

The History of the Olympic Games



Zeus was the king of the Greek gods. Zeus was said to live on the top of a mountain.

People built a temple for Zeus. Lots of people would come to visit the temple.

Lots of men would take part in sports at the same time. There would be...

running



jumping



throwing



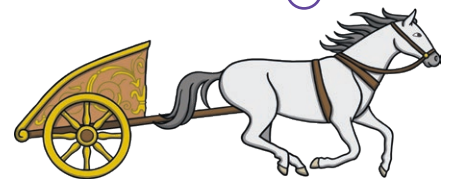
boxing



wrestling



chariot
races



These became known as the Olympic Games. People think that they began in 776 BC.

Did You Know...?

There were no medals at the first Olympic Games. The winners would be given a crown that was made out of olive leaves.



Questions

1. Who was Zeus? Tick one.

- ☐ a god
- ☐ a mountain
- ☐ a sport

2. What did people build for Zeus? Tick one.

- ☐ a mountain
- ☐ a temple
- ☐ a crown

3. Which sport did men take part in? Tick one.

- ☐ skipping
- ☐ hopping
- ☐ boxing

4. When do people think that the Olympic Games began? Tick one.

- ☐ 706 BC
- ☐ 767 BC
- ☐ 776 BC

5. What was the prize crown made out of? Tick one.

- ☐ medals
- ☐ leaves
- ☐ stone

Answers

1. Who was Zeus? Tick one.

- ☒ **a god**
- ☐ a mountain
- ☐ a sport

2. What did people build for Zeus? Tick one.

- ☐ a mountain
- ☒ **a temple**
- ☐ a crown

3. Which sport did men take part in? Tick one.

- ☐ skipping
- ☐ hopping
- ☒ **boxing**

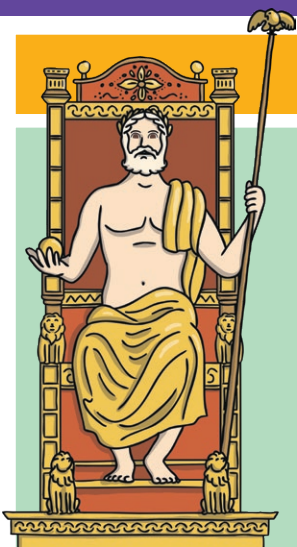
4. When do people think that the Olympic Games began? Tick one.

- ☐ 706 BC
- ☐ 767 BC
- ☒ **776 BC**

5. What was the prize crown made out of? Tick one.

- ☐ medals
- ☒ **leaves**
- ☐ stone

The History of the Olympic Games



Zeus



Zeus was the king of the Greek gods. Zeus was said to live on top of Mount Olympus. People built a temple for Zeus in the town of Olympia. Thousands of people would come to Olympia to visit the Temple of Zeus and to see the huge statue of Zeus that was inside. Lots of men would take part in sports while they were in Olympia. These became known as the Olympic Games.

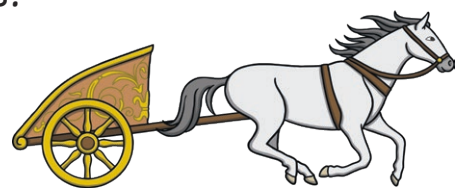


Stopping and Starting

People think that the first Olympic Games began in 776 BC. They ran every four years for around four hundred years. Then, they stopped for over one thousand years until they began again on 6th April 1896.

Sports

There were running, jumping and throwing events as well as boxing and wrestling. There were also chariot races!



Prizes

There were no gold, silver and bronze medals given out at the ancient Olympic Games. The winners were given a crown made of olive leaves. The leaves had been cut from a special tree in Olympia.

Winners would be treated like heroes when they went back home. People thought that they must have been touched by the gods.



Questions

1. Where was Zeus said to live? Tick one.

- ☐ in a temple
- ☐ on top of a mountain
- ☐ in a huge statue

2. Number the sub-headings from 1-4 to show the order in which they appear in the text. The first one has been done for you.

- ☐ Stopping and Starting
- ☐ Prizes
- ☒ 1 Zeus
- ☐ Sports

3. Which of these sports would you not see at the first Olympics Games? Tick one.

- ☐ throwing
- ☐ swimming
- ☐ boxing

4. What were the winners given?

5. What was inside the Temple of Zeus?

Answers

1. Where was Zeus said to live? Tick one.

- ☐ in a temple
- ☒ **on top of a mountain**
- ☐ in a huge statue

2. Number the sub-headings from 1-4 to show the order in which they appear in the text. The first one has been done for you.

- 2** Stopping and Starting
- 4** Prizes
- 1** Zeus
- 3** Sports

3. Which of these sports would you not see at the first Olympics Games? Tick one.

- ☐ throwing
- ☒ **swimming**
- ☐ boxing

4. What were the winners given?

The winners were given a crown made of olive leaves.

5. What was inside the Temple of Zeus?

Inside the Temple of Zeus was a huge statue of Zeus.

The History of the Olympic Games

How the Olympic Games began is a story that goes back thousands of years and links to the ancient Greek gods and goddesses.



Where and Why They Happened



The ancient Olympic Games began as a festival about Zeus. Zeus was the king of the ancient Greek gods. Zeus was said to live on top of Mount Olympus, which is the tallest mountain in Greece.

