



OLYMPIC MUSEUM
LAUSANNE

From Olympia to Athens

Educational files about
the Olympic Games of Athens 2004



Objectives

- Discover historical references in contemporary visual elements
- Stress the historical importance of holding the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens
- Show that the historical legacy of Ancient Greece is still a major source of inspiration today

Process

We always start with an illustration that we link to other images in order to highlight the ancient references. Using images and objects that will receive strong media exposure this year, you can draw your pupils' attention to the numerous historical references which lie behind their creation.

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The Athens 2004 OG and Olympic Legacy

For each theme:

- 1 activity file for the student
- For the teacher
- 1 information file containing basic facts
- 1 file with additional informations

Using the files

The files are intended to be used in class.

At the Olympic Museum

- From 27 May 2004 to February 2005, "Destination Olympia, 5th Century BC" follows the progression of an athlete taking part in the Ancient Games, illustrating facets of daily life and mythology. A teaching file on this will also be produced and sent to you, to help you prepare for a visit to the Museum.
- From 24 June 2004 to early 2005, the exhibition "From Olympia to Athens" will be devoted to the Athens 2004 Olympic Games.
- You will also receive the full programme of events organised by the Museum in this Olympic year.

Useful information

The files may be obtained from the Olympic Museum Cultural Mediation Section or in electronic form from:

www.olympic.org/education

All other information on the Olympic Museum can be found at:

www.museum.olympic.org

Your opinion

Feel free to give us your comments and suggestions:

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The Olympic Torch 2004

Look at the Athens 2004 torch. The designers have tried to illustrate the combination of nature and technology. What materials have they used?

Do you recognise the object which inspired the Sydney 2000 torch (pictures 1 and 2)?

Where will the flame go?

Can you find Athens and Olympia on the map of Greece (picture 3)?

Using the world map (picture 4), follow the torch relay route and identify one city per continent.



1



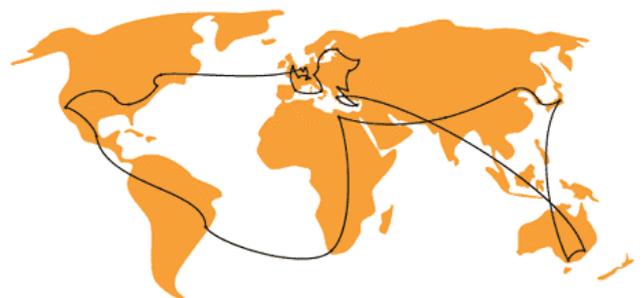
2



Was there a torch relay for the ancient Olympic Games?



3



4



The Torch Relay: Symbol of the Olympic Games



The 2004 Olympic torch

While the Sydney torch adopted the shape of the famous Opera House and the colours of the Pacific Ocean, the torch for Athens 2004 is inspired more by the richness of the earth. The Greek industrial designer, Andreas Varotsos, took his inspiration from the olive leaves used to make the winner's crowns at the ancient Olympic Games, and adopted their dynamic curves to create the shape of the Olympic torch for Athens 2004. Its ergonomics and long, rounded shape are intended to form a harmonious whole with the human body. The choice of the materials, metal and wood, in their natural colours, reflects the desire for balance between man and nature. The shape is not just that of the torch, but seeks to become an extension of the relay runner's hand.



The Torch Relay

For the first time, the torch will cross five continents before returning to its native land for the Opening Ceremony of the Games in Athens on 13 August 2004. The Olympic flame will thus be going for the first time to continents on which it has never shone before: Africa and South America.

After leaving Olympia, the flame will travel around the world before returning to Greece to burn throughout the 2004 Olympic Games. The flame's journey will last 78 days. Once lit, it will travel through the Peloponnese for seven days before beginning its world tour, visiting 33 cities. Outside Greece, it will cover almost 78,000 kilometres and pass through every city that has hosted the Olympic Games as well as others such as Beijing, host of the Games in 2008, or Brussels, capital of the European Union. It is expected in Lausanne and Geneva on 24 June 2004.

