

A marathon, not a sprint

Level: Intermediate upwards

Timing: 90 minutes plus

Material needed: One copy of the student worksheets and Vocabulary record per student

Group size: Any

Overview

This lesson plan for both pre-experience and in-work business students is based around an original article first published in *Business Spotlight* Issue 2/2012. The article is written by a journalist based in the UK who assesses some of the factors involved in hosting an international event the size of the Olympic Games and the disruption and challenges this may cause the people of London. He also looks at the cost of living in the UK's capital city and at what may happen after the Games has taken place.

The tasks in the student worksheets encourage the students to learn and use new business vocabulary and functional language and practise useful business skills, such as researching and summarizing information.

The teacher's notes provide suggestions for teaching and learning strategies as well as ideas on how to present the tasks in the classroom, any necessary answer keys and extension tasks (for in class or as homework).

Introduction

At first glance this article appears to be about sport. However, when you start to read it and think about it in depth it throws up many questions, such as whether or not the money and effort involved in hosting an international event the size of the Olympic Games is worth the costs and disruption and lasting challenges it will bring to the people of London.

Warmer

These warmer tasks and questions introduce the topic of the Olympic Games and will give you an idea of how interested the learners are in the subject of the Games and sport in general. Give the students a time limit, e.g. two minutes, for task *a*.

Key:

1. 26 sports in total for the 2012 Summer Olympics - the full list can be found on <http://www.london2012.com/>
2. 2008: Beijing; 2004: Athens; 2000: Sydney; 1996: Atlanta; 1992: Barcelona
3. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Teaching and learning strategy: Introducing an element of competition

Nearly everyone loves competitions and quiz shows - so, instead of brainstorming or gathering ideas in a general way, introduce a competitive element to a warmer task to awaken your students' interests and provide them with the motivation to start to engage with the subject of the lesson or article.

Encourage students to work in pairs or small groups and to challenge the other students' answers if they do not agree with something. This tactic seems to work especially well with younger students.

Key vocabulary crossword

The students should complete the crossword with the key words from the article. The paragraph numbers are given to help them.

Key:

- Across:* 2. home straight; 4. infrastructure; 8. shard; 10. magnate; 11. legacy; 12. failings
Down: 1. vibrant; 3. the city; 5. residences; 6. stalled; 7. riots; 9. inherit

Understanding the article

Divide these topics up amongst the students so that they don't all have to look for all the information. You could do this by giving each student a number, one to three, and asking number ones to research the first three topics in the list, number twos to look at the next three topics, etc. Then put the students together in groups of three (made up of students one to three) and ask them to talk about what they found out. This will deepen the understanding of the many elements mentioned in the article and allow the students to orally recreate or summarize the article content. The answers can all be found in the article.

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Missing figures

The students should complete the city file with the missing figures. Doing this will encourage them to read into and think about the information and what it represents, rather than to just skim over it.

Key:

A. 44; B. 1; C. 40; D. 340; E. 1,158; F. 25; G. 7.83; H. 68.9;
I. 15.8

Discussion

The discussion questions encourage the students to talk about what they have read and widen the topic to include their own opinions, experience and feelings.

Web task

Students are asked to make an intelligent guess as to what information they might find on an official website. They could list a few items they think they would find, such as dates, venue, tickets, etc. and then go to the website and compare their guesses with what is really there.

Vocabulary record

Here, students should be encouraged to record all the new and useful vocabulary they have learned during the lesson, not only in the form presented in the article but also in related forms.

Related topics on onestopenglish

For follow-up lessons on the same or related topics, go to the following lesson plans on onestopenglish:

Mini-plays: The Olympics

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/skills/listening/mini-plays/the-olympics/551447.article>

Business Spotlight: The Golden State?

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/business/business-spotlight/the-golden-state/551672.article>

