



TEACHER WORKSHEET

CYCLE 3 / 10–11 YR • HISTORY AND ART HISTORY

THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

OVERVIEW

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- Remember that after World War I, peace in Europe remained fragile.
- Understand that Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party, which came to power legally in 1933, was racist and had plans to dominate the world.
- Understand that by hosting the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the Nazi Party sought to demonstrate the superiority of the German race and used the event as a means of propaganda.
- Understand that the victories of Jesse Owens, an African-American athlete, helped to disprove Nazi propaganda.
- Understand the values of the Olympic Games: encourage physical activity and the brotherhood of peoples, rejecting all forms of discrimination.
- Familiarize oneself with a few Olympic athletics disciplines.

ANNUAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES:

Topic 3: Two world wars in the 20th century

The Olympic Games under Hitler's Germany in the pre-war period.

SPECIFIC SKILLS:

- **History:**
Determine one's place in time: develop historical points of reference.
Understand a document.
Practice using different language skills in history (writing, speaking, grasping and using history vocabulary).

- **Art history:**

Relate characteristics of a work of art to usage and to the historical and cultural context in which it was created.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS:

- **Geography:**

Determine one's place in space.

- **Moral and civic education:**

Understand the principles and values of a democratic society.

SCHEDULE FOR SESSIONS:

- Launch project.
- Gather initial student project feedback.
- Read documents aloud as a class.
- Do three reading-comprehension activities in pairs (text and image).
- Share with class and review.
- Extend activity.

DURATION:

- 2 sessions (2 × 45 minutes).

ORGANIZATION:

- Work in pairs, then share as a class.



OLYMPIC GAMES KEYWORDS:

OLYMPISM • ANCIENT GREECE •
JESSE OWENS • PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE



CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

JESSE OWENS: SPORTS LEGEND

James Cleveland Owens, the grandson of slaves, was born in 1913 into a large and poor family, forced to move to Ohio in 1920. It was there that he first started running and set his first records, which opened doors for him at the university. In 1935, Jesse Owens made history by breaking five world records. He would hold one of those world records—the 8.13-meter long jump—for 25 years.

At the 1936 Games in Berlin, he won four gold medals, beat or tied nine Olympic records, and set three new world records.

During the Olympic Games, he befriended the German athlete Carl Ludwig Long, who came in second in the long jump event behind Owens.

THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

In 1931, Germany was still a democratic country when the International Olympic Committee designated Berlin as the host city for the 1936 Olympic Games. The aim was to help Germany emerge from the economic crisis that had hit the country at the end of World War I. Two years later, Hitler was appointed chancellor.

He gradually installed a totalitarian and racist regime. Through pervasive propaganda, he extolled the superiority of the “German race” and Greater Germany. He had an obsession with the body and physical exercise. Starting in 1935, when the Nuremberg Laws were enacted, Jews were persecuted and eventually excluded from German society.

The Berlin Games became an opportunity for Hitler to promote the image of a new Germany, the legitimate heir to ancient Greece. The country celebrated the event like never before—a thousand special trains brought in spectators, 4.5 million tickets were sold, and German athletes won 33 gold medals. Special correspondents in the media were not fooled, however, and some newspapers, like the French publication *L'Équipe*, ran headlines such as “*Les Jeux défigurés*” (“The Disfigured Games”).

Hitler hoped that the Berlin Games would prove his theory of Aryan racial superiority. Instead, spectators in Berlin hailed Owens, an African American, as a hero for his achievements.

Hitler left the grandstands before Owens arrived to avoid shaking hands with the Olympic champion.

A REFERENCE TO ANCIENT GAMES

As Führer, Adolf Hitler ordered a new stadium be built for the 1936 Olympic Games—ancient-inspired decor with colossal statues served as a backdrop for Nazi propaganda.

An amphitheater was modelled after the one in Delphi. Germany also broke new ground by deciding that the Olympic flame would be lit in Olympia before travelling across Europe to Berlin. The relay has since become a tradition (see “Fun fact!”).

FUN FACT!

Ever since the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany, a flame has been lit in Olympia and passed on in a relay to the host city’s stadium. The purity of the flame is ensured by the special way it is lit— the sun’s rays.

FUN FACT!

During World War II, a bunker was built under the 1936 Olympic Stadium. The stadium miraculously survived the bombings and in 1945 became a headquarters for the British troops. Today, the stadium is known as Olympiastadion. At the entrance, there is a commemorative plaque featuring the names of various figures, including Jesse Owens, a reminder of the famous 1936 Olympic Games.



STUDENT WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

VOCABULARY:

Nazi Party, racism, anti-Semitism, discrimination, propaganda.