The Olympic flame will be in Lausanne and Geneva on 24 June 2004.

On 9 July 2004, the flame will arrive back in Greece and conclude its journey through the remaining departments and islands of the country. Over 45 days, some 7,700 relay runners will cover the country, from one end to the other. On 13 August 2004 the flame will arrive at the Olympic Stadium to mark the opening of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.



The 33 cities on the 2004 international torch relay route

Sydney	St Louis	Barcelona
Melbourne	Atlanta	Rome
Tokyo	New York	Munich
Seoul	Montreal	Berlin
Beijing	Antwerp	Stockholm
Delhi	Brussels	Helsinki
Cairo	Amsterdam	Moscow
Cape Town	Geneva	Kiev
Rio de Janeiro	Lausanne	Istanbul
Mexico City	Paris	Sofia
Los Angeles	London	Nicosia

The origins of the Olympic flame

It was in 1928 at the **Games in Amsterdam** that a flame first burned in the stadium, symbolising the flame of Antiquity.

While there were no torch relays or races in the Pan-Hellenic Games, the modern relay nonetheless contains a reference to Ancient Greece:



- Some time before the Games, **messengers** with olive crowns announced the dates of the competitions to the other Greek cities, inviting them to Olympia.
- There were **torch races** organised to commemorate certain gods, such as Prometheus. The lampadedromia in Athens were one example.
- In each city state, a cauldron burned constantly. At Olympia, a **sacred flame** lit by the rays of the sun burned at all times on an altar dedicated to Hestia. Similar fires were lit in honour of Zeus or Hera.

It is from this legacy that the modern Olympic flame and torch relay are derived.

The first torch relay

The torch relay was first run on the occasion of the **1936 Games in Berlin**. At its Session in 1934, the International Olympic Committee approved the proposal by the Secretary General of the Berlin Games Organising Committee to have a flame carried by relay runners from Olympia to Berlin. For the first time in the history of the modern Olympic Games, the Olympic flame was lit by a fire which came directly from the sanctuary of the Ancient Games at Olympia. The National Olympic Committees of Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany, the seven countries through which the torch relay passed, cooperated enthusiastically on setting this up, and the Organising Committee planned a route which took in the capitals of each country, covering **3000 kilometres**.

The Olympic flame is lit at a well-defined ceremony:

In front of the temple of Hera, the flame is obtained from the rays of the sun focused by a parabolic mirror. The flame is then placed in an urn and carried to the ancient stadium, where it is passed to the first runner in the relay.

Further activities

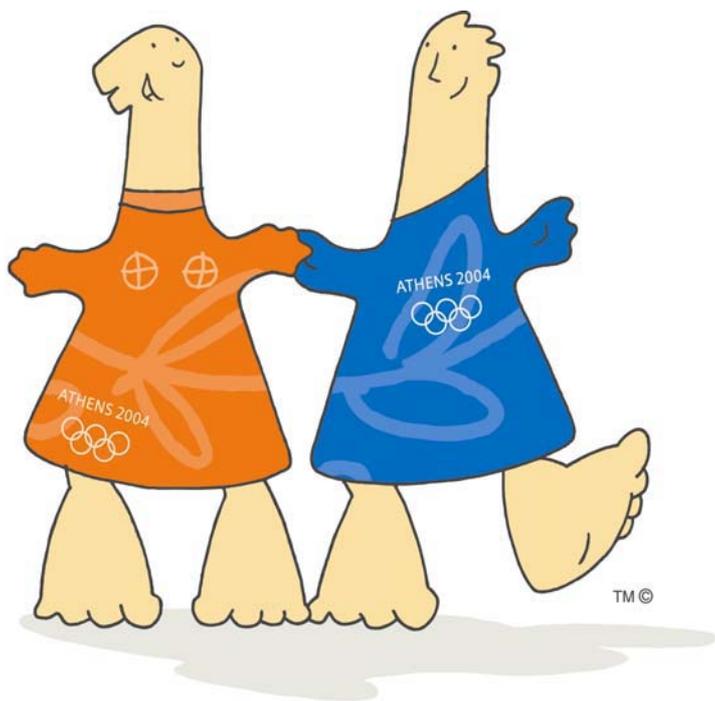
- As a class activity, design a **regional mini-relay**, defining the route, means of transport, etc.
- Choose some of the cities on the 2004 relay route and describe (in the form of a **talk**) their cultural and economic interest.
- Discuss the interest and **impact** of placing a modern phenomenon in a thousand-year historical context.

