

## CROSS-CURRICULAR IDEAS

The Olympic and Paralympic Games offer many different opportunities for using a global citizenship approach to promote real-life learning across the curriculum, enabling young people to learn about, think about and take action on global issues. Here are just a few practical ideas.

*Note: All of the web links provided below were correct at the time of publication.*

### Maths

- Explore the flags of the different nations participating in the Olympic Games. *What patterns can you see? What 2-D shapes and types of angles are there? Which flags have lines of symmetry?*
- Investigate the number of qualifying athletes and medal totals from the nations that participated in the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Consider possible reasons why some nations have many more athletes and medals than others. Compare these data to the athlete and medal totals from the Olympic Games in London in 2012. *What similarities and differences are there between the data?*
  - For a list of participating athletes by nation in the London 2012 Olympic Games, see: [www.theguardian.com/sport/datablog/2012/jul/27/london-olympic-athletes-full-list](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/datablog/2012/jul/27/london-olympic-athletes-full-list)
  - For details of the Olympic medals by nation, see: [www.olympic.org/olympic-results](http://www.olympic.org/olympic-results)
  - For a list of medal totals and numbers of participating Paralympic athletes by nation, see: [www.paralympic.org/results/historical](http://www.paralympic.org/results/historical)
  - For resized world maps according to the numbers of participating Olympic and Paralympic athletes from each country, see: [www.viewsoftheworld.net/?p=2541](http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/?p=2541)
- Research the numbers of male and female athletes from different nations competing in the Olympic Games. Compare different nations and think critically about why some nations might have more men participating than women. Investigate data from previous Olympic Games to explore how the participation of women has changed over time.
  - For further information about women in the Olympic movement see: [www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference\\_documents/Factsheets/Women\\_in\\_Olympic\\_Movement.pdf](http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents/Factsheets/Women_in_Olympic_Movement.pdf)

### English

- Explore media coverage of the 2016 Olympic Games, both in Brazil and in other countries around the world. *Is the coverage generally positive or negative? What sorts of issues are being covered? Are any of the issues raised being addressed? Does it seem that the Olympics is helping to make the host city a fairer place? Compare the media coverage of the Rio 2016 Olympics with that of other Olympic Games, such as London in 2012 or Beijing in 2008. What similarities and differences are there in the coverage? What might be the reasons for any differences?*
- Research and write profiles of sporting heroes and heroines who have had to overcome obstacles in their lives to achieve sporting success. For example, Mo Farah (athletics) and Luol Deng (basketball) both moved to the UK as children, the former a migrant and the latter a



refugee. Tanni Grey-Thompson was born with spina bifida but went on to become one of the UK's most successful disabled athletes, competing in five Paralympic Games.

- See: *Olympics 30 – Great Olympic Stories*: [www.olympics30.com](http://www.olympics30.com)
- Try *Heroes and Heroines – Carrying the torch for a fairer world* by Bridges and Oxfam: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/heroes-and-heroines](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/heroes-and-heroines)

*Note: This resource, published in 2012, includes Oscar Pistorius as an example of a hero.*

- Write the story of a sports item used at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, such as a football. Think about where in the world the product was made, how it was made and the people involved in the supply chain. Describe the working conditions and profits of the different people involved, from the factory where it was produced to the consumer at the end of the chain.
  - See Playfair 2012's *Fair's Fair – Life and rights in the global sports industry* to find out more about some of the people who make these goods in poorer countries, often working with few rights, and for very low wages: [www.playfair2012.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TUC\\_Fairs-fair\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.playfair2012.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TUC_Fairs-fair_booklet.pdf)
  - Try Oxfam's *The Clothes Line* to explore cotton production and the textile industry in India: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-clothes-line](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-clothes-line)

## Science

- Design a healthy, balanced meal for an Olympic or Paralympic athlete. Then investigate traditional diets in different countries and examine the energy and nutrition content of typical meals.
  - See Oxfam's *Our Food, Our World* for photographs of and information about some foods in different countries: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/our-food-our-world](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/our-food-our-world)
- Sailing during the Olympic Games in 2016 is scheduled to take place in the polluted waters of Guanabara Bay, on the shores of Rio de Janeiro. Many people are concerned over water quality in the bay, with tests recording high levels of disease-causing viruses. Explore the issue of access to clean water around the world. Then research water-borne diseases and how to prevent them.
  - Try *Water for the World* from Practical Action and Engineers Without Borders UK: [practicalaction.org/water-for-the-world](http://practicalaction.org/water-for-the-world)
- Investigate the recent outbreak of the Zika virus in Brazil and find out what action is being taken to control it. Research other mosquito-borne diseases, such as malaria and dengue fever.
  - Try the Association for Science Education's *It Makes You Think: Malaria* to find out about local and global strategies that can be used to prevent deaths from this disease: [www.itmakesyouthink.org.uk/mal.php](http://www.itmakesyouthink.org.uk/mal.php)