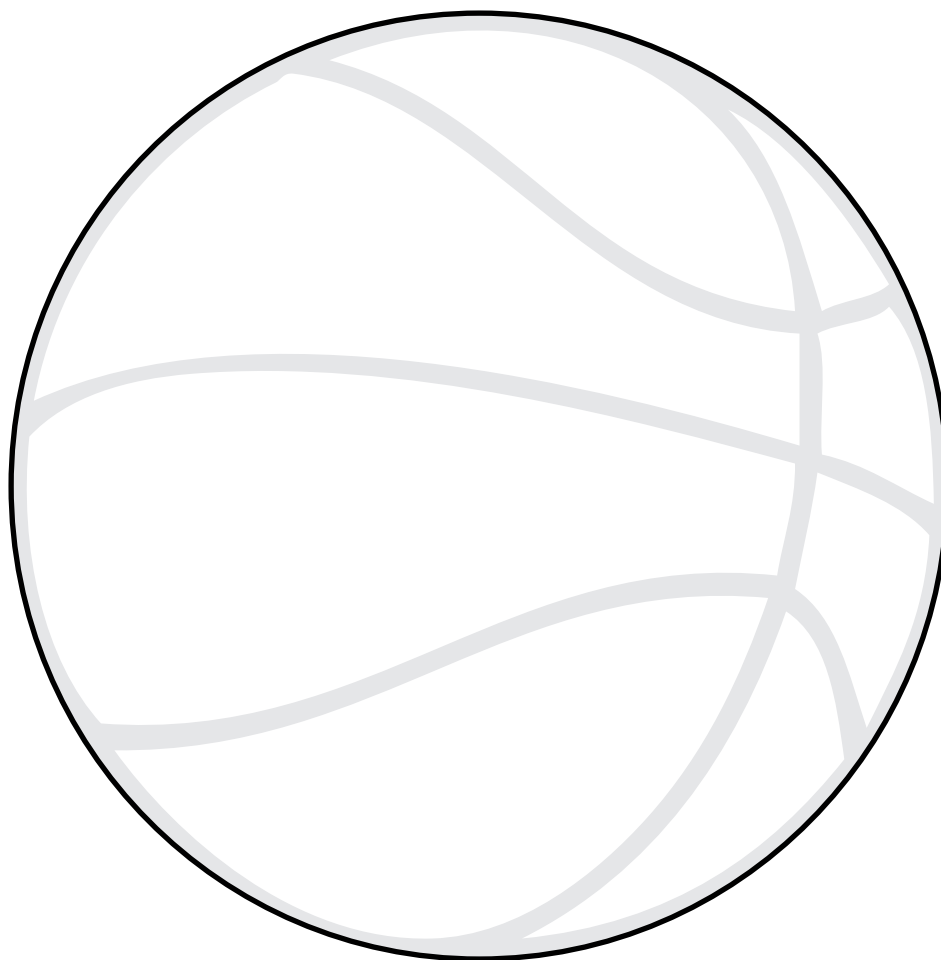
You may also find topical and relevant *Guardian* news lessons here on onestopenglish:

<http://onestopenglish.com/skills/news-lessons>

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1 Warmer

1. Write down as many Olympic disciplines as you can into the basketball.



2. Match the years of past Olympic Games with the cities that hosted them.

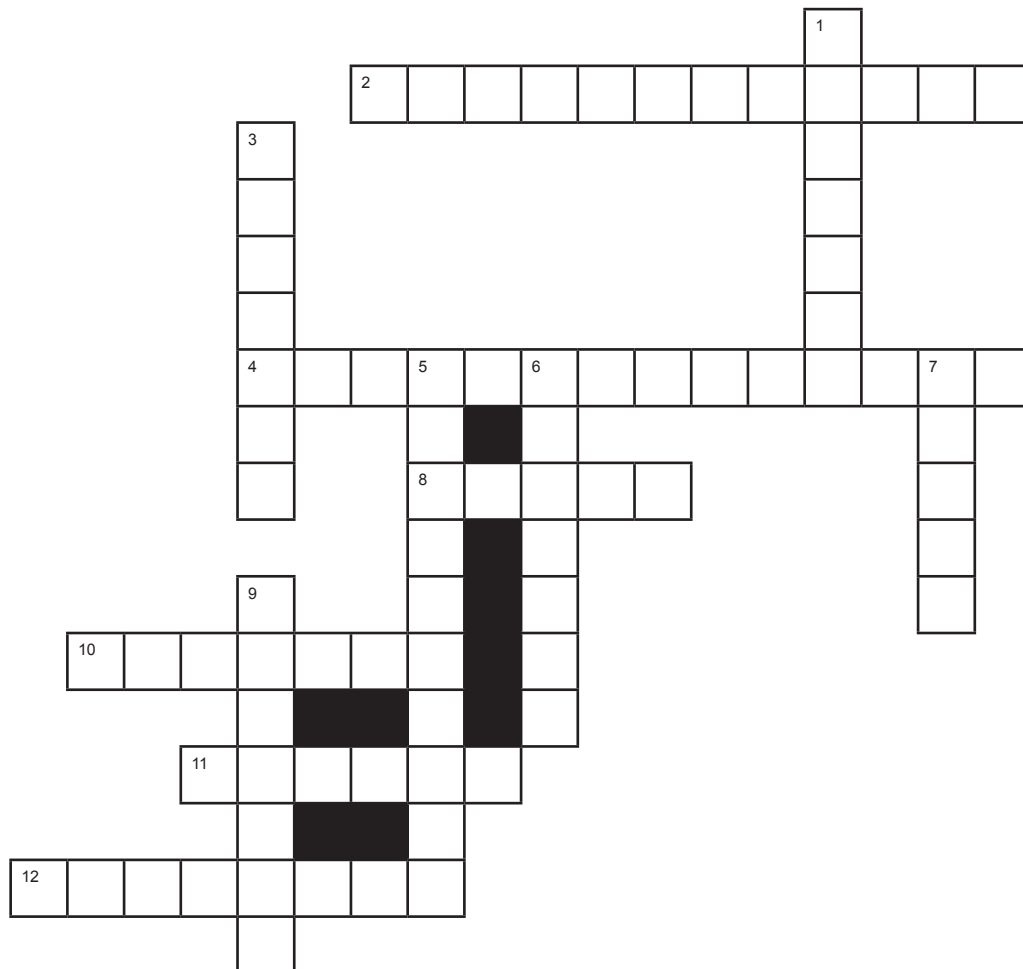
2008	Barcelona
2004	Atlanta
2000	Beijing
1996	Athens
1992	Sydney