ACTIVITIES:

▶ ACTIVITY 1: GREEK INFLUENCE ON THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Reading comprehension (text and image) 9-10 yr 10-11 yr 11-12 yr

- Materials: – Image: Photo of a statue (replica) of the *Doryphoros* of Polykleitos (5th century B.C.)
 – Image: Photo of monumental statues made for the Olympic Games in Berlin

▶ ACTIVITY 2: THE OLYMPIC FLAME AT THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Reading comprehension (text and image) 9-10 yr 10-11 yr 11-12 yr

- Materials: – Image: Photo of the flame in Olympia
 – Image: Photo of the last Olympic torchbearer's arrival at the stadium in 1936

▶ ACTIVITY 3: JESSE OWENS: A LEGEND AT THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Language studies (vocabulary) 9-10 yr 10-11 yr 11-12 yr

- Materials: – Text
 – Image: Photo of the 1936 Olympic gold medalist Jesse Owens performing the long jump
 – Image: Photo of Jesse Owens with German athlete Luz Long



STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

▶ ACTIVITY 1: GREEK INFLUENCE ON THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Reading comprehension (text and image) 9-10 yr 10-11 yr 11-12 yr

- 1) The statues conform to the canon of Polykleitos and each one depicts a nude athlete. The statues celebrate the glory of winning athletes.
- 2) The Greek model represented perfection. Drawing inspiration from it reinforced the theory of a superior German race.

▶ ACTIVITY 2: THE OLYMPIC FLAME AT THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Reading comprehension (text and image) 9-10 yr 10-11 yr 11-12 yr

The choice of Olympia as the starting point underlines the link between the Games in ancient Greece and the modern Games and highlights the close relationship between those two events. It was also a way to show that "all roads lead to Berlin".

▶ ACTIVITY 3: JESSE OWENS: A LEGEND AT THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Reading comprehension (text and image) 9-10 yr 10-11 yr 11-12 yr

- 1) German-Jewish athletes were not allowed to compete for their country. Hitler therefore failed to follow the IOC's rules.
- 2) Adolf Hitler hoped that the Games in Berlin would prove his theory of Aryan racial superiority. Instead, spectators in Berlin hailed Owens, an African American, as a hero for his achievements.



FIND OUT MORE

CNOSF EDUCATIONAL FILES

- Cycle 3: "Sports stars and heroes"
- 10–11 yr: "The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin"
- 11–12 yr: "The first Olympic Games"
- 9–10 yr: "Stadium history from ancient times to the present day"
- Cycle 3: "Bobsleigh (dimensions and measurements)"

DIGITAL RESOURCES

- Learn more about the ancient Games:
<http://cnosf.franceolympique.com/cnosf/actus/4918-douze-sicles-de-jeux-olympiques-antiques--la-priode-archaue.html>
- Learn more about Jesse Owens:
<http://www.lequipe.fr/Medias/Actualites/Luc-dayan-il-y-a-un-devoir-de-memoire-concernant-jesse-owens/702992>

- Learn more about the Olympic Games in Berlin (archival footage):
<http://education.francetv.fr/matiere/epoque-contemporaine/premiere/video/l-attribution-des-jeux-olympiques-pour-sortir-du-marasme-de-la-crise>

<http://education.francetv.fr/matiere/epoque-contemporaine/premiere/video/outils-de-propagande-et-jeux-olympiques-1>

<http://education.francetv.fr/matiere/epoque-contemporaine/premiere/video/la-reappropriation-des-jeux-antiques-par-l-allemande-nazie>

- Learn more about Nazi Germany:
<http://education.francetv.fr/matiere/epoque-contemporaine/premiere/video/arrivee-d-hitler-au-pouvoir-en-1933>

<http://education.francetv.fr/matiere/epoque-contemporaine/premiere/video/l-allemande-nazie-se-prepare-pour-les-jeux-olympiques>

<http://education.francetv.fr/matiere/epoque-contemporaine/premiere/video/la-nazification-de-la-jeunesse-par-le-sport>

- Learn more about the Olympic flame:
<https://www.olympic.org/olympic-torch-relay>

FILMS FOR TEACHERS

- Jesse Owens biopic: *Race*, directed by Stephen Hopkins (France, Germany, Canada; 2016).

