



Ancient Olympic Games

(Target Audience: 5-8, 9-12)

Dress in a running outfit (running was the first Olympic sport) or in an ancient Greek robe and mention some fun facts about the first Olympic Games or print them out on slips of paper and have children pull them out of a Grecian-looking urn or vase. Talk about some important ancient Greek gods and goddesses and that the first Olympic Games honoured Zeus, the king of the gods.

CRAFTS:

Medals - have circles of gold paper ready and make up a smaller paper medal on the computer with a slogan such as *Go for the Gold* and leave a space on it which can be filled in by the children (they can award themselves for their favourite Olympic sport, reading or anything they are good at). Glue the paper medal to the gold paper circle. Punch a hole through the medal and insert a ribbon through it long enough to go over a child's head and tie the ends.

Olive leaf wreaths (just like the ones the winning athletes wore at the first Olympics) - draw olive leaf shapes on a piece of 8 ½ inch x 11 inch paper and photocopy onto sheets of green paper. Give each child a sheet of leaves to cut out and a one-inch wide strip of paper long enough to fit around their head. Have the children glue the leaves to the headband. Wearing their headbands, the children can have a procession to music around the room.

BOOKS:

You will probably have a variety of stories from Greece to use. Here are some suggestions:

Atalanta's Race: a Greek Myth by Shirley Climo

King Midas: The Golden Touch by Demi

Max and Ruby's First Greek Myth: Pandora's Box by Rosemary Wells

Gods and Goddesses of Olympus by Alike

Or, use any books on Greek gods.

Also, any story from *Aesop's Fables* (Aesop was a slave in sixth-century Greece)

You can find some online here: <http://www.umass.edu/aesop/>

RIDDLES:

Put riddles in a running shoe and have the children draw out a riddle.

GAMES:

Sports bag guessing game – put items relating to the ancient Olympics (running shoe, boxing glove, toy horse, etc.) in a sports bag. Children ask questions which must be answerable by yes or no. The first child to correctly guess what the object is, wins a small prize. Everyone who plays the game receives something for participating (a bookmark, for example).

Discus throw – have children try their skill with the discus (a paper plate) and throw it as far as they can. The child who throws it the farthest wins a prize. Everyone receives something for participating (see above).

Javelin throw – use straws and play as above.

MUSIC:

Chariots of Fire by Vangelis

FOOD:

Have everyone sample a pitted olive or a grape.