3. Where will the 2016 Olympic Games take place?

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2 Key vocabulary crossword

Complete the crossword using the clues below.



Across

2. the last part of a race – just before the finishing line (two words, para 2)
4. the set of systems within a place that affect how well it operates, for example the telephone and transport systems in a country (para 7)
8. a sharp piece of broken glass, metal or pottery – here, used to describe the shape of a building (para 2)
10. a successful and important person with a lot of power in a particular industry (para 1)
11. something that exists as a result of something that happened in the past (para 8)
12. faults or weak points that makes something less effective (para 7)

Down

1. lively and exciting (para 3)
3. the name given to London's financial and business district (two words, para 7)
5. houses, or other places, where people live, especially large houses used by important people (para 2)
6. stopped making progress (para 7)
7. violent protests by crowds of people (para 4)
9. to have responsibility for a situation that someone has started and left for you to deal with (para 7)

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by Julian Earwaker

London's skyline is growing as plans for the Olympic Games take shape. But will the future mayor consider those who cannot afford such luxuries? Julian Earwaker investigates this question.

- 1 Every time I take the train to Britain's capital, I travel through East London and Stratford. The area is being transformed into a futuristic landscape in the countdown to the 2012 Olympics. The latest – and tallest – addition to the Olympic Park is the ArcelorMittal Orbit. This 115-metre-high, red tubular-steel sculpture was designed by Anish Kapoor and paid for mostly by Britain's wealthiest man, the steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal.
- 2 Closer to the centre, a building has entered the home straight: "The Shard". Designed by Renzo Piano, the glass spire rises 310 metres into the London sky. Also known as "Shard London Bridge" or "32 London Bridge", this will be the EU's tallest building. It houses luxury office space, a hotel, luxury residences, shops and public viewing galleries from which you can no doubt see the Olympic Orbit in the distance.
- 3 But what do these new additions to London's skyline symbolize? A vibrant British capital? Or monuments to the rich and famous? One thing they don't signify is a building boom: the number of new buildings in Britain has sunk to its lowest level since 1923.
- 4 The new buildings will also not improve the lives of everyday Londoners. Living costs and rents are rising much faster than average wages. And 18- to 21-year-olds are the hardest hit; their real incomes have dropped by 5% in the past year alone. Unemployment is rising and last summer's riots were a reminder of the anger that many feel.
- 5 The Olympics will bring a feel-good factor and an estimated additional £1.5 billion will be spent by tourists

over the period 2007-17. But the original Olympic budget of £2.7 billion has soared to £9.3 billion. And Londoners have paid most of this.

While all eyes will be on the British Olympians this summer, another important contest will take place beforehand. Thursday 3rd May, is the day on which the next mayor of London will be elected. The most powerful directly elected politician in the UK, the mayor represents the hopes of more than 7.5 million Londoners and oversees a yearly budget of more than £3 billion.