EXHIBITIONS FOR STUDENTS

- The Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland
<https://www.olympic.org/museum>
(virtual tour available online)

- "Fair Play": A touring exhibition on Olympism, available on loan (12 panels, 1.60 m × 50 cm):
Contact: academieolympique@cnosf.org

- The Musée National du Sport in Nice, France

FURTHER READING FOR STUDENTS

- Friedrich*, by Hans Peter Richter, Penguin, 1961

FILMS FOR STUDENTS

- The Ace of Aces*, directed by Gérard Oury (France, 1982)

INFOGRAPHIC WORKSHEET

- End of unit: "10 words about racism"



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STUDENT WORKSHEET

CYCLE 3 / 10–11 YR • HISTORY AND ART HISTORY



THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

Aa

VOCABULARY

NAZI PARTY: Political party founded by Adolf Hitler which had a racist program.

RACISM: Behavior and beliefs of those who think that there is a hierarchy among people and that there is more than one human race.

ANTI-SEMITISM: Hostility, racism towards Jewish people.

DISCRIMINATION: The act of treating individuals or groups within the same population differently.

PROPAGANDA: Means used to make people adopt an idea or belief.



ACTIVITIES

▶ ACTIVITY 1: GREEK INFLUENCE ON THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

MATERIALS:

- Photo of a statue (replica) of the *Doryphoros* of Polykleitos (5th century B.C.).
- Photo of monumental statues made for the Olympic Games in Berlin.



Document 1: Photo of a statue (replica) of the *Doryphoros* of Polykleitos (5th century B.C.).

Polykleitos was a famous sculptor in ancient Greece (5th century B.C.). He was the first person to invent the rule of “ideal proportions”, which depicts the body in a balanced way.

That is what is known as a “canon” (from the Greek word *kanôn*, or “rule”). Polykleitos believed that a body’s total height should be seven times that of the head, and that the shoulder width should be twice that of the head!

At the time, statues were always depicted in the nude, since that’s how athletes competed. Polykleitos sculpted many statues based on those rules, including

the *Doryphoros* (spear bearer), the *Discophoros* (discus bearer), and the *Diadumenos* (athlete with a ribbon tied around his head after a victory). Unfortunately there are now only replicas, because the originals have disappeared.



TIPS & TRICKS



Getting organized makes learning easier. It also

means having more free time since you need to spend less time working, so you’re less stressed.

Do what works for you!

Try the 30-second technique.

Before you start working (in class or at home), sit down at your desk and, for thirty seconds,

imagine yourself working

and figure out what you need to get done. You’ll see how effective that can be, because it helps with **concentration** and **memorization**.

Document 2: Monumental statues created for the Olympic stadium in Berlin in 1936 by sculptors like Josef Thorak.



Josef Thorak was a German sculptor who worked for the Nazi regime. Today he is especially known for his monumental works inspired by ancient times—warriors, Apollonian heroes, etc. When Adolf Hitler came to power, all young Germans had to follow an intense physical-exercise program, and there were public displays of physical fitness and training.

Carefully read and look at documents 1 and 2 and answer the questions below:

1) What do the sculptures in documents 1 and 2 have in common?

.....

.....

2) In your opinion, why did Nazi sculptors like Josef Thorak draw inspiration from Greek models?

.....

.....

▶ FIND OUT MORE

At the Louvre Museum in Paris, you can find a white marble statue of Polykleitos' *Doryphoros* and see for yourself that its total height is seven times the height of its head!

▶ ACTIVITY 2: THE OLYMPIC FLAME AT THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

MATERIALS:

- Photo of the flame in Olympia.
- Photo of the last Olympic torchbearer's arrival at the stadium in 1936.



Document 1: A flame burns on the altar of each god (Zeus, Hera, Hestia) in Olympia.

Greeks in ancient times considered fire to be an element of divine origin and would keep an ever-burning fire in front of the main temples.

That was the case in the sanctuary of Olympia, where the Games were held in ancient times. The flame was lit using the rays of the sun, to ensure purity. The rays were captured in the center of a parabolic dish, called a *skaphia*.



Document 2: The arrival of the last Olympic torchbearer in Berlin in August 1936.

Inspired by the ancient tradition of messengers travelling from city to city to announce the dates for competitions, Germany broke new ground in 1936 and decided that an Olympic flame would be carried by 3,075 torchbearers from Olympia, where it was lit, to Berlin (3,075 km).

Carefully read and look at documents 1 and 2 and answer the question below:

In your opinion, by making that decision what did Germany want to symbolize?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

▶ ACTIVITY 3: JESSE OWENS: A LEGEND AT THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

MATERIALS:

- Text.
- Photo of the 1936 Olympic gold medalist Jesse Owens performing the long jump.
- Photo from the documentary about Jesse Owens and Luz Long's friendship, *Jesse Owens et Luz Long : le temps d'une étreinte*.

Document 1: Sports and Nazism.

At the head of the Nazi Party, Chancellor Hitler declared that the Germans were a “superior race” that should dominate the world. He made the first anti-Semitic policies, aimed at excluding Jewish people from society, as soon as he came to power.

