

# The History of the Olympics

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**ISBN-13: 978-1-55319-192-6**

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# The History of the Olympics

## UNIT OVERVIEW

The “*Let’s Go to the Olympics*” unit looks at general information about the Olympic Games. Students study the information about the Olympic Games as they read the newspaper articles and charts that are included in this unit. Students practice using different reading, writing, research, and language arts skills as they complete the activities in the “*Let’s Go to the Olympics*” unit. This unit is divided into three sections. Section One includes a series of lessons designed to provide students with interesting facts and information about the Olympic Games. Section Two includes a number of optional lessons that teachers can use to supplement the main lessons of the unit. Section Three provides a suggestion for a major project that the students can complete during the unit or when they have finished the main lessons of the unit. A book display should be set up somewhere in the classroom. A wide variety of books on the Olympic Games and the different sporting events should be included in the display. Students refer to the books during the course of the unit.

## SECTION I – LESSONS

Section I contains ten structured lessons dealing with general aspects of the Olympic Games. Students read a series of newspaper articles, research different sources, and use a number of different charts to complete the activities of these lessons.

- 1) Ancient Olympics
- 2) First Modern Olympic Games
- 3) Olympic Sporting Events
- 4) Discontinued Olympic Sporting Events
- 5) Host Cities
- 6) Olympic Symbols
- 7) Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- 8) Olympians
- 9) Olympic Villages
- 10) International Olympic Committee (IOC)



## SECTION II – OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The optional activities provide teachers with flexibility in teaching the unit. They can replace activities in the main lessons, be used as review, or provide students with enrichment.

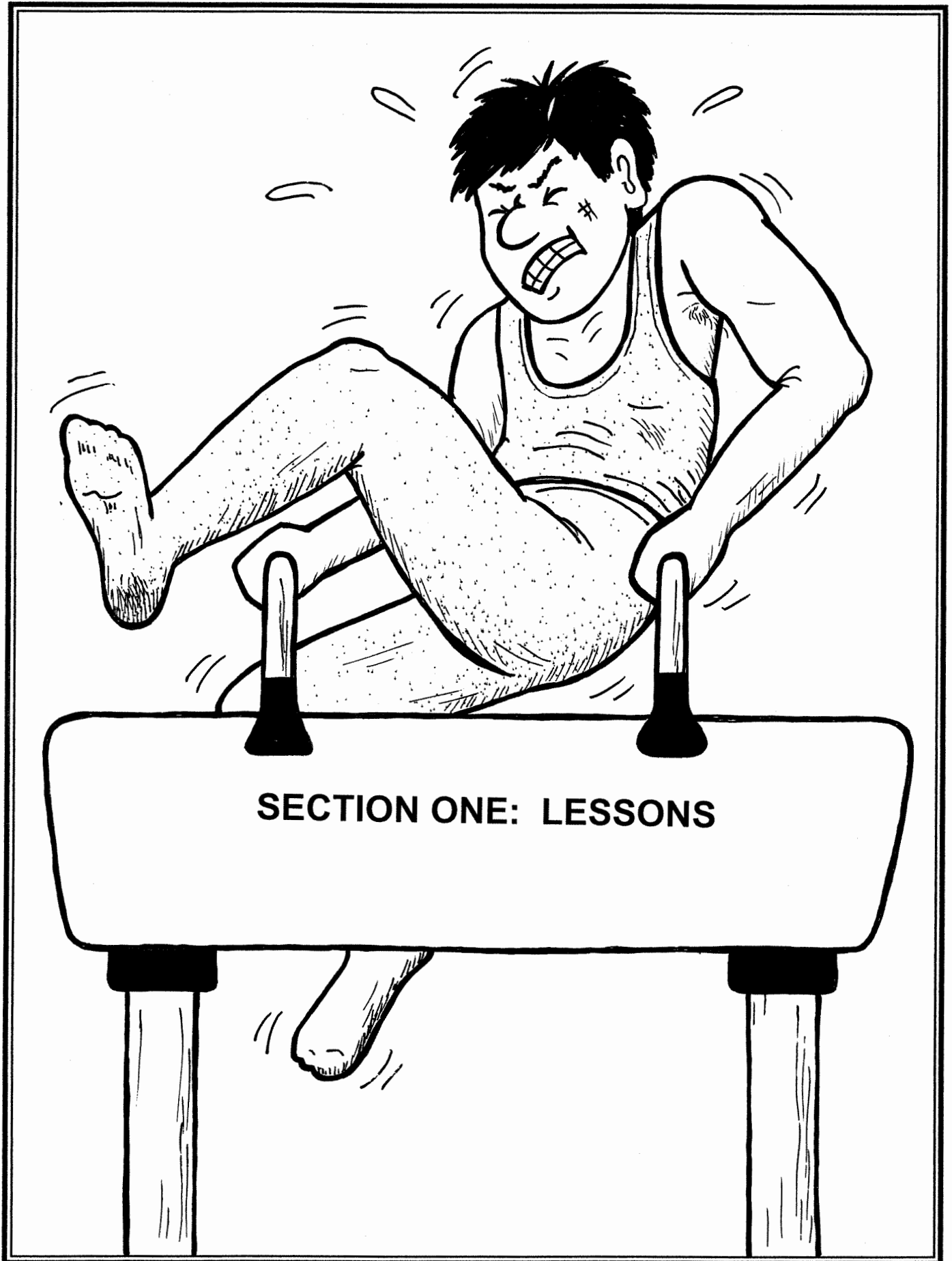
- 1) Classroom Visit
- 2) Write a Letter/E-mail
- 3) Create a Game
- 4) Research
- 5) Elect Class IOC President
- 6) Olympic Website
- 7) Write a Song or Poem
- 8) Research Sporting Event
- 9) Olympic Survey
- 10) Sample Exam