Reference

The progress of the 2004 torch relay is tracked each day in the Olympic Museum entrance hall.

An information sheet on the Olympic torch relay can be downloaded from www.olympic.org/education





Do you know these two characters?

Describe their shape and colours.
 What symbol do you recognise on their clothes?

What is the source of inspiration?

Illustration 1 shows the object that inspired the shape of these two characters.

Guess what it is made from.

What could it have been used for ?

Clue: today, we still find objects used for the same thing.

Illustrations 2 and 3 represent two Greek gods who gave their names and some of their qualities to the mascots.

Do you recognise them?

Describe them.



1

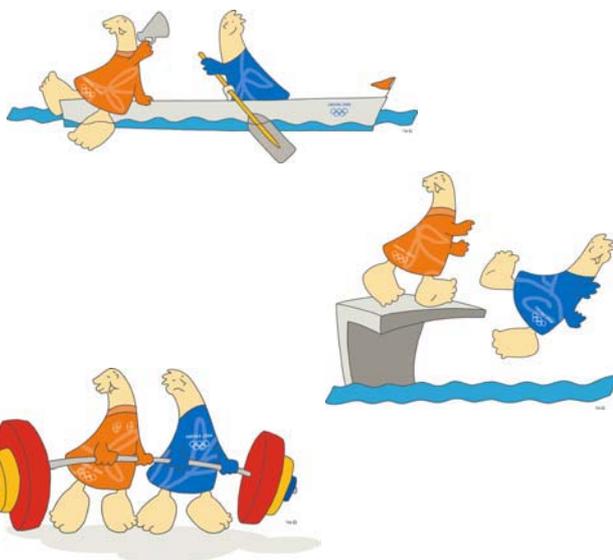


2



3

Describe how these two characters play sport



What is the point of a mascot?

Do you have a favourite object or toy, or a souvenir with great sentimental value ? What role does it play in your daily life?



The Mascots: Ambassadors of the Olympic Games



Who are these two characters?

Athena and Phevos are the official mascots of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Their creators were keen to make these mascots part of a historical legacy. Their shape is inspired by an ancient Greek doll and their names are those of two divinities of Olympus.

In Greek, these names are pronounced [fivos] and [aθi:na].

The **Olympic symbol** can be seen on the mascots. The five interlinked rings symbolise the five continents, united to celebrate the Olympic Games.



Why are they such a strange shape?

The original object that inspired the shape of the mascots was a terracotta **doll** in the shape of a bell. Its legs were joined to its body by an iron thread. The doll dates from the 7th century B.C. and belongs to a collection in the Benaki Museum in Athens. Several ancient dolls of this type are preserved in numerous museums throughout the world. The use of terracotta was widespread, as it is more durable than wood.

Where do their names come from?

Their names are drawn from mythology. They recall two divinities of Olympus:



Also known as Phevos “the bright one”, **Apollo** is the Greek god of light, beauty, divination, music and poetry. He is the son of Zeus and Leto, and the twin brother of Artemis. He drives the sun chariot, drawn by four horses. His attributes are the lyre and the laurel. In this picture, he is carrying a **laurel crown**.



Athena is the protector of the city of Athens and goddess of reason. She came out of Zeus's head, fully-grown and armed. Here, on an amphora in the illustration, she is carrying a **shield**. Her attributes are the owl, the symbol of wisdom, and the olive tree, which she herself created.

The mascots Phevos and Athena are also representative of modern children, their names being popular in today's Greece.

What role do these two characters have?

