



Tap into the excitement of elite athletic competition, the inspiration, and the sheer global celebration of the Olympics with this theme that encourages kids to go for their own personal Gold!

## SETTING THE SCENE

**Olympic Village:** Decorate your reading area to suggest the excitement of an Olympic Village. Options include posters from “Be a Gold Medal Reader,” pictures of athletes in action, flags of many nations (Oriental Trading Company has affordable individual flags or flag garlands at [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com), or color your own on index cards), the official interlocking rings logo, colorful bunting, etc. Add a torch. You might use a backyard Tiki torch, or disguise a table lamp as a torch: Tape a poster board tube or cone in place over the base of the lamp. Cut the bottom out of a plastic tub, sized to rest on top of the base and enclose the light bulb loosely. Replace the lampshade with the plastic tub, and use yellow or orange polypropylene film or tissue paper, wrapped around the tub and extending in jagged points above the light bulb, to create



the flames. The bulb will bring the torch to colorful life. Bright beanbag chairs work well for seating. Arrangements of small sports equipment items (swim goggles, jump ropes, stop watches, hand weights, baseball gloves, etc.) on tables or windowsills complete the effect.

**Bulletin Board:** Use the “Be a Gold Medal Reader” bulletin board decorator to anchor a display. Add the Olympics logo in the middle, and use the centers of the rings to feature books about sports or the Games, upcoming events, or your own Gold Medal readers. You might assign a literary genre to each circle and use Gold Medal Bulletin Board Accents to let readers recommend favorite titles in those genres.



**Book Display:** Create a display of books on the Olympics or sports in general, on and around three boxes on a shelf or table, arranged like the Olympics winners’ podium. Cover the center box, which should be higher than those on each side, with gold paint or paper, the left box with silver, and the right box with bronze. Add



a stack of give-away ribbon bookmarks from the “Be a Gold Medal Reader” materials.

**Incentives:** Stock up on “Gold Medal Reader” winner medals, bookmarks, candies wrapped like sports balls, etc. for children who meet their reading goals or who win games or contests.

## GAMES

**Paper Games:** Try some pencil-and-paper games from the *U. S. Olympic Puzzles and Brain Teaser* book (see Resource list). Or use the reproducible Olympics Unmix & Match Puzzle on page 9 of this guide. (See page 10 for the Answer Key.)



**Kid-friendly Games:** Set up scaled-down, just-for-fun Olympic events, like shooting baskets using a free-standing children’s hoop and soft balls, lifting weights with small hand weights or barbells, simple tumbling on a small exercise mat, or volleyball over a small net with a soft ball. If you have access, add a small stationary bike, rowing machine, or ping pong table.

**Online Games.** Bookmark this page from the *U.S. Olympic Committee Kid’s Base Camp* Web site: [www.usoc.org/kids/Athens/site/games/index.shtml](http://www.usoc.org/kids/Athens/site/games/index.shtml).

[usoc.org/kids/Athens/site/games/index.shtml](http://www.usoc.org/kids/Athens/site/games/index.shtml). Kids can choose a maze or a guessing game about Olympic athletes.

## ARTS/CRAFTS

**Athlete Paper Chain:** Using a simple “gingerbread man” pattern, have kids color and cut out pictures of athletes from various countries dressed for different Olympic events.



Display the paper athletes in a hand-to-hand line or ring to demonstrate the spirit of Olympic diversity and harmony.

**Olympic Logo Art:** Challenge children to create sports-related drawings that incorporate the Olympic symbol. They should start with the five interlocking rings, then develop their designs around the circles. For extra challenge, have them hide the logo in the detail of their designs. Then look for the logo in each picture. Display the artwork.

**Animal Olympians Coloring Page:** Copy the coloring sheet on page 11. Encourage kids to use their imaginations to add appropriate animal Olympians to the winners’ podium for a variety of Olympic events. Books



like *The Mud Flat Olympics*, *Gus & Gertie and the Lucky Charms*, *Elympics*, and *Koala Lou* may help them get started.

**Olympic Torch:** Twist and tape construction paper or card stock into a conical torch shape, or cover cardboard tubes with aluminum foil for a shiny, cylindrical torch. Try different media to make the flames. You might trace children's hands and color them in shades of yellow, red, and orange to make "fingers" of flame, or scrunch sheets of flame-colored tissue paper or foil wrapping paper and tuck them into the torch so that paper flames spill out the top. For a different look, roll pieces of felt or other stiff fabric into flame "fingers" and glue them into the base.

## WRITING PROJECTS



**Olympic Motto:** The Olympic motto, "Citius, Altius, Fortius," means "Swifter, Higher, Stronger." Have kids write poems or songs based on these inspiring words. Display sports poetry books like *Good Sports* for inspiration.

**Sports Silliness:** Display *Sports Jokes* on a table with paper, pencils, and crayons. Have kids write original Olympics or sports jokes and riddles. Feature their work as part of a bulletin board display.

**Olympic Dreams:** Invite kids to dream about being Olympic champions, and write 1–2 page compositions about what sports they'd choose and why they'd like to win Olympic Gold.

## GEOGRAPHY



**Map the Games:** On a world map or globe, work with children to locate cities that have hosted the modern Summer Olympics. The cities are profiled in the "Olympic Snapshots" section in *Swifter, Higher, Stronger* and listed in *The Encyclopedia of the Summer Olympics*.

**Look Ahead:** Invite kids to think ahead to future Summer Olympics and nominate cities as possible hosts. They should explain why they think that city is a good choice and suggest mascots that represent that part of the world and the Olympic spirit. [www.yakscorner.com/stories/OLY04\\_mascots.htm](http://www.yakscorner.com/stories/OLY04_mascots.htm) shows past mascots.

## CONTESTS

**Torch Relay:** Divide kids into equal teams of 4–5. Name each team for a country that participates in the Olympics. Set up a large space with markers (tape on



the floor?) that define lanes across the room for each team. Give each team a small torch to carry and pass to the next in line, as they complete a series of fun indoor "Olympic events." Start each race with a whistle and see which team completes each first. Keep track on a chart, awarding 3 points for first, 2 for second, and 1 for third. The team with the most points at the end wins gold medals, second wins silver, third wins bronze. Here are some possible events:

- Running
- Hopping on one foot
- Skipping
- Speed-walking backwards
- Hopping with ankles loosely tied together
- Walking in small steps, with heel touching toe each step



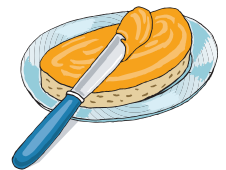
## FOODS/RECIPES

**Cool Olympic Torches:** Scoop orange or lemon sherbet into pointed sugar cones and decorate with sprinkles in flame colors. Yum!

**Energy Drinks:** Serve sports drinks, or blend healthy smoothies from ice cubes, fruit juice, fruit, and flavored yogurt.

**Healthy Beijing Snacks:** Offer a taste of Beijing by serving Chinese snacks like rice balls, sweetened dough twists, or egg rolls (you can buy them frozen). For good Chinese recipes, visit [www.chinesefooddiy.com](http://www.chinesefooddiy.com).

**Medal Snacks:** Use spreads to turn round snack crackers into winners' medals: Cheese whiz for gold, cream cheese mixed with black food coloring for silver, creamy peanut butter for bronze. For a sweet version, use round sugar cookies and white icing, covered with silver sugar balls or gold or brown sprinkles.



## SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

**Sports Science:** Choose activities from the book with the same name. Do the demonstrations and discuss the scientific principles.

**Mascot Mania:** Mascots for the Beijing Games are figures of four animals native to China, along with one that represents the Olympic flame. Show pictures of the mascots, which you'll find at [en.beijing2008.cn/27/74/](http://en.beijing2008.cn/27/74/)



[article212027427.shtml](#). Use classroom or library resources to learn about Chinese fish, the panda, the Tibetan antelope, and the swallow.

## HISTORY ACTIVITIES

**“Mine” for Gold:** Have children choose a favorite Olympic sport and use library or classroom resources to learn about the gold medal achievements in that sport throughout the modern Olympics. They could complete one or more of these tasks:

- List the Gold Medal teams or winners and their countries, in chronological order.
- Plot the winning scores or times on a line graph.
- Create a time line showing significant events, including gold medal winners, in that Olympic sport.
- Write a biographical sketch of a recent gold medal athlete in that sport, including a photocopied or drawn portrait of the athlete.
- Write about the athletes or teams scheduled to compete in that sport in the Beijing Summer Games, indicating those who are favored as likely medalists.



## MATH ACTIVITIES

**Sports Sorts:** Gather many pictures of sports equipment from magazines or clip art. Work with young children to sort the items into different categories like balls, items used in water sports, items used on snow or ice, items used to hit balls, items you wear, etc.

**Sports Stats:** Find a page of statistics in a nonfiction book about the Olympics. Have kids work with the numbers in a variety of ways. For example, based on the chart near the end of *Swifter, Higher, Stronger*, they could rewrite the column listing the number of sports represented at the Summer Games over the years from smallest to largest, add up the total number of female athletes who have participated in the modern Summer Games, compute the average number of nations participating in the Games, find the years in which the most and fewest male athletes competed, etc.

**Sports Math Concepts:** Several titles in Stuart J. Murphy’s MathStart series from HarperCollins present math concepts for early grades in the context of sports stories, with related activities at the end. Check out *Racing Around*; *The Greatest Gymnast of All*; *Game Time*; *The Shark Swimathon*; and *Jump, Kangaroo, Jump*.





## INTERNET ACTIVITIES

**U.S. Olympic Committee Kid's Base Camp**, [www.usoc.org/kids/Athens/site/](http://www.usoc.org/kids/Athens/site/). K–3. Enjoy cartoon videos, coloring pages, games, and lesson plans.

**BBC Ancient Greece**, [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ancient-greece/olympia/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ancient-greece/olympia/index.shtml). 3–6. Explore Olympia at the time of the ancient games.

**Kodak Olympics Musarium**, [www.musarium.com/kodak/olympics/olympichistory/index](http://www.musarium.com/kodak/olympics/olympichistory/index). Check out a timeline of Olympics history and an amazing gallery of photos.

**Official Web Site of the Olympic Movement: Beijing Games**, [www.olympic.org/uk/games/beijing/index\\_uk.asp](http://www.olympic.org/uk/games/beijing/index_uk.asp). 3+. Everything you want to know about the 2008 Summer Games.

**USA Junior Olympic Skills Competition**, [www.jrolympicsskills.com](http://www.jrolympicsskills.com). 3–8. Serious young athletes can learn

about opportunities to compete in events sponsored by the U.S. Olympic Committee.

**Top End Sports Free Olympic Clip Art**, [www.tope-ndsports.com/clipart/pics/olympic-games](http://www.tope-ndsports.com/clipart/pics/olympic-games). Invite kids to use the images to create their own Olympics stickers, bookmarks, posters, etc. Images may be used free as long as they are not modified.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**Mini Olympics:** Spark interest in the Summer Games by holding mini-Olympics. *Spider Storch*, *Rotten Runner* has ideas for choosing events, having teams represent countries, and conducting an opening parade. Teams might wear their nations' flag colors and use recordings of national anthem. Or simulate the ancient Greek games using flute music in the background and including foot races, javelin (broom handle?) throwing, long jump, and discus (Frisbee). Ask children to prepare brief talks about these important Olympic traditions: The official motto, the famous logo, the Olympic anthem, the torch and flame, the release of doves, and the Olympic oath. All are introduced on the Fact Monster Web site: [www.factmonster.com/spot/olympicsceremonies.html](http://www.factmonster.com/spot/olympicsceremonies.html).





**Firsthand Experience:** There is probably someone in your community who has participated in programs of the U.S. Olympic Committee as a hopeful Olympian, a Special Olympian, a Junior Olympian, a coach or trainer, or a spectator. Many states also host State Games sponsored by the Committee. Look for someone with firsthand experience of the Games—preferably a contestant—to come and share his or her adventure. Use the program to introduce programs like State Games, Special Olympics, or Junior Olympics that are available to local athletes and encourage kids to go for the gold!

**Nursery Rhyme Olympics/Story Hour:** Invite young children and families to an action-packed program combining ideas from this guide. You could show “The Olympic Champ” from *The Goofy World of Sports* video, serve Medal Snacks and energy drinks, make an Olympic Torch or an Athlete Paper Chain, read nursery rhymes related to the games, and try these Nursery Rhyme Olympic events:

- **Simple Simon Pie Pan Relay:** Have teams “run” a relay course with a metal pie pan on their heads.
- **Humpty Dumpty Puzzle Race:** Find or make several cop-



ies of a simple puzzle illustrating the famous rhyme and see which team can assemble it fastest.

- **Jack and Jill Water Relay:** Have teams carry small pails of water along a relay course without spilling.
- **Mother Goose Waddle:** Have teams waddle along the course with a soft block or ball between their knees.
- **Candlestick Jump:** Gather several large books and a candle in a small holder. Let kids take turns jumping over the candle without touching it, then the candlestick on one book, then on two, etc. until only one child is left. That child’s team wins the event.

### ***GOLD MEDAL READER RESOURCES***

- ***Ancient Greece and the Olympics*** by Mary Pope Osborne and Natalie Pope Boyce. Random House, 2004. ISBN 0375823786. 3–4.
- ***Elympics*** by X. J. Kennedy, illustrated by Graham Percy. Scholastic, 2000. ISBN 0439238587. K–3.
- ***The Encyclopedia of the Summer Olympics*** by David Fischer. Franklin Watts, 2004. ISBN 053116392X. 4+.
- ***Going for Gold!*** by Andrew Donkin. DK Publishing, 1999. ISBN 0789447649. 2–4.
- ***Gus & Gertie and the Lucky Charms*** by Joan Lowery Nixon, illustrated by Diane DeGroat. Chronicle Books, 2002. ISBN 1587171589. 1–3.

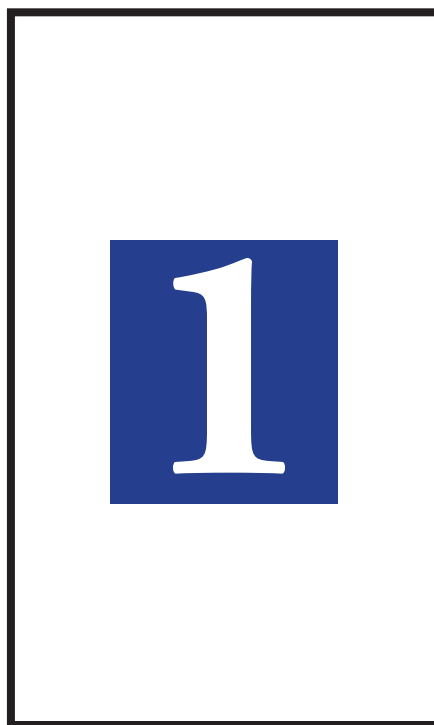


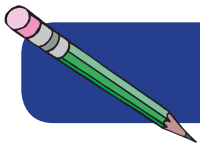
- *Harmony: The Official Athens 2004 Olympic Games Classical Album* by various artists. EMI Classics, 2004 (Audio CD). ASIN B0002IQGXX. All ages.
- *Good Sports: Rhymes about Running, Jumping, Throwing, and More* by Jack Prelutsky, illustrated by Chris Raschka. Knopf, 2007. ISBN 0375837000. K–5.
- *Hour of the Olympics* by Mary Pope Osborne. Random House, 1998. ISBN 0679890629. 3–4.
- *Koala Lou* by Mem Fox, illustrated by Pamela Lofts. Voyager Books, 1994. ISBN 0152000763. P–2.
- *The Mud Flat Olympics* by James Stevenson. Greenwillow Books, 1994. ISBN 0688129234. K–3.
- *Olympic Black Women* by Martha Ward Plowden. Pelican Publishing, 1995. ISBN 1565540808. 4–6.
- *“The Olympic Champ” from The Goofy World of Sports* from Walt Disney Studios. Buena Vista Home Video, 1992 (VHS Video). ASIN: 6302409845. P–3.
- *Olympics!* by B. G. Hennessy, illustrated by Michael Chesworth. Puffin, 2000. ISBN 0140384871. K–3.
- *Run with Me, Nike!: The Olympics in 420, B.C.* by Cassandra Case, illustrated by Dan Brown. Soundprints, 1999. ISBN 1568996047. 1–4.
- *Sixteen Years in Sixteen Seconds: The Sammy Lee Story* by Paula Yoo, illustrated by Dom Lee. Lee & Low Books, 2005. ISBN 158430247X. 2–4.
- *The Special Olympics* by Mike Kennedy. Children’s Press, 2003. ISBN 0516293753. 3–5.
- *Spider Storch, Rotten Runner* by Gina Willner-Pardo. Albert Whitman, 2001. ISBN 0807575941. 1–4.
- *Sports Jokes* by Pam Rosenberg, illustrated by Patrick Girouard. Child’s World, 2004. ISBN 1592960774. K–4.
- *Sports Science* by Shar Levine and Leslie Johnstone. Sterling Publishing, 2006. ISBN 140271520X. 2–5.
- *Sports Stories You’ll Have a Ball With* by various authors. Chronicle Books, 2001. ISBN 1587170868. 1–3.
- *Swifter, Higher, Stronger: A Photographic History of the Summer Olympics* by Sue Macy. National Geographic, 2004. ISBN 0792266676. 4–6.
- *Toad Rage* by Morris Gleitzman. Yearling, 2005. ISBN 0375827633. 3–6.
- *U. S. Olympic Puzzles and Brain Teasers (Intermediate)* by Michelle Breyer, illustrated by Howard Chaney. Griffin Publishing Group, 2001. ISBN 1580000827. 3–6.
- *The Winter Olympics* by Larry Dane Brimner. Children’s Press, 1997. ISBN 0516262076. 1–4.
- *You Wouldn’t Want to be a Greek Athlete! Races You’d Rather Not Run* by Michael Ford, illustrated by David Antram. Franklin Watts, 2004. ISBN 0531163946. 2–5.

# Animal Olympians Coloring Page

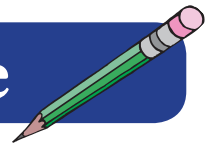
Draw and color animal Olympians on each step of the Winners' Podium below. Choose appropriate animals for the Olympic Event.

Olympic Event: \_\_\_\_\_





# Olympics Unmix & Match Puzzle



Unscramble the words on the left. Then draw lines matching each to the correct sentence on the right.

IJBGEN \_\_\_\_\_

ODGL \_\_\_\_\_

RVIESL \_\_\_\_\_

BEOZRN \_\_\_\_\_

OLIYMPNA \_\_\_\_\_

EAMD L \_\_\_\_\_

DIMUOP \_\_\_\_\_

PDERAA \_\_\_\_\_

TNOIASN \_\_\_\_\_

TENMAH \_\_\_\_\_

STCMAO \_\_\_\_\_

GLAVIEL \_\_\_\_\_

ASINTGYMSC \_\_\_\_\_

NMIGMWIS \_\_\_\_\_

QETEUINARS \_\_\_\_\_

PTATNLEHNO \_\_\_\_\_

KARCT \_\_\_\_\_

TINSGAK \_\_\_\_\_

DEJUGS \_\_\_\_\_

HPMPSNSRIOTSA \_\_\_\_\_

First place winners earn \_\_\_\_.

Games open with a \_\_\_\_ of Nations.

\_\_\_\_ choose the winners.

An Olympic event done on ice is \_\_\_\_.

The winner's National \_\_\_\_ is played.

\_\_\_\_ will host Summer 2008 Games.

Athletes live in the Olympic \_\_\_\_.

Medalists stand on the winner's \_\_\_\_.

The top honor is the Gold \_\_\_\_.

Olympics promote good \_\_\_\_.

Olympic Games have an official \_\_\_\_.

Second place winners earn \_\_\_\_.

Third place winners earn \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ combines five sports in one event.

Games open with a Parade of \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ and Diving events go together.

Horses are involved in \_\_\_\_ events.

An Olympic athlete is an \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ and Field events go together.

\_\_\_\_ combines acrobatics and dance.



# Olympics Unmix & Match Puzzle



## Answer Key

IJBGEN BEIJING

ODGL GOLD

RVIESL SILVER

BEOZRN BRONZE

OLIYMPNA OLYMPIAN

EAMDL MEDAL

DIMUOP PODIUM

PDERAA PARADE

TNOIASN NATIONS

TENMAH ANTHEM

STCMAO MASCOT

GLAVIEL VILLAGE

ASINTGYMSC GYMNASTICS

NMIGMWIS SWIMMING

QETEUINARS EQUESTRIAN

PTATNLEHNO PENTATHLON

KARCT TRACK

TINSGAK SKATING

DEJUGS JUDGES

HPMPSNSRIOTSA SPORTSMANSHIP

First place winners earn GOLD.

Games open with a PARADE of Nations.

JUDGES choose the winners.

An Olympic event done on ice is SKATING.

The winner's National ANTHEM is played.

BEIJING will host Summer 2008 Games.

Athletes live in the Olympic VILLAGE.

Medalists stand on the winner's PODIUM.

The top honor is the Gold MEDAL.

Olympics promote good SPORTSMANSHIP.

Olympic Games have an official MASCOT.

Second place winners earn SILVER.

Third place winners earn BRONZE.

PENTATHLON combines five sports in one event.

Games open with a Parade of NATIONS.

SWIMMING and Diving events go together.

Horses are involved in EQUESTRIAN events.

An Olympic athlete is an OLYMPIAN.

TRACK and Field events go together.

GYMNASTICS combines acrobatics and dance.