

**KS2 LESSON PLAN:**  
**HISTORY**

# THE games HAVE CHANGED

The last Olympics to be held in the UK were the first to take place following WWII. So how will London 2012 compare to the 'austerity' event of 1948, asks Christopher Russell?

**Today we will explore...**

- > Historical concepts of similarities and differences
- > Historical skills such as observing changes and questioning



**As we look forward to the London 2012 Olympic Games, this lesson is designed to help a KS2 class investigate similarities and differences between the Games of 1948 and those about to take place in London this summer.**

the events, preparation of the athletes, diet, accommodation, venues, kit, merchandise, advertising, Olympic posters, funding, the cost of hosting the games, legacy and ticket prices. Other aspects of the context for the 1948 Olympics could be included, such as the message of celebrating peace, rationing and the fact that some nations - Germany and Japan - weren't invited to attend.

If children have suggested other areas for investigation during their preliminary discussions, these could either be incorporated into the lesson or held back for independent work.

important in directing the reasoning children provide for the changes and similarities they identify.

For the main activity, the children will need access to evidence for the 1948 and 2012 Olympics. However, you may feel that finding this evidence could be incorporated into the lesson and become part of the children's investigation.

Organising the class could be done in several ways. A carousel style lesson would be an effective way for all children to access all of the information. Similarly, each table could be given an area for investigation and then present their findings to the rest of the class at the end of the session.

Areas for investigation could include: the opening ceremony, the events, the countries taking part, the celebrated athletes and participants, the medals, comparing the world records for

**Main activities**

**Looking back**

The main purpose of this lesson is for the children to investigate the changes and similarities between the Olympic Games of 1948 and 2012. The children should be encouraged to do this using as many sources as possible, such as photographs, written accounts, media clips, newspaper stories and other records.

This activity will work best if the children are able to investigate the materials and sources themselves. However, teacher input is always important in prompting the children towards certain observations and steering discussion through questioning. The teacher's role is also

**Starter activity**

Explain to the children that the Olympic Games have been held in London on two previous occasions (1908 and 1948) and that on the most recent occasion things were very different. This lesson will explore some of those differences.

The children will each be given a particular area of the Olympic Games to investigate. A nice activity would be for the children to identify the areas they would like to investigate for themselves. This would take more time and organisation and is, therefore, probably best done in advance of the actual lesson. Alternatively, you may consider providing the areas for investigation yourself.





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christopher Russell is the Senior Lecturer in Education at Edge Hill University for Primary History.



### 3 Drawing conclusions

The children will need to collect and collate their findings. There are many ways of doing this. 'Then and Now' boxes, or two columns, provide a simple way for the children to record their discoveries and to identify the similarities and changes identified throughout the process. Younger children often find this method of recording rewarding as they can draw their findings and annotate with simple sentences, whilst the activity can easily be extended for older or more able children.

However, there is plenty of

scope to adopt a more creative approach to recording and presenting the findings for such a lesson. By incorporating ICT, the children could present their learning in a TV-style programme focusing on the 1948 and 2012 Olympic Games. Perhaps an even more engaging method of presenting their findings would be to create a podcast. Whilst this may take longer than one lesson, the children would not only find such an approach engaging and interesting, but could easily share their hard work with their friends and classmates.

### 2 Identifying changes

It might appear that identifying differences between the two Olympic Games would be easier for the children, as it is likely that most of the evidence and materials available highlight these more readily. However, the children should be encouraged to try to identify similarities as well.

With the areas for investigation chosen, some children might need help and guidance in exploring the evidence presented to them. This may include making sense of old documents, unfamiliar handwriting and phrasings or help in looking for clues in photographs and making sense of them.

This lesson could also provide opportunities to look at differing interpretations of the evidence children have been using. For instance, some children may find negative articles about the 2012 Olympics regarding the ticket ballot or the cost of the Games. As a result, their perceptions of the Games could be challenged.



### Follow up and assess

- > The lesson should conclude with sharing the children's findings. This may not be in the completed form, (as indicated above, a podcast would take longer than one lesson).
- > The teacher should look to develop the plenary by questioning the children as to the assertions they have

made in the findings they have presented. Questioning at this stage of the lesson should consolidate the children's understanding as to what they have found out.

- > The teacher's questions along with the children's responses and their final piece of work will provide the assessment information for the teacher.

## USEFUL QUESTIONS

- > How did you find this out?
- > What makes you think that....?
- > Where did you find the evidence to support this statement?
- > Which Olympics would you like to take part in? Why?
- > Can you tell me how you know this?



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