The mascot is a mark of **recognition** of the Olympic Games. It allows young people, in particular, to identify with the **Olympic values**. Phevos and Athena thus represent:

- Participation: they invite every child in the world to participate in the great sporting festival which is the Olympic Games;
- Brotherhood: Phevos and Athena are brother and sister;
- Equality: especially participation open to both men and women;
- Cooperation and fair play.

The mascots are used as a basis for the creation of toys, souvenirs and various objects.



An original way of practising sport

Phivos and Athina see sports as **games** and love taking part: whether they are testing new ways to row (Athina's feet double up as oars- handy!) or picking up weights together (weightlifting doubles has yet to be invented!) their efforts are always marked by team spirit, even if they do not always respect the rules in force: Athina, for example, thinks she can teach Phivos how to jump by pushing him off the diving board...

Mascots, essential companions of the Olympic Games

Since **Waldi**, the agile and jolly dachshund from 1972, the Olympic Games have always had an official mascot. Mariscal's little dog **Cobi**, the mascot of the 1992 Barcelona Games, remains imprinted on people's memories. The mascots are an important source of revenue for the organising city of the Games (in Sydney, they brought in more than 50 million dollars).

Apollo's laurel

This mythological tale recounts the impossible love between **Apollo** and **Daphne**:

"Eros, who had been watching the road for a while, saw Apollo approaching. Not far away, Daphne was walking around. It was now or never: Eros fired a gold arrow at Apollo, making him fall in love. He fired a lead arrow at the nymph, which, conversely, inspired disgust. The result was immediate: Daphne immediately refused Apollo's advances and ran away from the lovesick god, who followed hot on her heels.

As soon as he thought he was about to reach her, the nymph evaded him, and the chase started up again! Becoming exhausted, and fearing that she no longer had the strength to escape from her pursuer, Daphne begged her father to come to her rescue. Peneus heard the desperate call of his daughter and decided to help her by transforming her into something else! Just when he was about to catch up with her, Apollo came face to face with the rugged trunk of a tree and got his brown curls knotted up in the laurel's dark leaves: the young girl had lost her human form for ever. Broken-hearted, Apollo swore that he would cherish this tree eternally. He made himself a crown from its leaves and placed it on his head. This was how the laurel tree became the emblem of Apollo."

References

The mascots Phivos and Athina can be seen on the website www.athens2004.com

Further information on the Benaki Museum can be found on www.benaki.gr

The brochure *Mascottes Olympiques, Olympic Mascots*, Lausanne: IOC (s.d.) proposes fun activities for children, based on the Olympic Games mascots from 1972 to 1994.

Further studies

- Look for other representations of Athena and Apollo.
- Present an extract from the **Iliad**, the first text mentioning Athena.
- Read other **mythological tales** related to Apollo, such as the fight against the serpent of Delphi, or his relationship with Hyacinthos.





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What does this pictogram represent?

How many parts is it composed of? Which is the main part?

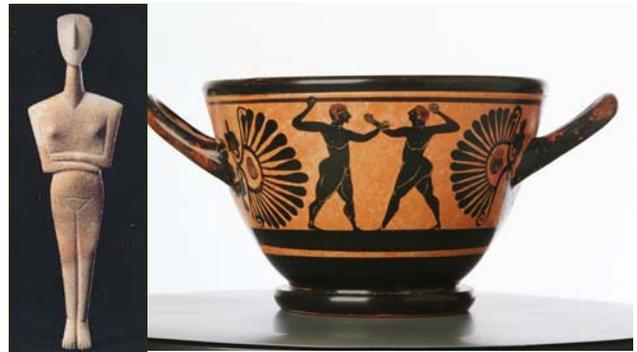
Where does the idea come from?

Look at pictures 1 and 2 and find what they have in common with the big pictogram.

Look at picture 3. What is it?
Based on this picture, can you explain why the Athens 2004 pictograms have irregular-shaped backgrounds?



3



1

2

What is a pictogram for?

Do you know any other pictograms?

What do the parts “picto” and “gram” mean?

What are the advantages of using pictograms?

What sports are these?