What will the new mayor inherit? There is a risk that projects such as the Olympic Park and The Shard will hide London's failings. In 2008-09, London had the highest growth of the nine English regions. By 2009-10, it was down to third place – with a growth rate of just 0.9%. The City, Britain's financial engine, has been damaged by the global crisis. Important infrastructure projects, such as the proposed high-speed rail link with Birmingham or airport expansion, have stalled.

London needs more than just additions to its skyline. It needs investment in its infrastructure, the regeneration of poorer areas and an Olympic legacy that goes beyond the redevelopment of East London. Whoever wins the race to become mayor of London, and however many gold medals Britain wins, the planning for London's future needs to be seen as a marathon, not a sprint.



JULIAN EARWAKER is a British journalist who writes on a wide range of social, political, business and travel subjects.

Business Spotlight, 2/2012, www.business-spotlight.de

3 Understanding the article

What does the author of the article say about the topics below?

- unemployment
- public transport
- the financial crisis
- the cost of living in the UK's capital city
- the cost of hosting the Olympics
- buildings and architecture
- politics
- tourists
- the gap between the rich and the poor

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4 Missing figures

Complete the city file using the figures below.

1 7.83 15.8 25 40 44 68.9 340 1,158

City file: London 2012



GENERAL

Official name: London

Status: capital of England and the United Kingdom

Main languages: English is the most common language. The top ten other languages spoken by London residents are French, Spanish, Polish, Hindi, Italian, Urdu, German, Russian, Bengali and Portuguese.

Telephone code: + _____ [A] 20

Time zone: Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), which is Central European Time minus _____ [B] hour

Currency: pound sterling

ECONOMY

GDP per head: £ _____ [C],432 (2008)

Unemployment: 9.7%, compared to a national average of 8.3% (Sep. 2011)

Housing: the average property price in the capital is £ _____ [D],308, compared to an average for England and Wales of £159,999 (Oct. 2011)

Average property rental: £ _____ [E] per calendar month (Oct. 2011), 8.8% higher than in Oct. 2010

POLITICS

Current mayor: Boris Johnson (Conservative). The mayor of London is elected once every four years. The mayor heads the London Assembly, which consists of _____ [F] elected members. Eleven members represent the whole capital and 14 are elected by constituencies.

PEOPLE

Name: Londoners (or "Cockneys" for those born in the city's East End)

Population: _____ [G] million in Greater London (July 2010 est.)

Population growth: population is projected to increase to 8.87 million by 2031

Gender structure: male 49.8%; female 50.2%

Age structure: 0-15 years: 19.6%; 16-64 years: _____ [H] %; 65 years and over: 11.5%.

The 18-30 age group represents 20.8% of London's population, compared to the national average of 17.7% (June 2010).

Religions: Christian 58.2%, no religion _____ [I] %, Muslim 8.5%, Hindu 4.1%, Jewish 2.1%, Sikh 1.5%, Buddhist 0.8%, other 0.5% (2010)

DID YOU KNOW?

- A million Londoners speak a first language other than English (more than 300 languages are spoken in London).

- The City, London's financial district, is also known as the Square Mile because it retains its square-mile medieval boundaries. The City has a 37% share of the global foreign-exchange turnover.

- In July 2011, the London Underground carried the highest-ever number of passengers in a four-week period, when 90.6 million customers used "the Tube".

Sources: UK National Statistics (www.statistics.gov.uk); Greater London Authority (www.london.gov.uk); Transport for London (www.tfl.gov.uk); Land Registry (www.landreg.gov.uk/house-prices); HomeLet Rental Index (www.homelet.co.uk/rentalindex/greater-london)

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5 Discussion

Discuss the questions below in small groups.

- What are the benefits of hosting a big international event for a city or country?
- Is the money the event brings to a city or country worth the costs and disruption for the citizens?
- Decide what the author means with this final sentence from the article: *the planning for London's future needs to be seen as a marathon, not a sprint.*
- Did any of the information in the city file surprise you?
- Which of the facts in the 'Did you know?' box did you already know?

6 Web task

What information would you expect to find on the homepage of the official London Olympic Games website?

Make notes of your ideas and then go to <http://www.london2012.com/>. Does what you see match what you expected to find?

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Vocabulary record: A marathon, not a sprint

verb	noun	adjective (+ opposite)	adverb (+ opposite)
inherit			
	risk		
		futuristic	
	luxury		
		wealthiest	

Vocabulary record

