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History of Greek Olympics

A music producer is someone who is in charge of putting together all aspects of a song. For example, a music producer might choose the musicians, instruments, and lyrics that create a song. Music producers become known for certain genres of music and ways they put a song together. For example, Dr. Dre is known for producing famous hip hop songs in the 1990s.

Music producers are often inspired by real life events from the past or present. They use these events to help them create songs. One event that might inspire music producers are the Olympics.

Today, you will learn about the history of the Olympics and how it has changed over time. Then, you will create a music album inspired by the Olympics.

Follow the steps below.

Step 1: Learning About the Olympics

Read the passage and then answer the questions.

The Olympics

Have you ever watched the Summer or Winter Olympics on television? The Olympics is an international sporting event that takes place every four years. Athletes from around the world compete in a variety of sporting events for a chance to win medals and recognition for the nations they represent. The Olympics are an opportunity for people around the world to come together and celebrate the accomplishments of athletes representing many nations, cultures, and sports.

Despite the international popularity of the Olympics, many people do not know that the Olympics began in Ancient Greece as a festival to honor the Greek god Zeus. And, while much has changed between the games held in Greece thousands of years ago and today's Olympics, the Olympics continue to honor the traditions of the past, while adapting and changing for the future.



Comparing Modern-Day and Ancient Olympics

When and Where

Ancient Olympics:

The Ancient Greek Olympics began in 776 BCE in Olympia. Olympia was a town in Ancient Greece that was home to a large temple built in honor of the god Zeus. The city also had a large stadium where people came to watch the Olympic Games. The games were held every four years in Olympia until 393 CE. By 393 CE, the Greeks were conquered by the Romans. The Roman emperor Theodosius abolished the games because he did not want the Greeks participating in religious festivals, like the Olympics.

The Temple of Zeus still stands today in Olympia.



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Modern Olympics:

The first modern Olympic Games began in 1896 in Athens, Greece. They are held every four years in different countries around the world. For example, in 2008 the Olympic Games were held in Beijing, China. The 2002 Olympic Games were held in the United States in Salt Lake City, Utah. It can be a great honor for a country to host the Olympics. In 1924, the Winter Olympics were created. In 1992, the Winter and Summer Olympics began alternating on separate four-year cycles. For example, the Summer Olympics were held in 2000, 2004, and 2008. The Winter Olympics were held 2002, 2006, and 2010.

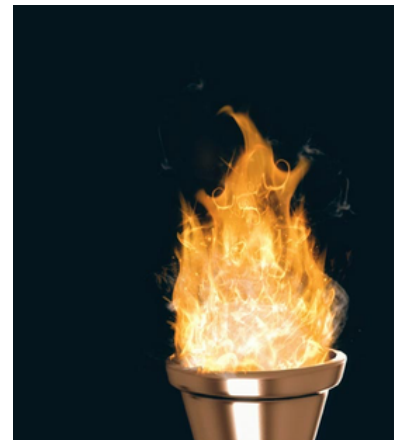
Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Ancient Olympics:

The Ancient Olympics featured an opening and closing ceremony. The opening ceremony included a procession, or walk, from the town of Elis to Olympia. Upon arriving in Olympia, all athletes visited the temple of Zeus. At the temple, they pledged to obey the rules of the game and to not cheat. Throughout the games, a sacred fire was kept burning at the altar of Zeus. To formally close the games, a religious ceremony took place where 100 oxen were sacrificed at the temple of Zeus.

Modern Olympics:

To officially open the games, a torch is lit on a ceremonial cauldron in a stadium in the city where the games are being held. The fire used to light the cauldron is always taken from the cauldron where the last games were held. For example, the fire from the cauldron for 2012 games held in London, England lit the fire for the cauldron in the 2016 games held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The fire stays lit for the duration of the games. The opening ceremony also includes a procession where each country's athletes are introduced to the stadium crowd as they march around the stadium. One person from each country's team carries their country's flag. There are also programs that feature dancers, musicians, and multimedia presentations that tell about the host country's history and culture.



Olympic Torch

At the end of the games, all of the athletes gather in the middle of the stadium with their countries' flags. In addition, the Olympic flag is passed to the representative of the next host city. There are also fireworks to conclude the celebration.