The Pictograms: Wayfinders of the OG



The Athens 2004 pictograms

Athens 2004 have created 35 sports pictograms to illustrate the 28 Olympic sports and four collective disciplines. They each show the specific characteristics of the Olympic sports and disciplines, to enable spectators to recognise them immediately.



The function of pictograms

The primary function of pictograms is to give a visual identity to all information concerning the sports competition programme. Thanks to a few pencil strokes, the sport in question is immediately recognised, with no need for text or translation. Pictograms are an international language understood by all those who share the visual references.

References to Antiquity in the pictograms

The pictograms do not just give information about the sports they represent. With their references to ancient shapes, they emphasise the place of Athens 2004 in the context of thousands of years of history. The sports pictograms for the 2004 Games in Athens are inspired by Ancient Greece in three ways:



The vases with black figures on a red background. They illustrate the famous vases of the 6th century BC from Athens, where the black surfaces depict the contours of a human body and the scratched white lines show specific details.



The Cycladic marble figurines from the era between 3200 and 2000 BC with their simple, sober shapes forming elegant and dynamic human contours also inspired the creators of the pictograms.



The clear and gracious forms of the illustrations are surrounded by an irregular border, like the fragment of an ancient vase. The illustration shows a reconstitution of a Greek vase, based on the fragments found by an archaeologist.

picto- comes from the Latin *pictus* (painted).

gramma in Greek means something drawn or written. *grammê* means a line. See also *graphein*, which has a similar meaning (write or draw).

The objects produced by the Cycladic civilisation were a major source of inspiration for the modernist painters in the early 20th century.

Sports on the Athens 2004 programme

Athletics	Judo
Rowing	Wrestling
Badminton	Swimming
Baseball	Modern Pentathlon
Basketball	Softball
Boxing	Equestrian Sports
Canoe-kayak	Taekwondo
Cycling	Tennis
Fencing	Table Tennis
Football	Shooting
Gymnastics	Archery
Weightlifting	Triathlon
Handball	Sailing
Hockey	Volleyball

Sports practised at the ancient games

Foot races (basic race, diaulos – 2 lengths of the stadium, dolichos – 7-24 stadium lengths, race in armour)

Pentathlon (foot race, jump, discus, javelin and wrestling)

Combat sports (wrestling, pankration, boxing)

Horse races

Music and singing (a feature of the Games in Delphi, of which there was no trace at Olympia)

Black and red figures

Vases decorated with **black figures** appeared in Corinth around 700 BC. Before then, the decorations had been scratched into a painted surface. Vases with red figures date from the 5th century BC. These were already being produced in Athens around 525 BC. The technique using **red figures** – which are in fact ochre or orange – involved representing the figures on raw clay painted with a diluted clay solution which turns black when fired. In this way, only the background was painted, together with some details of the figures.

Further activities

- Try to **draw** an activity from every-day life using as few strokes as possible on a small square surface using a thick pen.
- Make a list of the most well-known pictograms (road and railway signs, toilets, etc.) and look at **company logos**. What information do they give?
- Explain the importance of **ancient ceramics** as a visual historic source (scenes from mythology, social life, etc).

References

All the pictograms can be found at www.athens2004.com

The Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens has a website: www.cycladic-m.gr

Numerous Greek vases with black figures representing sports competitions are on show in the permanent exhibition at the Olympic Museum.

Credits:

All pictograms: © ATHOC 2004

Illustration 1: © Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens

Illustration 2: © IOC, Olympic Museum

Ill. 3: © Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig, Basle, Agorà

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IOC 2004



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The new Olympic medal

Do you recognise the figure in the middle?
Have you seen this type of figure before?

Look at the two architectural features?
What do they remind you of?
Which city do they refer to?

On the reverse (back) of the medal (picture 1), what is the feature in the foreground?
What language is the text written in?



1



2

3



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ATHENS 2004



What can you see on the Athens 2004 emblem?

Previous medals

Look at picture 2. Can you see similarities with the big picture? What are the main differences?

Compare pictures 2 and 3. Can you see the differences between the pictures?