## Geography / Social studies

- Research and locate on a world map the countries of origin of different sports clothes and trainers worn by learners in your class. Discuss who is involved in the production and selling of one of these items of sportswear and draw a diagram, in the form of a chain, of the people involved, from the factory worker to a consumer in the UK. Investigate the working conditions

and profits of the people involved in the production process and compare this to those of others along the chain.

- See Playfair 2012's *Fair's Fair – Life and rights in the global sports industry* to find out more about some of the people who make these goods in poorer countries, often working with few rights, and for very low wages:  
[www.playfair2012.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TUC\\_Fairs-fair\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.playfair2012.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TUC_Fairs-fair_booklet.pdf)
- Try Oxfam's *The Clothes Line* to explore cotton production and the textile industry in India:  
[www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-clothes-line](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-clothes-line)
- Identify factors that will contribute to the carbon footprint of the Olympic Games, such as building the sporting venues and accommodation for the athletes, and providing transport and food and drink for spectators. Investigate what actions organisers have taken to minimise the environmental impacts of staging the Olympic Games; for example, using renewable energy. Then plan your own sustainable Olympics.
  - For information about some of the actions taken to integrate sustainability goals into the London 2012 Olympic Games, see:  
[www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference\\_documents/Factsheets/London\\_2012\\_Facts\\_and\\_Figures-eng.pdf](http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents/Factsheets/London_2012_Facts_and_Figures-eng.pdf)
- Use a *Why-why-why chain* to think critically about why some countries have higher numbers of athletes participating in the Olympic or Paralympic Games and achieve more medals than others.
  - See page 12 of *Oxfam's Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A guide for teachers*:  
[www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides)

## History

- In 2016, for the first time ever, there will be a team of refugees taking part in the Olympic Games. From different countries, these athletes will compete under the Olympic flag. Research the reasons why other athletes have competed under the Olympic flag in previous Olympic Games. For example in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, athletes from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia competed under the Olympic flag because of sanctions which prevented the country from taking part. Athletes from East Timor competed under the Olympic flag in 2000 and from South Sudan in 2012, as these were new nations at the time and their Olympic Committees had not yet been formed.
  - Find out more:  
[www.olympic.org/news/team-of-refugee-olympic-athletes-roa-created-by-the-ioc/248766](http://www.olympic.org/news/team-of-refugee-olympic-athletes-roa-created-by-the-ioc/248766)
- Explore the origins of the Paralympic games. Ludwig Guttman, a German Jewish refugee, fled Nazi Germany and in 1948 (on the day of the opening ceremony of the London 1948 Olympic Games) held the first competition for wheelchair athletes in Buckinghamshire. This competition went on to become the Paralympic Games, which first took place in Rome in 1960 with 400 athletes from 23 countries taking part.
  - Find out more: [www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/history-of-the-movement](http://www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/history-of-the-movement)
- Research the participation of women in the Olympics. Women first took part in the Olympic Games in Paris in 1900. Only 22 women out of a total of 997 athletes competed; they took part in just five sports: tennis, sailing, croquet, equestrian and golf. Female participation has risen steadily since then. Some 44% of participants in the London 2012 Olympics were women and



those games were the first where women competed in every single Olympic sporting event. However in some countries, female participation in the Olympics and sport in general is much lower than that for men.

- Find out more:

[www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference\\_documents/Factsheets/Women\\_in\\_Olympic\\_Movement.pdf](http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents/Factsheets/Women_in_Olympic_Movement.pdf)

## Physical education

- Organise a Paralympics Sports Day to raise awareness of disability. Try different Paralympic sports, such as sitting volleyball, boccia<sup>1</sup> and gameball.<sup>2</sup>
  - Find out more: [www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/paralympic-school-day](http://www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/paralympic-school-day)
- Learn about the International Fair Play Committee, which exists to promote fair play around the world. Each year, the committee awards Fair Play prizes to people who have proved to be excellent ambassadors of fair play. Ask learners to nominate peers who they think have shown fair play, whether in sport or other activities, and organise an annual or termly Fair Play award ceremony.
  - See: [www.fairplayinternational.org/](http://www.fairplayinternational.org/)
- Research the World Indigenous Games, a sporting and cultural event for athletes from indigenous groups. The first world games took place in Palmas in Brazil in October 2015, with 1,800 indigenous athletes from 23 countries taking part. The aim of the games is to raise awareness of indigenous culture worldwide. Sporting events include bow and arrow, lance throwing, tug of war, canoeing and a tree trunk race.
  - Find out more: [www.jmpi2015.gov.br/](http://www.jmpi2015.gov.br/)
- Learn some capoeira, a Brazilian martial art combining elements of dance, acrobatics and music. Find out about the history of this art form and its links with the beginning of African slavery in Brazil.

