

History Week 2

WALT: compare Ancient Greek Olympics to modern day.

Olympics

The Olympics actually started in Ancient Greece. The different city states often fought but during the Olympics, peace was declared and everyone came together to enjoy the games.

The games began in 776BC in Olympia. It is believed that the games were a religious event to honour Zeus who was the king of the Gods.

Your Task

Read the article 'How much were the original Olympics like the modern Games?' which is attached to this document.

You need to identify the similarities and differences between the Ancient Greek Olympics and the modern-day Olympics. Present your findings in the table on the next page.

Key points to think about:

- How often does/did the Olympics take place?
- Why does/did it take place?
- What do/did people win?
- Who is/was allowed to watch and participate?
- What games and events do/did people participate in?

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Written by The BBC

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How much were the original Olympics like the modern Games?

Today's Olympic Games may seem a thoroughly modern affair. But how did the original event compare with today's spectacle?

The Olympic Games began over 2,700 years ago in Olympia, in south west Greece. Every **four years**, around 50,000 people came from all over the Greek world to watch and take part. The ancient games were also a religious festival, held in honour of **Zeus**, the king of the gods.

There were no gold, silver and bronze medals. Winners were given a **wreath of leaves** and a **hero's welcome** back home. Athletes competed for the glory of their city and winners were seen as being touched by the gods.

The Olympics were strictly for men. Women weren't even allowed to watch.

One reason for their exclusion, perhaps, was that the athletes all competed in the nude. The ancient Greek word for "to exercise" meant literally "to be stark naked".

Which events were contested?

The original Olympics had fewer events than what we have at the modern Olympics today.



BOXING

With no weight classifications, no scoring system, no time limit and death a real possibility, boxing at the Ancient Olympic Games appears to have been a brutal and barbaric affair. But in reality, honour, respect and fair play were always at the fulcrum of this noble art.

[View](#)



CHARIOT RACING

Chariot racing is one of the most thrilling, visceral and danger-filled sports ever invented by man. Present at the Ancient Olympic Games from 680BC, it continues to capture our attention and fuel our imagination more than two-and-a-half thousand years later.

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LONG JUMP, JAVELI, DISCUS

From flute music to slingshot mechanics, the long jump, javelin and discus at the Ancient Olympic Games stand out for their intricacy and innovation. Gold medal-winning coach Toni Minichiello is impressed by what he hears.

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PANKRATION

A combination of boxing and wrestling with barely any restrictions, pankration was the wild, no-holds barred centre of the Ancient Olympic Games. Boasting huge men of incredible strength, it became a fountain of wondrous stories and stirring myths.



RUNNING

From completing three marathons in one day – post Olympic title – to chasing down a live hare, the achievements of the running idols at Olympia were remarkable.



WRESTLING

From lifting live bulls to tearing trees apart with their bare hands, wrestlers were the wildly popular heroes of the Ancient Olympic Games. With an unrivalled prominence, the sport basked in its glory days.

In Olympics 2020 there will be 339 events for athletes to compete in.

Torch

During Ancient Greek Olympic, there was no torch relay like there is today. The modern Olympic torch relay was first instated at the 1936 Olympic Games.