The Winners' Rewards

The Athens 2004 medal

For 70 years, the design on the Summer Games medal remained the same. With the Games in Athens, this has been radically changed:



A representation of the **Nike from the Olympia Museum** now features on the obverse of the Summer Games medal. This 3m statue was produced by the sculptor Paion in 421 BC. Standing on a triangular pillar nine metres tall facing the east side of the Temple of Zeus, it appeared to those who saw it to be coming down from the sky.

301 medal ceremonies are scheduled during the 2004 Games in Athens. Hundreds of athletes will thus return to their home countries with the honour of being an Olympic champion, as symbolised by the medal.

The **Panathinaikon Stadium** recalls the venue for the first modern Games in 1896. It occupies half the surface area of the medal. In the background, the **Acropolis** can be seen.



On the reverse, there is the cauldron with a flame burning inside it. This is the **flame**, lit in Olympia, which will cross the five continents during the 2004 Torch Relay. A text in Greek appears in the background. This is taken from the first lines of **Pindar's Eight Olympic Ode**, composed in 460 BC to honour the victory of Alkimedon of Aegina in wrestling (text overleaf).



The Summer Olympic medal from 1928 to 2000

Since the 1928 Games in Amsterdam, when the Summer Games medals were standardised, until the 2000 Games in Sydney, the medal design remained almost unchanged. On the obverse there had to be a representation of **Victory**, seated and without wings, holding a **wreath** in one hand and a **palm branch** in the other. In the background, there was an **arena** reminiscent of the Coliseum in Rome.



The Athens 2004 emblem

The stylised crown on the logo is a reference to the ancient Games held in Olympia, where the winners received a **crown of wild olive**.

In Antiquity, a crown of leaves was a sign of victory. In 1896, for the first modern Olympic Games, the winners received an olive crown in addition to a medal.

The Panhellenic Games

In Antiquity, all the games held at Olympia, Corinth, Nemea and Delphi during a four-year period (Olympiad).

The winners' crowns

Olympia – olive
Corinth – pine
Nemea – celery
Delphi – laurel

Nike

The Ancient Greeks believed that it was the gods who decided which athlete would win. They represented victory in the form of a winged female character called Nike (Greek for “victory”). A servant or messenger of the gods, Nike flew down to bring the chosen person the **divine reward** in the form of a crown or ribbon. Note that Nike was not a goddess, but a messenger of the gods.

An American **brand** of sports goods is named after the Greek word for victory.

Pindar’s eighth ode

The first lines which appear on the 2004 Olympic medals are:

“O tender mother who dost delight to bedeck with shining crowns the foreheads of thy athletes, Olympia, lend thine ear to my words! Sanctuary of truth...” The ode continues: “...it is in thy walls that august sacrificers seek in the smoking entrails of their victims the will of the master of thunder for those men whose painful travails lead to the most sublime of virtues and repose, worthy recompense for their success; and Jupiter, tender to their piety and prayers, makes known his decrees.”

Further activities

- Read extracts of other **odes by the poet Pindar** (518-438 BC). Thanks to these odes, we know about the famous athletes of Antiquity, such as Theron of Agrigento or Diagoras of Rhodes.
- Discuss the importance of **prizes** today, including in the world of sport, material or symbolic rewards (salary, respect, competition prizes), the corresponding **rituals** and challenges to be met, and the role of **sponsors**.

References

All the Olympic Games medals can be seen at www.olympic.org

Numerous representations of Nike can be seen on vases on show in the Olympic Museum’s permanent exhibition.



More than 100 years of the modern Olympic Games

Comment on the two tables below and try to explain the differences.

Athens 1896

Length: 11 days, from 5 to 15 April 1896
Disciplines: 10
Countries represented: 10
Athletes: 295 (men only)
Spectators: 750,000

Athens 2004

Length: 17 days, from 13 to 29 August 2004
Disciplines: 37
NOCs represented: 202*
Athletes: 10,500* (men and women)
Spectators: 3,700,000,000*

* Estimates



1



2

The importance of Athens 2004 for the future

By looking at pictures 1 and 2, try to guess the legacy that the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens will leave to future generations.



