

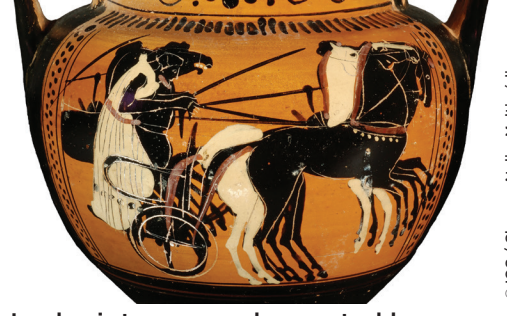
The Ancient Games



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Mini Fact:

Athletes and judges took an oath before the games to compete honorably and abide by the rules.



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In chariot races and mounted horse races, the winner was the owner of the horse, not the rider.

Are you looking forward to watching the Summer Olympics in a few weeks? This year's games will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The games of the XXXI Olympiad open on Aug. 5.

The modern Olympics have been held since 1896. But the ancient Olympics took place many centuries before in ancient Greece.

Greek games

Beginning in 776 B.C., people in Olympia, Greece, celebrated their god Zeus (zoo-se) with an athletic competition that was to take place every four years — every Olympiad. At first, the games lasted just one day, but later they were extended to three days, and then to five.

All free males were allowed to participate in the Olympic Games. Married women could not compete or even attend the games, but single women could watch the competitions.

An Olympic truce

The games became so important that an Olympic truce, or agreement to stop fighting, was established. Three kings from different parts of Greece announced that there would be no fighting during the Olympic Games. Athletes, their families and spectators could travel in safety to the games.

Organizers hoped that participating in the games would encourage people from different cities to get along better.

Ancient events

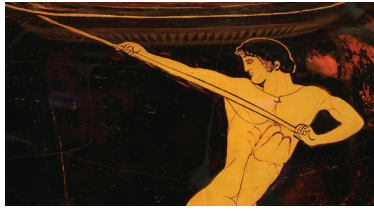
Athletes trained for months in advance of the games. Competitors did not wear any clothes during the contests. The ancient games did not include team sports, but there were many individual events:

- Running events included a **stade**, or 200-meter foot race; a **diaulos** (two stades), or 400-meter race; and a **dolichos**, which ranged from seven to 24 stades.

- In the **long jump** event, athletes held weights until just before the end of their jump, then threw the weights backward to propel themselves forward.

- The **discus throw** looked much like it does today. Originally, the discus was made of stone.

- For the **javelin throw**, the athlete wrapped a small leather strap around the shaft of the javelin to give it extra spin.



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- **Wrestlers** competed until one of the contestants gave up. **Boxers** wrapped their hands with leather straps to make their wrists stronger, but the hard leather could damage an opponent's face.

- **Pankration** was a combination of wrestling and boxing and was thought to be the hardest event.

• **Equestrian** events included horse races and chariot races held in the Hippodrome, a large, flat, wide open space.

Winner and awards

In the ancient games, only one athlete was the winner. The Greeks believed that the gods decided the winner.

Right after the competitions ended, a judge gave the winner a palm leaf, and a red ribbon was tied around his head and his hands. Later, in a formal ceremony, a judge placed a crown made of an olive branch on the winner's head.

End of the games

The ancient games continued for more than 1,000 years. In A.D. 393, the emperor stopped the games, and Olympia was abandoned. But since 1776, archaeologists have uncovered much of the site of the original games.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/1OQbeDS
- bit.ly/25dz6J1

At the library:

- "The Ancient Greek Olympics" by Richard Woff
- "The First Olympics of Ancient Greece" by Lisa M. Bolt Simons

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of the ancient Olympics are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



ANCIENT, BOXER, CHARIOT, CROWN, DISCUS, EQUESTRIAN, GAMES, GODS, GREECE, JAVELIN, JUDGE, OLIVE, OLYMPIAD, PALM, RACE, PANKRATION, STADE, TRUCE, WINNER, WRESTLER, ZEUS.

C D I S C U S Y N I L E V A J
H Z A E G D U J E C E E R G W
A E Q U E S T R I A N D O R Y
R J N O I T A R K N A P E N F
I B B O X E R T P I X S W O N
O R E N N I W A P Z T O B L E
T S E M A G L M E L R P T I D
E C U R T M Y U E C L U B V A
Z R A C E L S R Z S D O G E T
G I L U O V T N E I C N A O S

Cook's Corner

Greek Salad

You'll need:

- 1 head romaine lettuce, washed
- 1 small red onion, sliced
- 1 cup sliced black olives
- 1 cup feta cheese
- 1 cup croutons

Dressing:

- 3 teaspoons vinegar
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- salt and pepper



* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

What to do:

1. With clean hands, tear lettuce into small pieces in a large bowl. Add red onion, black olives, feta cheese and croutons.
2. In a small bowl, combine ingredients for the dressing.
3. Pour dressing over salad and serve. Makes 2 or 3 servings.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.



1. gentle and friendly (4) _____
2. noontime meal (5) _____
3. what teachers do with tests (7) _____
4. game played on a diamond (8) _____
5. strummed instrument (6) _____
6. masked animal (7) _____
7. she serves you food (8) _____

ND	LUN	WAIT	RA
TAR	RESS	CH	OON
ECT	GUI	CC	BALL
RR	KI	BASE	CO

Answers: kind, lunch, correct, correct, guitar, raccoon, waitress.

Mini Jokes



April: What do whales like to chew?
Adam: Blubber gum!

Frank: What do you call a person who washes whales?
Frannie: A blubber scrubber!

Eco Note



Bugs are an important part of keeping the Earth healthy. For instance, worms eat their way through dirt and leave behind rich soil for plants. Spiders eat other bugs such as mosquitoes and flies. We couldn't live without bugs!

adapted with permission from "The New 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth" by The Earthworks Group, Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com)

Thank You



The Mini Page thanks the Olympic Museum Educational and Cultural Services for help with this issue.

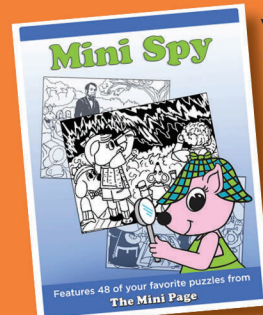
Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bbs.amuniversal.com/teaching_guides.html

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