slides 91–98</p>	<p>Final piece addressing similarity and difference between modern and ancient Olympics, peer review of each other's exhibitions in relation to key questions.</p>

How will this enquiry help children to make progress in history?

The enquiry uses the Olympic theme to initially inspire children's curiosity about the Ancient World and engage them in a creative activity related to it.

Based on the Key Stage 2 programme of study, it will enable children to make specific progress in relation to:

- Knowing and understanding significant aspects of the history of the wider world and the nature of ancient civilisations and their achievements.
- Gaining and deploying a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as civilisation, empire and legacy.
- Understanding historical concepts such as continuity and change, similarity and difference, and significance, and using them to make connections, draw contrasts and create their own structured narratives.
- Understanding methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used.

How might this enquiry be adapted for children of different ages and different abilities?

- Teachers have the autonomy to edit the resource pack to adapt or remove slides from the deck.
- The number and nature of 'displays' and 'exhibits' can be adapted.
- There are extension opportunities and links to other curriculum areas, signposted as 'Thinking deeper'.
- The central museum display activity can be developed in relation to different learning styles, ages and abilities.