3

What is the historical source of inspiration?

Look at picture 3. This athlete is finishing a race over more than 40 km. What is it called?

This event was included in the 1896 Games in Athens. To what event in Ancient Greece does it refer

Wrestling was already on the programme of the Ancient Games.



Athens 2004 is introducing a new event which would have been impossible at the time. Guess what it is.

The Athens 2004 Olympic Games and Olympic Legacy



Athens 1896

The **first modern Olympic Games** were held in Athens in 1896, two years after Pierre de Coubertin created the International Olympic Committee.

But these first modern Games were still a long way from those we know today. As the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) had not yet been formed, there was no official team in 1896. The groups of athletes were created in more or less random fashion. The sports facilities were also often inadequate. This explains the fairly mediocre performances achieved during these first Games. However, the Games were considered a **success**, particularly in terms of the enthusiasm of those taking part, spectator numbers (750,000, with more than 40,000 at the Opening Ceremony), and the political and private support they received. Thanks to television coverage, those following the Games (whether present or via television), are today numbered in billions.



The legacy from Athens 2004

The Olympic Games represent a tremendous **development** opportunity. Although the city authorities have been spending over 15 years trying to give their city a human dimension and restore some degree of elegance, the organisation of the Games is speeding up this process. This is how numerous **pedestrian streets** have been created over the past months; kilometres of **pavement** have been built; and numerous **parks** created or improved (a total of 290,000 trees and 11 million shrubs will be planted). With 120 kilometres of newly-laid **roads**, the construction of a new international airport, the new **tramway**, extensions to the **metro**, and, of course, the new **sports infrastructures** (29 projects), Athens was the biggest building site in Europe in 2003. No less than 180 million euros have been devoted to embellishing the Greek capital in the framework of the Olympic Games. Some 65,000 new jobs have been created.

Thanks to the new transport infrastructure, which frees the city centre from congestion and protects the **archaeological sites**, it is thought that a 35% decrease in **air pollution** can be achieved. The Acropolis is thus less subjected to petrol fumes, and is now surrounded with a pleasant pedestrian zone. Numerous archaeological sites have been highlighted during the building work taking place.

At Olympia, 100 million euros were granted to renovate the existing museum and create a new one devoted to the history of the Olympic Games.



The marathon inspired by Antiquity

In 1896, the first modern Olympic Games included numerous references to Ancient Greece. Organising the Games in Athens was naturally a reminder or where the Games originated: in Greece. The organisers even went so far as to invent a race inspired directly by an event from Greek history: the marathon. This race commemorates the **achievement by a soldier** who, in 490 BC, ran from the town of Marathon to **announce the military victory** over the Persians to the people of Athens. According to the legend, after delivering his message, the man died of exhaustion. He had covered a distance of around 40 km. Today, the distance run is 42.195 km.

This is how **Pierre de Coubertin** described the winner of the first marathon: "as if the whole of Ancient Greece had entered the stadium with him".

Wrestling at the 2004 Games in Athens

This year, **women's wrestling** will feature for the first time on the competition programme at the Olympic Games, with four freestyle weight categories. In Ancient Greece, wrestling was one of the most popular sports, even though it was practised only by men, like all the other sports. Only Greek-born free men could take part in the ancient games. Men of other nations, **women** and slaves were **excluded**. Women were not even allowed to attend the games as spectators.

Further activities

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of holding the Olympic Games in your **region**.
- Imagine what the **opening ceremony** of the Olympic Games in Athens will be like.
- Try to complete a **table** like those in the activity sheet (Athens 1896/Athens 2004) for the ancient games.

References

MILLER, David, *Athens to Athens - The Official History of the IOC and the Olympic Games 1894-2004*, Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing

ANDERS, Heinrich, FRIEDRICHSEN, Frank, *100 Jahre Olympia*, Hamburg: MedienKontor, 1996

From 24 June until the end of the summer 2004, the Olympic Museum is presenting an exhibition on Athens 2004.

The competition programme for the 2004 Games in Athens can be found at www.athens2004.org

