

# Let the Games Begin

by Julia Wall





## Overview

This book looks at the way people from all around the world gather together to compete in the Olympic Games. It focuses on the changes that have occurred since the first Olympic Games. (Big idea: Many different people live in the world.)

## Suggested purposes

This book supports the following **comprehension strategies**:

- summarising the main ideas 
- comparing and contrasting. 

It supports the following **non-fiction strategies**:

- using a contents page
- using photos to compare and contrast information
- using layout and headings to convey important information
- using labels to explain photos
- using a glossary (boldface type).

## Key vocabulary

The vocabulary that is focused on includes:

- Anchor words – *country, different, people, place, together*
- Content words – *athletes, basketball, events, flag, flame, friendship, ice hockey, judo, medals, Olympic Games, Paralympics, race, rings, running, skiing, sports, stadium, summer, torch, wheelchairs, winner, winter, world, wreath*
- High-frequency words – *another, each, first, into, many, other, such, take, three, where*

## Features of the text

- Non-fiction features:
  - cover flap, which provides support for identifying the big ideas and anchor words
  - topic (Olympics), which expands on pages 12 and 13 of the anchor book *Discovering My World*
  - preview question on the back cover
  - contents page, glossary (boldface type), and index
  - headings
  - captions that add information
  - historical information
- Word study:
  - digraphs – “th”, “sh”, “ch”, “wh”
  - silent “e” – flame
  - words with repeated letters – *different, millions, winner, allowed, winning, summer*
  - compound words – *worldwide, wheelchairs, basketball*
- Exclamation marks
- Apostrophes and commas



## Setting the scene

If you have already introduced the topic using the Whole-class Introduction and the anchor book (*Discovering My World*), you can review the discussion and show the students pages 12 and 13 of the anchor book.

Ask the students what they know about games and sports.

- *What sports do you like?*
- *In which other countries are these sports played?*
- *How do you know?*

## ELL support

Meaningful social interaction is very important for ELL students. When planning classroom instruction keep in mind that:

- The students need a real purpose for communicating.
- They need to talk with students who can model English well.
- They need a setting that provides frequent interaction with proficient speakers.

## The first reading

N.B. Display a world map or globe so you can find the different countries in the text.

**Pages 2 and 3** – Point to “compete”. *Why do you think this word is in bold?* Explain that the author is emphasising a key idea about the Olympic Games. Look up the meaning in the glossary. *Why do you think people take part in the Olympic Games? Why do they come from around the world?*

**Pages 4 and 5** – Discuss the photograph. Tell the students that the purpose of the caption is to describe the picture. *What is the photograph showing? What would it be like to be there?* (Summarising) *What important fact have we learned?*

**Pages 6 and 7** – Discuss the illustration on page 6. *Where have you seen the white building?* (front cover) *What other features are similar to the front cover?* (people running, flame) Look up “wreath” in the glossary. (Comparing and contrasting) Find Athens on the map. After reading the text, look at the photograph and caption on page 7. *What is similar about this photograph and the information on page 6?* (wreaths made from olive leaves) *What is different?* (women, medals, different clothing) *What do you think the author is trying to show?*

## Introducing the book

**Front cover** – Read the title. *What do you think the “games” are? Where have you heard “Let the games begin”?* Look at the photo. Explain that cover photos usually give clues about the content of a book. *What are the men doing? Why are they crouching in a line? Why is there a flame? What questions do you have about the photo or title?*

**Back cover** – Read aloud the preview question. Lead a discussion to build the students’ background knowledge.

**Using the flap** – Read aloud the text on the flap, and (if relevant) remind the students that they have read this in *Discovering My World*. Read aloud the anchor words on the other side. Tell the students that they can point out the words when they find them in the book. Ask them to leave the flap open as they read.

**Title page** – Read aloud the title. Discuss the photograph. *What game is this person playing?* Have the students discuss their experiences of playing hockey. *How does the photo capture your attention? What extra information does it give about the “games”?*

**Pages 8 and 9** – Read the heading. Support the students to understand the meaning of “modern”. Look up “worldwide” and “athletes” in the glossary. Find Amsterdam on the map. (Comparing and contrasting) Look at the photograph on page 8. *How is this stadium different from the one on pages 4 and 5?* (lots of people, very simple, no fireworks, black and white) Look up Paris, France, on the map. *Why do you think it is called the “modern Olympics”?* Have the students compare it with the first Olympics.

**Pages 10 and 11** – Point to the heading. *What does “opening” the games mean?* Have the students think of a different heading. Give an example such as, “How do the games start?” (Summarising) *Apart from sport, what is important about competing in the Olympics?* (friendship)

**Pages 12 and 13** – *Why do you think there is a summer and a winter Olympics? How might this have improved the Olympics?* Read page 13. Support the students as they read “Paralympics”. Look up “disabled” in the glossary. *Why is it important to have all kinds of Olympic Games? How do you think disabled people feel about being able to take part?* Tell the students that this emphasises the message of friendship and getting along.

