



Olympic Day – June 23

SOCIAL SCIENCES, HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION MULTI LEVEL CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCING OLYMPIC DAY

- Tell students that we celebrate Olympic Day, every year on 23 June and that this is a celebration that takes place all over the world. Schools celebrate this day with an Olympic Day Run on the day or during the week leading up.
- Have students recall and share memories of times that they have taken part in an Olympic Day Run. Can they say:
 - *what they did?*
 - *what were they doing it for?*
 - *what were the benefits they got from taking part?*
- Do they know that Olympic Day is a celebration of the founding of the Modern Olympic Movement on 23 June 1894? Calculate how many years ago this was.
- Have students brainstorm and speculate on reasons for celebrating this day every year. List reasons on a wall chart for future reference.
- Apart from the excitement of taking part and watching the sport, can students come up with any ideas about how the Olympic Games is good for countries and peoples all over the world? List responses.
- Do the students know when and where the Olympic Games will be held this year (Beijing, Aug 8 – 24)? Can students locate Beijing using their atlases?
- Tell students that this year it will be 100 years since New Zealand sent its first athlete to an Olympic Games and that one of this year's team will be the 1000th athlete we have sent to an Olympic Games.

TEACHER TASK

Download the student Olympic Worksheet at: www.teachingonline.org/olympic.pdf (Photocopy and distribute to students.

SETTING THE STUDENT RESEARCH TASK

- Tell students that to understand why we have the Modern Olympic Games we must go back and find out what the Ancient Greeks (who started the Olympic Games) believed in and how the Games would help them celebrate these beliefs. Ensure students understand that the word 'ideal' means an idea or something we believe in that we try very hard to achieve.
- Have students read through the worksheet and then as a class, discuss, answer and complete the following:
 - *after careful reading of the beliefs of the Ancient Greeks and the principles of modern Olympic ideals, have students identify the beliefs or ideals that are similar*
 - *could they find any points of difference?*



- *do the students think that the philosophies of the Ancient Greeks and the modern philosophy of Olympism are good ways to live life? Give reasons.*
- *Develop the idea that Pierre de Coubertin wanted art exhibitions, drama and music to be held as part of the Olympic Games (they still are). What reasons can the students suggest for including these?*



EXPLORING de COUBERTIN'S BELIEFS (Olympism)

- Have students think about why it is important to set a good example to other people by:
 - *listing times they have set a good example to others*
 - *listing times when they could have set a better example to others – particularly younger family members/friends*
 - *list activities or things they do where they believe they have room for improvement and can set a better example in the future. How would they go about this?*
- In groups, have students focus on friendship. What do they like about their friends? Can they come up with a list or definition of 'what makes a good friend'?
- Have students write a short paragraph or poem on 'the value of friendship'.
- Tell students that most athletes who take part in the Olympic Games will say that though they were proud to represent their country, the things they valued most was the meeting with people from around the world, learning about their cultures and making new (often for life) friendships. How do the students think this can make the world a better and happier place?
- 'The making of new friendships and the sharing of different cultures is more important than the medals won'. Debate/discuss this idea. Is this any different than the way our sports commentators on TV, radio and in the papers try to make us think?
- Have groups re-read the principles of modern Olympism. Have groups rate them in order of importance. Share the results and have students justify their ratings. Can students relate these to everyday life?



Celebrating Ethics



DOING OUR BEST

- Can the students recall the times when they have really tried hard and they can 'truly' say they have done their best? Were there any times when they really surprised themselves with what they had achieved? Share experiences.
- Have students list:
 - activities they always try to do their best in
 - activities where they don't try so hard – why is this so?
 - are there any activities that they are good at but they could do better?
- Have students make a list of words and phrases to describe how they feel when they have tried to do their best. Using these as a basis, challenge students to come up with some catchy slogans designed to encourage others to always do their best. Display as a wall chart or mobiles.
- Have each student write a personal list of areas that they could try harder in and an outline plan of how they will try to accomplish this.
- Discuss how they could learn and practise this through sport?

FAIR PLAY, RULES AND ETHICS

- Have students (no names) give examples of times and situations where they think they have been unfairly treated. How did they feel about this?
- Can they recall times when they have treated other people unfairly or times when they have disagreed with others?
- 'The world would be a better place if we all had the same opinions'. Have students discuss this proposition and list or debate the pros and cons of this statement.
- Introduce the concept of rules. Focus on classroom rules. Why do we have them? Are they necessary? Can they justify them? What would classroom/school life be like without them?
- Introduce the idea that we all have a set of unwritten rules that we live by. These are called ethics and relate to how we treat other people in our everyday lives.
- Have students brainstorm a list of ethics (rules) that they believe would improve their quality of life at school and at home. Relate these to the principles of modern Olympism.



CELEBRATE WITH AN OLYMPIC DAY RUN

One of the ways the Olympic Movement celebrates Olympic Day is taking part in a fun but appropriately challenging run/walk around the school and/or local district.

- Remember that the run or run/walk should be appropriate in difficulty for the age and ability of the students who are taking part.
- Divide the class/school into teams. The run takes the form of a team challenge where every member of the team has their contribution, performance, attitude and behaviour during the run – respected and valued.
- Team members are encouraged to respond to this by striving to do their very best for the good of the team.
- Involve all teams in planning the course for the run. Make it fun by adding some obstacles and/or activities/tasks that have to be completed at stations around the course, **eg**
 - hopping 10 metres
 - throwing a ball through a hoop
- Team members will individually decide if they will run, walk etc. around the course. Prior to the run, teams should run/walk the course several times to see what pace suits each member.

- Decide upon a total team time they believe can be achieved.
- Have teams identify possible situations during the run where they will be able to display instances of the Olympic Ideals – in particular being a good role model, tolerance, generosity, friendship, unity and respect for others
- During the run, have students provide support and encouragement for each other in their challenge to equal or better their estimated team time.
- After the run, have students reflect on what they achieved. How close to the estimated time were they? Which of the *Olympic Ideals* helped the team in achieving their goal? Could they have worked better as a group to achieve their goal?
- Students self and peer assess the ways in which they showed inclusiveness and tolerance during the team run.
- Brainstorm and list ways and situations in everyday life where they can display and use Olympic Ideals. Monitor this over the rest of the year Display results on a class wall chart.



Olympism Activities for Junior Classes can be downloaded at: www.teachingonline.org/juniorolympic.pdf