Olympic Flag

The Olympic flag has 5 rings of different colors on a white background. The colors represent the colors found in every country's flag. The 5 rings represent the 5 areas of the world athletes come from: Asia, Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Oceania (Australia and surrounding islands).

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Competitors

Ancient Olympics:

In the beginning years of the Olympics, only Greek male citizens were allowed to participate. Over time, the rules were relaxed to allow male participants from other countries to compete. Unlike modern Olympic athletes who represent their country, ancient Greeks competed for themselves.

Modern Olympics:

Male and female athletes from around the world compete in the Olympics. The number of athletes that compete for each country varies. For example, during the 2018 winter games in Seoul, Korea, almost 3000 athletes from 92 countries competed. Some countries, such as South Africa, sent only one athlete. Other countries sent hundreds of athletes. The United States sent 241!

Usain Bolt



Usain Bolt, from Jamaica, is considered the fastest man in the world. He holds the world record for the 100 meters, 200 meters, and 4 x 100 meters relay. He has won 8 gold medals at 3 different summer Olympic games!

Training

Ancient Olympics:

Ancient Greek athletes trained rigorously for months at a time. Some had personal trainers who made sure they were training properly and eating a healthy diet.

Modern Olympics:

Athletes training for the Olympics train for hours a day for years. It requires a lot of dedication and practice to be an Olympic athlete. Most athletes have coaches and began their training as children.

Sports and Uniforms

Ancient Olympics:

The first Olympics lasted one day and featured one event: a foot race. Over time, other sports were added, such as wrestling, the long jump, the javelin throw, and longer foot races. As more sports were added, the games continued for five days. Competitors also did not wear uniforms. In fact, they did not wear any clothes at all!

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History of Greek Olympics

Modern Olympics:

While some events from the ancient games are still around today, new sports continue to be added to the Summer and Winter Olympics. Surfing, skateboarding, and rock climbing will appear in the next Summer Olympics. Each country's competitors wear uniforms to show what country they represent. The uniforms are different for every Olympics.

Here are Olympic athletes wearing their uniforms in the Summer Olympics:



Prizes

Ancient Olympics:

Winners were given a crown that was made from the leaves and branch of wild olive trees. The Greeks believed that the trees were sacred because they were planted by Hercules. Hercules was the son of Zeus and was known for his strength, courage, and intelligence.

Modern Olympics: The winners of the first modern Olympics in 1896 received an olive wreath crown and a silver medal. At the 1904 Olympics, gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded for first, second, and third place. That tradition continues today.



Olive Crown

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Answer the questions below.

1. What was the purpose behind the Olympics?
2. What traditions have been carried over from the Ancient Greek Olympics to today's games?
3. What do the Olympics suggest about the power of sports in history?
4. How might the events of the Ancient Greek Olympics be helpful to a Greek wanting to be a soldier?

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Step 2: Create a Music Album

Music producers use events from the past and present to inspire their songs and albums. By creating music inspired by real life events, music producers can share people's viewpoints and give a glimpse into how people in the past and present lived or thought about the event. For example, the musical "Hamilton" and its songs tell the story of Alexander Hamilton and events that occurred near the Revolutionary War. The music discusses how people who lived during the late 1700s thought about politics and what their daily life was like.

Today, you will imagine you are a music producer creating a new album about the Olympics. It is your job to create a list of ten song names and descriptions about what the songs are about. You will also design an album cover on the next page.

Requirements for album cover:

- Has a title related to the Olympics
- Has information about what type of music the album will contain (i.e., rap, jazz, country)
- Contains both images and words that are appropriate for the topic. For example, it wouldn't be appropriate to put silly cartoons on the cover of an album talking about a war.

Requirements for song names:

- Include information about the ancient and modern-day Olympics
- Should not be too long (most song titles are less than 7 words in length)

Requirements for descriptions of songs:

- Teach the listener about the ancient and modern-day Olympics or how they are similar and different
- At least 3 descriptions must cite a direct quote from the passage.

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Create your list of 10 song titles and a description for each one below.

- Song Title: _____
- Description: _____

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- Song Title: _____
 - Description: _____

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- Song Title: _____
 - Description: _____

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- Song Title: _____
 - Description: _____

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- Song Title: _____
 - Description: _____

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- Song Title: _____
- Description:

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- Song Title: _____
 - Description:

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- Song Title: _____
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Design your album cover below: