

The Olympic torch origin and relay

OLYMPIC GAMES HERITAGE



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Olympic Torch Relay always starts in Olympia, the location of the Ancient Olympic Games, to emphasise the link between the ancient and modern Games. The Modern Olympic Games started in 1896, but the ceremony of lighting the fire in Olympia and transporting the flame via a relay to the host city started in 1936. Each year, the host nation designs a course for the torch to travel prior to arriving at the host city. This course design is based on a key message selected by the nation, such as 'A relay of peace' in 1948 and 'A new world relay' in 1968.

Every Olympic Games, the torch is lit by the sun, to maintain the purity of the fire, and this purity represents the positive values associated with the Games. Early torches were fuelled by solid or liquid fuels including olive oil, but recent versions are generally a mix of butane and propane gases. In 1956, they used magnesium and aluminium flakes to create a giant sparkler. Unfortunately, this resulted in a burnt torchbearer. Over time, the design of the torches has changed to suit the fuel, as well as the design influence of the host city.

INFORMATION LINKS

Torch relay

- <<http://www.rio2016.com/tochaolimpica/en>>
- <<http://tinyurl.com/riotorchrelay>>
- <<http://tinyurl.com/torchrelayhistory>>

ANSWERS

Page 16 – The flame from Olympia

1. The Ancient Olympic Games started in Greece as early as 700 BC in honour of Greek god Zeus. The games were held in a sacred place called Olympia, and were also named after this location. The Greeks used to light a fire near the temples of the gods and goddesses using the sun's rays. This fire would be kept alight during the games.
The first Modern Olympic Games began in 1896, but it wasn't until 1936 that the torch relay became a tradition which is still carried on today.
The relay begins with the Olympic flame which is lit in Olympia, just as the Ancient Greeks did. The flame is then used to ignite a series of torches around the world in a relay, until the torch reaches the host city of the Olympic Games. The final torchbearer lights a cauldron which keeps burning until the end of the Games, when it is extinguished at the closing ceremony.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Page 16 – The flame from Olympia

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (Year 3)

How the community has changed and remained the same over time and the role that people of diverse backgrounds have played in the development and character of the local community **ACHASSK063** **AC**

ENGLISH (Year 3)

Re-read and edit texts for meaning, appropriate structure, grammatical choices and punctuation **ACELY1683** **AC**

Page 17 – Torch relay messages

ENGLISH (Year 4)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts **ACELY1692** **AC**

Page 17 – Torch relay messages

1. Teacher check – The first line of each description is given.

London 1948 Message: A relay of peace	This relay was designed to bring the world together after World War II ...
Mexico City 1968 Message: A New World relay	This relay was designed to retrace the steps of Christopher Columbus ...
Sydney 2000 Message: A relay Down Under	This relay had a dual mission: ...
Rio de Janeiro 2016 Message: A relay of spirit	This relay is designed to spread the Olympic celebration across the whole country ...

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CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ENGLISH

Torchbearer nominations

In an effort to include the general Brazilian public in the Rio 2016 torch relay, people are being asked to nominate someone that has made a difference in the lives of others. Write a description of a person in the class who has had a positive impact on others. What did they do? Why was it important?

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

Relay participation (Year 3)

Look at the number of torchbearers in each Olympic Games (Rio will have 10 000 torchbearers). Discuss reasons why so many people want to be part of the event. Refer to the Rio 2016 website for an insight into their torch relay.

<<http://tinyurl.com/nn2x8ru>>

MATHEMATICS

Relay measurements

On a school map, draw the course of a relay with intersections where each new torchbearer will begin. Measure and record the distance each torchbearer will travel and the total distance of the relay. Time how long it would take to complete the relay.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Get moving in a relay

Plan a relay event using a baton decorated as a torch. Include different movements such as skipping, hopping or jumping to get to the next 'torchbearer'.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

ANCIENT VERSUS MODERN OLYMPICS

Discuss the difference between the ancient and modern games, using past and present tense. Create a class word wall of Olympic Games vocabulary, focusing on the spelling and suffixes of words.

(Links to page 16)

TRADITIONS AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Examine the events that occur and are repeated at every modern Olympic Games, including the lighting of the flame and the torch relay.

(Links to page 16)

PAST TORCH RELAYS

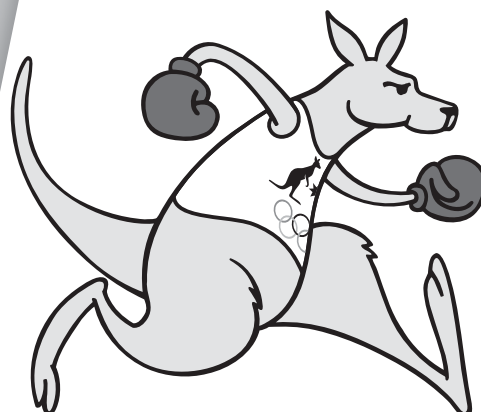
View past torch relays at <<http://tinyurl.com/p2xkqvy>>.

(Links to page 17)

MESSAGES

Discuss current world issues such as sustainability, immigration or health issues, and brainstorm possible messages that could be included in future Olympic relays.

(Links to page 17)



Torch relay messages



Cut out and match the torch relay map and message with the description of the relay.

<p>London 1948 Message: <i>A relay of peace</i></p>		<p>This relay had a dual mission: to emphasise the host countries location within Oceania and to promote cultural symbols in the country's different regions. It passed through 12 nations before arriving in its host city.</p>
<p>Mexico City 1968 Message: <i>A New World relay</i></p>		<p>This relay is designed to spread the Olympic celebration across the whole country, passing through 250 cities and towns in an effort to reach 90% of the host nation's population. Torchbearers will include not only celebrities, but members of the general public as well.</p>
<p>Sydney 2000 Message: <i>A relay Down Under</i></p>		<p>This relay was designed to bring the world together after World War II and celebrate the Olympic Games resuming after 12 years of absence. The torch relay passed through Lausanne, where a ceremony was held at the cemetery where Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the Modern Games of the Modern Era, is buried.</p>
<p>Rio de Janeiro 2016 Message: <i>A relay of spirit</i></p>		<p>This relay was designed to retrace the steps of Christopher Columbus, emphasising the relationship between the civilisations of the Mediterranean and Latin America. It was the first to be televised and closely followed by the media.</p>