In 1933, sports clubs that failed to obey the Nazi Party would no longer be allowed in Germany. As a result, many Jewish athletes were excluded from German sports federations, and their performances were no longer recorded.

At the Berlin Olympic Games, there were no Jewish athletes on the German teams.

Document 2: Jesse Owens, long jump gold medalist, Berlin Olympic Games, 1936.

At the 1936 Games in Berlin, American athlete Jesse Owens won four gold medals—for the 100 meters, 200 meters, 4×100-meter relay, and the long jump. He beat or tied nine Olympic records, and set three new world records.

Jesse Owens was one of eight African-American athletes on the U.S. team (triple the number of athletes who had competed at the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, California).



Document 3: Photo from the documentary *Jesse Owens et Luz Long : le temps d'une étreinte*.



This documentary illustrates the incredible friendship between the American athlete Jesse Owens (gold medalist) and the German athlete Carl Ludwig Long (silver medalist). Nineteen centimeters separated them during the event, but a real bond united them beyond the stadium. This brotherhood was an affront to the Nazi regime.



Carefully read and look at documents 1, 2, and 3 and answer the questions below:

1) In 1931 the IOC selected Berlin as host city for the 1936 Olympic Games to help Germany emerge from the economic crisis that had hit the country at the end of World War I. The government at the time pledged to uphold the Olympic Charter, which prohibited discrimination among athletes.

Reading the documents above, what did Adolf Hitler’s government fail to do?

.....
.....
.....

2) As soon as Jesse Owens won the long jump, Adolf Hitler left the stadium.

What do you think could have been the reason he left?

.....
.....
.....

FIND OUT MORE

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE UNITED STATES

When Jesse Owens returned to the United States, he was not invited to meet with President Roosevelt, as was the tradition. At the time, Americans were segregated in the U.S.

It was not until 1964 that African Americans were granted the same rights as white Americans in public places (with access to employment, businesses, higher education, etc.).

In 1975, when President Gerald Ford presented Owens with the Medal of Freedom, he said the following: “*[Jesse Owens] personally achieved what no statesman, journalist, or general achieved at that time—he forced Adolf Hitler to leave the stadium.*”

Jesse Owens died of lung cancer in 1980. Since then, a street and a school in Berlin have been named after him, as have many public places around the world, and two U.S. postage stamps have been issued in his honor.

At one point, First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama asked her husband, President Barack Obama (2008–2016), who his all-time favorite athlete was. The President chose Jesse Owens, saying, “*It’s got to be Jesse Owens, even though it’s a little before my time... When you think about not only being the fastest man in the world, but you’re doing it in front of the Nazis, sending a clear signal about what America stands for, the equality of all human beings. Pretty powerful stuff.*”



REVIEW

- Taken at face value, the Berlin Olympic Games were **a tribute to the ancient Games**.
- However, in hosting the Games, Adolf Hitler did not intend to celebrate the key values of Olympism. He used the Games as **a means to promote Nazi propaganda**, in an effort to prove **the racist notion** that the German race was superior. German-Jewish athletes were not allowed to compete in the Games.
- **The victory of Jesse Owens**, an African-American athlete, contradicted the Nazi theory of “racial” superiority.
- The Olympic flame expresses the **positive values of peace and brotherhood**.



NOW, TAKE ACTION!

- **Don't judge a person's abilities based on his or her physical appearance, sex, skin color, religion, or social background.** We are all equal and worthy of respect.
- **Form your own opinion.** If a rule or law seems unfair because it does not respect human rights, **ask yourself the question**, “Can I disobey it?” Then talk about it and discuss it with friends and adults.



INFOGRAPHIC WORKSHEET

CYCLE 3 / 10-11 YR • HISTORY AND ART HISTORY

THE 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BERLIN

10 words about racism

Racism

Behavior and beliefs of those who think that there is a **hierarchy** among people and that there is more than one human race.

Hatred

Violent feelings of **hostility** that lead to doing or wishing to do harm to someone.

Xenophobia

Hostility towards people from other countries.

Anti-Semitism

Hostility, racism towards Jewish people.

Intolerance

Unwillingness to respect those whose beliefs or opinions differ from one's own.

Discrimination

The act of treating individuals or groups within the same population differently.

Segregation

In some countries, the act of separating groups from different backgrounds and not granting them the same rights as others.

Exclusion

Rejection of one or more individuals.

Ostracism

Exclusion of someone from a group.

Contempt

The opposite of respect.

Hierarchy: A system of ranking from most important to least important.
Hostility: An aggressive, unfriendly attitude.