## Art and design

- Create artwork to represent the Olympic and Paralympic values of friendship, respect, excellence, determination, inspiration, courage and equality. Experiment with different techniques and media, such as sculpture, painting, drawing and photography.
- Research the logos of some of the sportswear companies that sponsor athletes taking part in the Olympics and Paralympics. Think about the meaning behind the different designs and colours used. Design your own logo for a fair trade sportswear company where all the materials are sourced responsibly and the people who make the items are paid fairly.
- Investigate the history of the Brazilian flag and the flags of other countries participating in the Olympic Games. Design a flag for an imaginary nation where there is fairness and justice for all and everyone has what they need to live happy and healthy lives.

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<sup>1</sup> Boccia is a game played on a hard surface where the goal is to throw the game balls so that they land as close as possible to a special target ball, the "jack".

<sup>2</sup> Gameball is a game for visually impaired athletes. The object of this game is to roll the ball into the opposite goal while opposing players try to block the ball with their bodies, a bell inside the ball helps to orient players.

## Music

- Explore the music and lyrics of the official Olympic anthem, used during the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games. The music for the anthem was composed by Spiros Samaras, to words by Kostas Palamas, for the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896. Compose your own anthem (tune and/or words) to represent the Olympic and Paralympic values of friendship, respect, excellence, determination, inspiration, courage and equality.
- Investigate the role of music in social change, for example gender equality.
  - See Oxfam's *Raising Her Voice*: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/raising-her-voice](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/raising-her-voice)
- Find out about some of the different genres of Brazilian music, such as samba, bossa nova and funk carioca. Investigate the history and development of the different music forms, including the cultural influences from Africa, Europe and the indigenous people of Brazil.

## Design and Technology

- Consider the waste generated by the millions of spectators during an Olympic Games. Explain that many host cities have tried to minimise the amount of waste produced. For example, in London (host city in 2012), 100% of waste was diverted from landfill, with 62% being reused, recycled or composted. Explore ideas for trying to reduce the amount of waste produced during an Olympic Games. Think about how waste is managed in your school and identify steps which could be taken to reduce this waste footprint.
- Research some of the new and emerging technologies used by athletes in the Paralympics, such as racing wheelchairs, mechanical knee joints, running blades and prosthetic legs and arm sockets. *Do you think athletes in all countries around the world are able to access such resources and technologies?*

## PSHE and Citizenship

- Consider the Olympic and Paralympic values of respect, excellence, friendship, courage, determination, inspiration and equality. Think of everyday scenarios where these values have been apparent. Then research examples of heroes and heroines outside your community (past and/or present) who have demonstrated one or more of these values.
- Reflect on the meaning of equality. Hold an unfair egg-and-spoon race, with the whole or part of class equipped with eggs and spoons, but give one or more learners ladles to carry their egg in. Discuss how learners felt after the race. Alternatively, share out some cake unevenly among a group of learners and discuss how those with more or less cake feel. Relate this to global examples of inequality.

## Computing

- Select, use and combine a variety of software to collect, analyse, evaluate and present data from past Olympics and Paralympics.
  - For medal totals and numbers of participating Olympic athletes by country and sport, see: [www.olympic.org/olympic-results](http://www.olympic.org/olympic-results)

- For medal totals and numbers of participating Paralympic athletes by country and sport, see: [www.paralympic.org/results/historical](http://www.paralympic.org/results/historical)
- Explore the meaning of the Olympic Rings and write a programme to draw them. Alternatively, research the flags of some of the different nations participating in the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and use programming to create these.

## Foreign language / Modern foreign language

- Find out how to say “Welcome” in some of the different languages from countries participating in the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Create a “Welcome” poster to display these words at the entrance to your classroom or school.
- Explore media coverage of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games from some of the different participating countries, in languages such as French, Spanish, German and Portuguese. *Is the coverage generally positive or negative? What sorts of issues are being covered? Compare the media coverage in different countries. What are the similarities and differences in the coverage? What might be the reasons for any differences?*

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