

Daffodil International School-EV

Class- V

Subject- English

Term: Final

Module on Sport (Unit-7)

## **The Ancient History of the Olympics**

### **Introduction**

The Olympic Games are the world's leading sports event. Athletes from more than 200 countries compete in them. The Olympics include the Summer Games and the Winter Games. Each is held in a different country once every four years. Until the early 1990s the Summer and Winter Games were held in the same year. Today they are separated by two years.

The Olympic Games were first held in ancient Greece at a site called Olympia. The ancient Greek Games lasted until 393 CE (CHRISTIAN ERA). The Olympics were revived in the late 1800s. The Games that began then are called the modern Olympics.

### **Organization and Flag**

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) governs the modern Games. It was founded in 1894. Its headquarters are in Lausanne, Switzerland. The IOC decides on the sports to include in the Olympics. It also chooses the cities that will host the Games. For example, London was chosen to host the Summer Olympics in 2012. In addition to the IOC, each country has its own national Olympic committee.

The flag of the Olympic Games has five linked rings on a white background. The rings represent the five parts of the world joined together by the Games: the Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. The rings are blue, yellow, black, green, and red. The colors of the rings and the white background came from national flags. At least one of the colors appears in every country's flag.



### **Olympic ceremonies**

The Olympic Games begin with an opening ceremony. Each country's team enters the Olympic stadium dressed in its official uniform. An athlete carrying the team's national flag leads each group. The Greek team is always the first to enter the stadium. The other nations follow in alphabetical order, according to the language of the host country. The host team is always the last.

During the ceremony the Olympic flag is raised. Then an important person from the host country carries a torch into the stadium and lights a fire, called the Olympic flame. (The torch is lit in Olympia, Greece. A series of runners then carries the torch from Greece to the host country.) The Olympic flame burns until the Games are over.



A victory ceremony is held during the Games after the end of each event. Medals are awarded for first, second, and third place. In order from first to third, the medals are gold, silver, and bronze. The flags of the winners' countries are raised while the national anthem of the gold medal winner is played.

The closing ceremony takes place after the final event. It is less formal than the opening ceremony. The Olympic flame is put out, and the Olympic flag is lowered. The ceremonies and events of the Games last 16 days.

## Events

The Summer Games and the Winter Games include different sports that fit the different seasons. There are individual and team events for men and for women. Some events are held indoors, others outdoors.

The Summer Games have a wider variety of events than the Winter Games. The most popular events at the Summer Games include gymnastics, swimming, and track and field. Other events include baseball, basketball, boxing, cycling, diving, judo, sailing, soccer, softball, volleyball, water polo, weight lifting, and wrestling.

All the sports of the Winter Games are played on snow or ice. Ice skating and skiing are crowd favorites. Skating events include graceful figure-skating competitions as well as speed-skating races. Ice hockey is a popular team event. The biathlon (A winter sport) combines skiing and shooting. The Winter Games also include high-speed races on sleds called bobsleds and luges.

The list of Olympic events can change. Sometimes popular new sports are added to the Games. In the late 1900s, for example, mountain biking, beach volleyball, and windsurfing became events at the Summer Games. Snowboarding was added to the Winter Games. In addition, women athletes now compete in sports that were once considered men's events. Two such events are weight lifting and wrestling.

## History

The first Olympic Games for which there are written records took place in Greece in 776 BCE (BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA). The ancient Games were held every four years in honor of the Greek god Zeus. Records from the ancient Games have preserved the names of some early champions. Milon of Croton was a wrestler who won six Olympic championships. Leonidas of Rhodes was a famous runner. The ancient Games continued until the Roman emperor Theodosius I stopped them in 393 CE.

For the next 1,500 years there were no Olympics. In the late 1800s a Frenchman named Pierre de Coubertin worked to revive them. He introduced the motto of the modern Olympics: *Citius, altius,*

*fortius* which means “Faster, higher, stronger.” The first modern Olympic Games were held in 1896 in Athens, Greece. At those Games a Greek shepherd named Spyridon Louis became a national hero when he won a new race called the marathon. The first Winter Games were held in 1924. In 1932 athletes began staying at a single place, called the Olympic Village, during the Games.



For about 80 years only amateur athletes were allowed to take part in the Games. Amateur athletes are not paid. But since the 1970s professional athletes have been allowed to compete in many Olympic events.