

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,255

Book Summary

To many athletes, competing in the Olympic Games is the ultimate honor, where they strive to be the best in the world. *The Olympics: Past and Present* examines the ways in which the Olympic Games in ancient Greece evolved into the modern-day Olympics. Photographs, illustrations, maps, and diagrams support this informative text.

Book and lesson also available at Levels R and W.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Connect to prior knowledge

Objectives

- Connect to prior knowledge to understand text
- Compare and contrast information in nonfiction text
- Recognize and understand irregular verbs
- Identify and use multiple-meaning words

Materials

Green text indicates resources are available on the website.

- Book—*The Olympics: Past and Present* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry-erase board
- Dictionaries
- [Connect to prior knowledge, compare and contrast, irregular verbs, multiple-meaning words worksheets](#)
- [Discussion cards](#)



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](#).

Content words:

Story critical: *archaeologists* (n.), *competitors* (n.), *motto* (n.), *procession* (n.), *qualify* (v.), *symbolic* (adj.)

Enrichment: *adamant* (adj.), *character* (n.), *clashed* (v.), *controversies* (n.), *counterparts* (n.), *deities* (n.), *deter* (v.), *elaborate* (adj.), *encompass* (v.), *excavated* (v.), *freewheeling* (adj.), *hippodrome* (n.), *honing* (v.), *Nazis* (n.), *pagan* (adj.), *pantheon* (n.), *racist* (adj.), *sacrifice* (n.), *sauna* (n.), *steeplechase* (n.), *steroids* (n.), *tarnished* (v.), *terrorists* (n.), *truce* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Write the word *Olympics* on the board. Have students share what they know about the Olympics. Encourage them to explain what they know about the different sports that athletes compete in, the countries athletes are from, and the prizes athletes receive.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, authors' names).
- Ask students to turn to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of what the book is about. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book based on what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Connect to prior knowledge**

- Explain that good readers use what they already know about a topic to understand and remember new information as they read a nonfiction book.
- Model connecting to prior knowledge using the information in the table of contents.
Think-aloud: The first section in the book is titled "To Be the Best in the World." I know that the word best means to be better than everyone else. When I think about Olympic athletes, I picture how strong and fit they are, and how well they do things such as swim, jump hurdles, or move on the balance beam.
- Have students preview the covers of the book. Ask them open-ended questions to facilitate a discussion: *What is the importance of the rings on the front cover? What types of activities occur in a stadium like the one pictured on the back cover? What else do you know about the Olympics?*
- **Independent practice:** Introduce and explain the [connect-to-prior-knowledge worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Compare and contrast**

- Explain that one way to organize information in a book is to explain how topics are alike and different. Create a Venn diagram on the board and write the words *Writing and Drawing Tools* above the diagram. Label the left side *Pencil* and the right side *Marker*.
- Show students a pencil and a marker. Invite them to explain how the objects are alike and different (alike: used for writing, approximately the same length, used in art, and so on; different: the marker produces color and a pencil produces gray markings, you can erase mistakes with the pencil but not with the marker, and so on). Model how to write each response on the Venn diagram.
- Ask students how identifying ways that a pencil and a marker are alike and different helped them understand the topic of writing and drawing tools.
- *Think-aloud: To understand and remember new information in a book, I can think about how information is alike and different. I know that this is one strategy that good readers use, so I'm going to compare and contrast new information as I read.*
- Introduce and explain the [compare-and-contrast worksheet](#). Remind students that as they read, to think about what they already know about the Olympic Games and to identify, in their mind, similarities and differences between what they know and information in the text.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for base words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Write the following words from the content vocabulary on the board: *archaeologists*, *competitors*, and *procession*.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

The Olympics: Past and Present

- Point out that these three words can be found in the text and that knowing what they mean will help students understand what's happening as they read the book. Give groups of students three pieces of blank paper and have them write one of the three vocabulary words on each page. For each word, have them write or draw what they know about the word. Create a definition for each word using students' prior knowledge.
- Point out the glossary at the back of the book. Review or explain that a glossary and a dictionary contain lists of words and their definitions.
- Model how students can use a dictionary to find a word's meaning. Have them locate the word *procession* in the dictionary. Invite a volunteer to read the definition for *procession*. Have students compare the dictionary definition with the glossary definition, pointing out the similarities and differences (glossaries only contain definitions for vocabulary words in that particular story, dictionaries contain longer and sometimes multiple definitions, and so on). Have them compare these with their prior knowledge of the word.
- Have students follow along on page 8 as you read the sentence in which the word, *procession*, is found to confirm the meaning. Repeat the exercise with the remaining vocabulary words.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to find out more about the Olympic Games in the past and present.

During Reading

Student Reading



Guide the reading: Have students read to the end of page 9. Ask them to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected with prior knowledge. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.


- Model making connections using prior knowledge.
Think-aloud: *I read that the early Olympic Games began with a procession, or parade. I've seen those on TV at the opening ceremonies of present-day Olympic Games. The athletes carry the flag of the country they represent and march into the Olympic stadium, where the Olympic torch is lighted.*
- Ask open-ended questions to facilitate discussion: What do you know about the procession at the beginning of the Olympic Games? How might today's processions be different from early Olympic processions?
- Ask students to share additional ways they connected to prior knowledge. Then have them identify whether the information in the text is similar to or different from what they know about present-day Olympic Games.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 13. Ask them to share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge. Ask students to turn to page 7 and identify the official prize of past Olympic games (an olive branch from a sacred tree). Have them identify whether this prize is similar to or different from the prize, later decided upon, to be given at the Olympic Games and which page supports their answer (different; page 12 explains that winners of the first Olympics in 1896 received an olive branch, certificate, and silver medal).
- Have students explain the meaning of the word *truce*. Ask them to explain tell how this word represents either a similarity or difference between past and present-day Olympic games (similarity). Have students identify the pages that support their answer (page 8: *During every Olympics, the city-states observed a strictly enforced truce.;* page 11: *...modern Olympics would be a time of peace, when nations would put aside politics and warfare...).*
- Ask students to record this similarity and difference on their compare-and-contrast worksheet.



Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to think about what they know about the Olympics as they read and to identify similarities and differences between past and present Olympic Games. Have them continue to put an asterisk or a star next to information where they connected with prior knowledge.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

The Olympics: Past and Present

-  Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Have students complete the connect-to-prior-knowledge worksheet and compare what they knew before reading the book with what they know after reading it.
- Discuss how making connections between information read and information known about the topic keeps readers actively involved and helps them remember what they have read.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read page 20, I thought about how Olympic athletes must train extensively before competing. It reminds me of the title of the first section, "To Be the Best in the World." In order to be the best at something, you must be highly skilled in that area. I know that I need to practice extensively to get better at something. In order for these athletes to be the best at their sport—better than everyone else in the world—they must be very dedicated to their training. Thinking about what I know helped me to understand and remember this information.*
- Have students share examples of how they connected to prior knowledge to understand the information in the book.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Review the similarities and differences between past and present Olympics that students recorded on their worksheet. Write the words *Olympic Athletes: Then and Now* on the board. Have students work with a partner to locate the author's words that show who could compete in the Olympics originally (page 9: strict civil law prohibited adult women from participating) and who competed in the first Olympic Winter Games (page 15: more than 250 athletes, including 11 women). Invite pairs of students to share the information that supports them. Have students record the information on the compare-and-contrast worksheet.
- **Independent practice:** Have students complete the compare-and-contrast worksheet by identifying at least two differences and two similarities between past and present-day Olympic Games.
- **Enduring understanding:** The Olympic Games have survived and continue to embody certain human values, such as passion and perseverance. Now that you know this information, what does this tell us about human nature and the ideals to which we aspire?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Irregular verbs

- Write the following sentence on the board: *I compete in the Olympics.* Ask students to identify the verb and the verb tense (*compete*, present). Write the phrase *present tense* on the board.
- Write the phrase *past tense* on the board. Ask a volunteer to change the sentence into the past tense. (*I competed in the Olympics.*) Ask students to identify what changed for the sentence tense to change (added the suffix *-ed* to the verb).
- Write the word *hold* on the board. Ask a volunteer to use the word in a sentence. Write the sentence on the board and circle the verb. Ask students to identify the tense of the verb (present).
- Have students turn to page 5. Read the following sentence aloud: *The ancient Greeks held regional athletic competitions throughout Greece for centuries.* Point out the word *held* and explain that the word is the past-tense form of the verb *hold*. Invite students to explain the difference between the formation of the past tense for the words *compete* and *hold* (the suffix *-ed* was added to *compete*; a spelling change was required for *hold*).

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

The Olympics: Past and Present

- Explain that *held* is an example of an *irregular verb* because its past tense is formed without adding *-d* or *-ed*.
- Have students read the second paragraph on page 7. Point out the irregular verbs (*sold, came, was, had*). Invite students to identify the present-tense forms of these verbs (*sell, come, is, have*). Write these examples on the board under the *past-tense* and *present-tense* headings.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the present-tense verbs *begin, wear, and win* on the board. Have students work in pairs to create past and present-tense sentences using these verbs. Have them share their examples aloud.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [irregular verbs worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Multiple-meaning words

- Write the following sentences on the board: *I saw the bird in the tree. I used a saw to cut the board in half.* Ask students to identify the word in each sentence that is spelled the same (*saw*).
- Have students explain the difference between the meanings of the two words (to have seen something; a tool used for cutting). Explain that words that are spelled and sound the same but have different meanings are called *multiple-meaning words*.
- Have students locate the word *watch* in the second sentence on page 12. Ask a volunteer to define the word using the context of the sentence (to observe something). Invite students to share other meanings of the word *watch*.
- Ask a volunteer to locate the word *watch* in the dictionary and read the definitions aloud. Write each definition on the board and have volunteers use each meaning of the word *watch* in a sentence.
- Repeat the dictionary exercise for the word *pass*.



- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *can* and *show*. Have students locate each word in the dictionary and read the definitions. Then have them use each of the different definitions of the word in a sentence on a separate piece of paper. Have students share their sentences aloud.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [multiple-meaning-words worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Invite students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have them compare with someone at home prior knowledge about past and present-day Olympic games.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Have students use the Internet to research an Olympic athlete. Have them identify the following information about the athlete they choose: country of origin, childhood, reasons for becoming an athlete, Olympic Games participated in, significant achievements in the sport, and influence on others. Have students present the information in a written report. Encourage students to add photographs or illustrations to their work.

Visit [Writing A-Z.com](http://WritingA-Z.com) for a lesson and leveled materials on expository report writing.

Social Studies Connection

Explain to students that each city that hosts the Olympic Games chooses a mascot that symbolizes the spirit of the Olympics. For example, the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City had three mascots: the snowshoe hare (swifter), the American black bear (stronger), and the coyote (higher). Have students use the Internet to research Olympic mascots and/or emblems for a particular Olympic year. Have them illustrate the mascot and include a written explanation of its significance. Have students share their information in an oral presentation.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently use the strategy of connecting to prior knowledge to understand nonfiction text during discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately compare and contrast information in nonfiction text during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and understand the formation of irregular verbs during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and use multiple-meaning words in sentences during discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**