People in ancient Greece built a temple for Zeus in the town of Olympia. Every four years, messengers would be sent out to tell everyone that it was time to travel to Olympia. Thousands of people flocked to Olympia to visit the Temple of Zeus and to see the huge gold and ivory statue of Zeus that was inside.

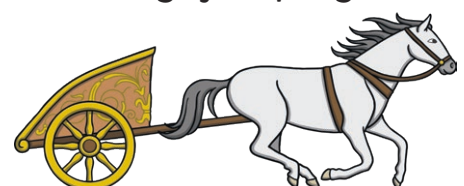
Lots of men would also take part in sports while they were in Olympia. These became known as the Olympic Games and it is thought that they began in 776 BC. The ancient Olympic Games ran every four years for around four hundred years. Then, it would be 1,500 years before the Olympics would properly begin again on 6th April 1896.

Did You Know...?

Female athletes only competed in the Olympic Games for the first time in 1900.

Sports

Some of the sports at the ancient Olympic Games were very different from the sports that we see today. There were running, jumping and throwing events as well as boxing and wrestling but there were also chariot races and a martial art called pankration.



Prizes

There were no gold, silver and bronze medals given out at the ancient Olympic Games. Instead, the winners were given a crown made of olive leaves that had been cut from a sacred tree in Olympia.

Winners would be treated like heroes when they returned back home because people thought that they must have been touched by the gods.



Questions

1. Which of these statements are true? Tick **two**.

- ☐ Zeus was at the first Olympic Games.
- ☐ Zeus was the king of the ancient Greek gods.
- ☐ The temple in Olympia was built for Zeus.

2. Draw **three** lines and match each word to the correct fact.

Olympic

The name of the town.

Olympia

The name of the mountain.

Olympus

The name of the games.

3. What was pankration? Tick **two**.

- ☐ a place that the Olympic Games took place in
- ☐ a kind of martial art
- ☐ a sport at the ancient Olympic Games

4. What was the prize for winners at the ancient Olympic Games?

5. Look at the section called **Where and Why They Happened**. Find and copy a word or phrase that means 'travelled to'.

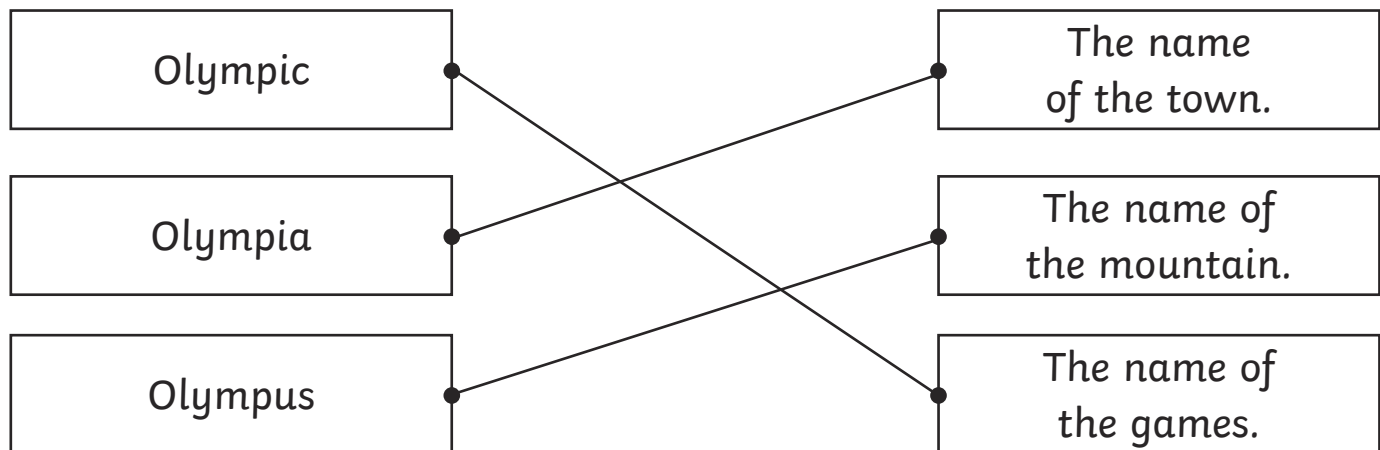
6. How do you think that the Olympic Games will be different in the future?

Answers

1. Which of these statements are true? Tick **two**.

- ☐ Zeus was at the first Olympic Games.
- ☒ **Zeus was the king of the ancient Greek gods.**
- ☒ **The temple in Olympia was built for Zeus.**

2. Draw **three** lines and match each word to the correct fact.



3. What was pankration? Tick **two**.

- ☐ a place that the Olympic Games took place in
- ☒ **a kind of martial art**
- ☒ **a sport at the ancient Olympic Games**

4. What was the prize for winners at the ancient Olympic Games?

The winners were given a crown made of olive leaves that had been cut from a sacred tree in Olympia.

5. Look at the section called **Where and Why They Happened**.

Find and copy a word or phrase that means 'travelled to'.

Accept either, 'visit' or 'flocked to'.

6. How do you think that the Olympic Games will be different in the future?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the sports will be different at the Olympic Games in the future because the sports that we have now have changed compared to the sports at the ancient Olympic Games.