

Dissecting Text Structures:

Olympic Games

Chronological

The Olympic Games first began as athletic festivals to honor the Greek gods. At that time, the most important festival was held in the valley of Olympia to honor Zeus, the king of the gods. It was the festival that became the Olympic games in 776 B.C. Later, these Games were ended in A.D. 394 by the Roman Emperor who ruled Greece. No Olympic Games were held for more than 1,500 years. Then the modern Olympics began in 1896. Almost 300 male athletes competed in the first modern Olympics. During the games held in 1900, female athletes were allowed to compete. The games have continued every four years since 1896 except during World War II, and they will most likely continue for many years to come.

Enumerative

The Olympic Games are a 2-week celebration featuring thousands of gited athletes from around the world competing in 28 different disciplines. One of the more popular disciplines during the summer games centers on pool sports. The aquatic events, like diving, swimming, synchronized swimming, water polo, etc., are a favorite of many. Gymnastics is another type of discipline. It consists of trampoline events, artistic gymnastics, as well as rhythmic gymnastics. Additional disciplines include track and field, figure skating, and winter outdoor sports.

Compare/Contrast

The modern Olympics is very unlike the ancient Olympic Games. Individual events are different. While there were no swimming races in the ancient games, for example, there were chariot races. There were no female contestants, and all athletes competed in the nude. Of course, the ancient and modern Olympics are also alike in many ways. Some events, such as the javelin and discus throws, are the same. Some people say that cheating, professionalism, and nationalism in the modern games are a disgrace to the Olympic tradition. But according to the ancient Greek writers, there were many cases of cheating, nationalism, and professionalism in their Olympics, too.



Cause/Effect

Millions of people attend the Olympic Games or watch them on television. Because of the Olympics, people can escape the ordinariness of daily life. They identify with someone else's individual sacrifice and accomplishment. Consequently, the Olympics impact national pride as an athlete's or a team's hard-earned victory becomes a nation's victory. For this reason, there are national medal counts and people keep track of how many medals their country's athletes have won.

Problem/Solution

One problem with the modern Olympics is that it has become expensive to operate. Consequently, the city or country that hosts the games often loses money. A stadium, pools, and playing fields must be built for the athletic events, and housing is needed for the international athletes. And all of these facilities are used for only 2 weeks! One solution is not to build new facilities, but to repurpose spaces. That's what Los Angeles officials did for the 1984 games; they used area colleges and universities as the athletes' living areas. They also solved the economic drain by charging a fee for companies who wanted to be official sponsors of the games. Companies like McDonald's paid a lot of money to be part of the Olympics. By so doing, Los Angeles actually made a profit rather than losing money as hosts of the Olympics.

Proposition/Support

To host the Olympics costs a city more money than the tourism will generate, making it an unwise investment. One example, according to CNN, was the 2004 Games. Athens, Greece built thousands of hotel rooms, hoping that the Games would encourage tourism beyond the Olympics. They are still waiting for that to happen. The biggest loss dates back to the 1976 Summer Games in Montreal. The \$1.5 billion debt took over 30 years to pay. (Canadians sarcastically changed the name of the unused Olympic Stadium from The Big O, to The Big O-W-E.) In fact, the only profitable Olympics was hosted in Los Angeles in 1984 where they made over \$100 million through corporate sponsorship. Nevertheless, hosting the Games does not provide the promised windfalls to the cities who foot the bill.