**Page 14** – Point to the photograph. *How do you know that these athletes are from different countries?* (different uniforms) Explain how the caption “Let the games begin!” describes the photograph. (**Summarizing**) *What different games are held? Why do you think it is such an amazing event?*

## Vocabulary activity

### Focus word: light

- Turn to page 11 and read: *The Olympic torch is used to light the Olympic flame.*
- Say “light” with me.
- Explain that “light” means to ignite or start burning.
- Give some examples that show how “light” can be used in other ways. For example:
  - When something doesn’t weigh much, we describe it as light.
  - A torch shines a bright light.
  - The boy drew a picture using light colours.
  - The burglar crept lightly across the room.
  - I saw the girl’s face light up when she got a birthday present.
- (a) Write the following scenarios of things to “light” onto pieces of card. Ask volunteers to mime the scenarios. The students can guess what the volunteer is “lighting” or “igniting”.
  - light a camp fire
  - light up the house by turning on the light switch
  - light the Olympic flame
  - light a candle
  - light a match
 (b) Ask the students to do the following activities in pairs.
  - Show how you would look if your face lights up.
  - Draw a picture with light colors.
  - Show how you can creep lightly.
 (c) Provide the students with the following sentence stem and ask them to finish the sentence. *It is important to light the Olympic flame because ...*
- What is the word we’ve been learning that means ignite and start burning? Say the word with me.*

## ELL activity

### Language objective: Past and present language

- Reread the book together. Discuss what the students learned about the Olympics.
- Write the following sentences from the book on sentence strips.
  - Only men competed.

- The only event was a running race.
  - The winner was given a wreath made from olive leaves.
  - The first worldwide games were held in 1896.
  - The Summer Olympics began in 1896.
  - The Paralympics were first held in 1960.
  - An athlete carries an Olympic torch.
  - The flame burns until the games are over.
  - Winners still get wreaths. They get medals, too.
  - Athletes from many countries compete together.
  - Let the games begin.
  - Millions of people watch the Olympics on TV.
- Write the headings “Past” and “Present” on the board or on a large piece of chart paper. Read the sentences. Tell the students that each sentence uses a past- or present-tense verb.
  - Hand out the sentences to the students and ask them to place them under the appropriate heading.
  - Underline the verbs. Discuss the differences between past- and present-tense verbs. (begin/began; compete/competed; was/were)
  - Have the students write the words that you have discussed under the headings “Past” and “Present”. They can share their work.

## Ideas for revisiting the text

### 1. Review and check

Listen as the students reread the text.

- Review the anchor and content words. Ensure that the students understand the meaning of each word and how to use it in context.
- Observe their ability to self-correct and independently monitor their own accuracy when reading.

### 2. Stop and learn

#### a. Decoding/word attack activities

Using the “wh” digraph

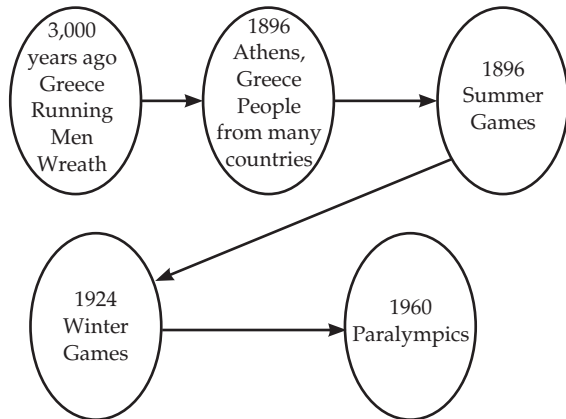
- Where did the first Olympics take place?*
- Write “where” on the board.
- Point out the “wh” sound.
- Say the word aloud.
- Practise saying other “wh” words and list them on the board (wheelbarrow, whistle, who where, when, why). Put them on the word wall.

BLM – Practising using the “wh” digraph

The students can read the sentences and circle the “wh” sound. They can write these words around the Olympic flame. They can then answer the questions.

### b. Comprehension activity

Reread the text and record the milestones of the Olympic Games such as: First games held in Greece 3,000 years ago, only event was running, only men allowed, prize was a wreath. The students can develop a timeline that includes the dates and the milestones.



### BLM – Comparing and contrasting

Reread the book. The students can compare and contrast the first Olympics with the Olympics today. They can use the Venn diagram on the BLM to show this information.

### c. Writing activities

Have the students:

- organise a mini-Olympics. Write a list of things that will be needed such as athletes, events, flags, a flame, and an opening and closing ceremony. Present the plan to the Principal for consideration.
- write a letter to an athlete who competed in the first Olympics. *What questions would you ask? What could you tell them about the Olympic Games today?*
- write an acrostic poem about the Olympic Games. Write "Olympic Games" down the page in capital letters and write a word or sentence that starts with each letter.

### 3. Suggestions for further activities

- Ask the students if they have any more questions about the Olympics. They can research them using the Internet or a library.
- Write to a person who is hoping to compete at the Olympics. Find out how they are preparing. If they are from your city or town, you could ask them to talk to the class.