## SECTION III – MAJOR PROJECT

The major project can be completed by the students individually, with a partner, or in small groups. Different activities for completing the project are provided in order to individualize the project and take into account the different learning styles of students.

- 1) City Proposal

## REFERENCES



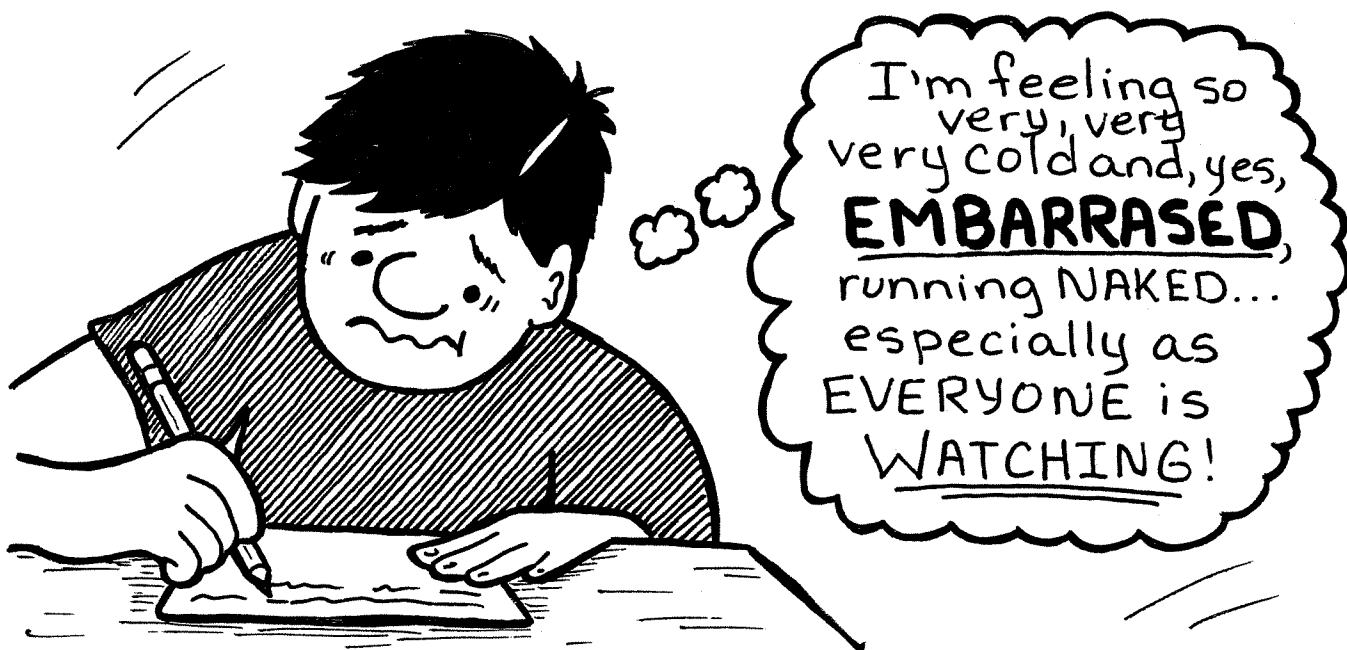
## LESSON #1 – ANCIENT OLYMPICS

### Student Objectives and Activities

- Lesson One gives students a brief overview of what the Ancient Olympics were like in Olympia, Greece.
- Students read about the Ancient Olympics.
- Students write a diary entry telling about what they would see, hear, think, and feel if they were a part of the Ancient Olympic Games.

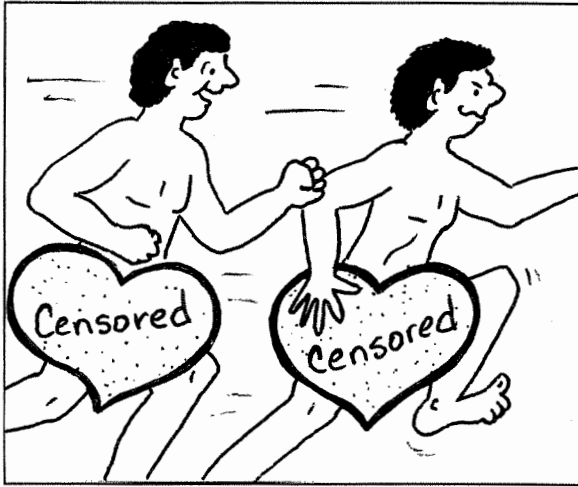
### Suggested Teaching Strategies

- Provide each student or pair of students with a copy of the *Olympic News – Volume 1 Issue 1* newspaper. Encourage the students to read over the newspaper a number of times.
- Encourage students to read books that you have gathered together in the class book display (for possible book sources, see the reference list at the end of this unit). The students need to search for information about the festivals and sporting events held during the Ancient Olympics.
- Discuss the findings of the students. Make a list of the findings on chart paper or on the chalkboard. Write the findings in brief form. Students refer to this list while completing this lesson's assignment.
- Tell the students to imagine that they are athletes taking part in one of the Ancient Olympic Games. They are going to write a diary entry describing what it is like to be a part of the Ancient Olympics. They are to write about the sights they see, the sounds they hear, what they are thinking about, and what they are feeling.



# OLYMPIC NEWS

## Volume 1 Issue 1 – Ancient Olympics



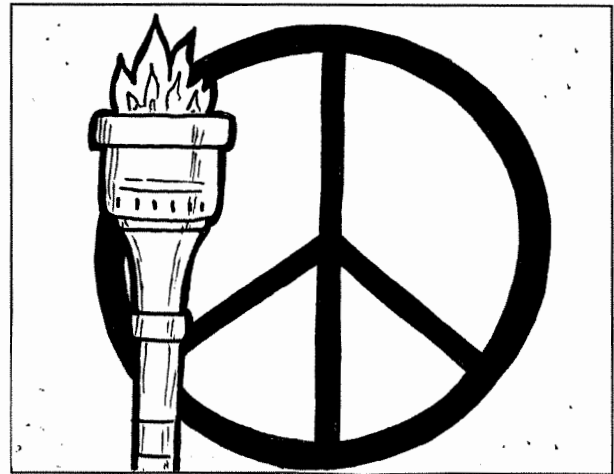
### FIRST OLYMPIC GAMES HELD IN OLYMPIA, GREECE

The first Olympic Games were held in 776 BC. They were held at Olympia, Greece in a valley. Olympia is located in the southwestern part of Greece. The Olympic Games were held every four years. The very first Olympics involved only one race. The race was a sprint of almost 200 metres. Only men were allowed to compete in the Olympic Games. Women did not begin competing in the Olympics until 396 BC. Many people traveled to Olympia to watch the race.

### ONE DAY EVENT BECOMES FIVE DAY FESTIVAL

The Olympic Games began as a one day festival. Later, it became a five day summer festival. The first and last days of the Olympic Games were

spent honouring the Gods. The Olympic Games began with the lighting of a flame. The flame was lit at the altar of Zeus. When the Olympic Games ended, the flame was extinguished.



### OLYMPIC GAMES PROMOTE PEACE

There were two main reasons for holding the Olympic Games. The Olympic Games were held to promote peace and to provide a place where the best athletes could compete against one another. In ancient times, battles and wars would stop so that the athletes competing in the Olympic Games could travel safely to Olympia. Athletes from all social classes were allowed to compete in the Olympic Games. They were supported in their training, and winners were heroes and received awards when they returned home.