

 THE  
OLYMPIC  
MUSEUM  
Educational Kit

# FINDING THE ROOTS OF SPORT

ORIGINS

RITEŚ

IDENTITIES



EDUCAZIUN E SVILUP  
EDUCAZIONE E SVILUPPO  
ÉDUCATION ET DÉVELOPPEMENT  
BILDUNG UND ENTWICKLUNG

**Olympic Museum Lausanne - Educational and Cultural Services**  
Quai d'Ouchy 1, case postale, CH-1001 Lausanne

**Opening hours:**  
Daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Enquiries and reservations:**  
Tel. 021 621 65 11 Fax. 021 621 65 12

[www.olympic.org/education](http://www.olympic.org/education)

**Educational kit developed in collaboration with the Foundation for Education and Development (FED), Regional Office, Lausanne.**

# INTRODUCTION

“Finding the Roots of Sport – origins, rites, identities” is the title of an exhibition held at the Olympic Museum from May 2005 until March 2006. In it, the visitor is invited to leave the Olympic stadium and discover traditional sports from the five continents which are still practised today. The journey includes the history of these sports, the rites which characterise them and the identities derived from them.



Exhibition entrance from the hall of the Olympic Museum

The present educational kit is based on the ideas and content of the exhibition, but is also a complete resource in its own right, separate from the exhibition visit. It places the subjects addressed in a more global context and encourages reflection on traditional sports and their links with modern or Olympic sports; as well as on sport as heritage, its cultural status and social role.

Indeed, sport is both a fragment of culture and the expression of that culture, and we consider it important that young people learn to view sport as a component of cultural heritage.

Adopting an interactive and interdisciplinary approach, this kit encourages teachers to travel with their pupils through space and time within the cultural heritage that is sport. It offers curriculum-based and extracurricular activities, photographs, worksheets to be completed by pupils and references for further information.

The aim is for the pupil to understand that behind the sports he or she may consider “traditional” there are values and gestures also found in modern or Olympic sports. Some of the ritual or recreational practices of sports may have altered, adapting to a changing environment, but they remain vehicles of culture.

The kit adopts an educational approach occupying the ground between the past and the future, there where tradition is passed on; and there where democracy takes on a physical form through the values expressed in sport and games: justice, tolerance, respect, humanity, honesty, fairness and freedom.

Sport is also presented as a means of expressing an identity, of making oneself known. Within such a definition, it becomes important to understand the risk that sport may become part of an identity-reinforcing or nationalistic fanaticism which goes against the values of intercultural exchange and peace.

Through the various activities on offer, the pupil will be able to trace the links between his or her own sports or recreational experience and the Olympic values of dignity, solidarity, respect and loyalty; in so doing, will perhaps discover that life is a game, but nonetheless a serious one, with rules, responsibilities, issues and penalties.

## Extras with the kit

### DVD

Produced during the events held at the Olympic Museum during the summer of 2005, this **DVD** features demonstrations of traditional sports and interviews with the people who practise them. A documentary section provides information (in French, English and German) on the sports presented, a colour photo file and the full teacher’s kit with links to the video section.

Anne Chevalley  
Head of Educational and Cultural Services  
Olympic Museum

Myriam Bouverat  
Education Section  
Foundation for Education and Development

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **I - The links between sport and culture** p. 6

1. Sport, cultural heritage
2. What exactly is culture?
3. Another definition of culture
4. Signs and symbols – the expression of a culture
5. Myths and sport
6. Identity, culture and sport

Focus on: The Naadam Games in Mongolia / Kurash in Uzbekistan

## **II - The roots of sport** p. 18

1. First movements
2. From games to sports
3. Difference between traditional games and modern sports
4. From ancient sports to the modern Olympic Games

Focus on: Wushu in China / Capoeira in Brazil

## **III – The rites of sport** p. 31

1. What is a rite?
2. Links between sport and religion
3. Rites of passage
4. Customs and habits, superstition and rituals
5. Magic rites

Focus on: Sumo in Japan / Wrestling in Senegal

## **IV – The values of sport** p. 41

1. Conflicts of values
2. Universal values
3. Sports ethics
4. Olympic values
5. Olympic spirit and/or competitive spirit?

Focus on: Traditional wrestling in Switzerland

## **Recommended references** p. 49

# METHODOLOGY

This kit seeks to foster knowledge of and different approaches to sport in school subjects such as language, geography, history, maths and general knowledge. As such, it provides a key to understanding both traditional and modern sports.

## Objectives

- Recognise sport as cultural heritage
- Research the roots of sport
- Identify the rites linked with sport
- Establish some of the values linked to sport
- Present traditional sports and compare these with Olympic sports
- Identify the particularities of each of these sports and their sociocultural context

## Skills

The activities allow at least five transversal skills to be developed:

### **Self-knowledge and personal identity:**

Identify, assess and communicate one's values, resources, limits, rights and responsibilities.

### **Perspective:**

Challenge one's point of view, look at things from another perspective.

### **Curiosity and constructive criticism:**

Develop critical faculties and investigation skills; question one's own practices and role.

### **Analytical ability:**

Analyse information, situations and social relationships from different viewpoints; adopt a systematic approach.

### **Take position:**

Develop an idea of the world and its future, in order to enrich and orientate one's own actions.

## How to use this kit

The kit is intended for secondary school teachers and their pupils (aged 12 and upwards).

You can:

- use it from start to finish;
- go directly to the thematic section on sports, which contains references to the other chapters;
- use the DVD as a supplement to the kit;
- based on the topics covered, create an interdisciplinary project with your pupils.

## Activities

Five types of activities are proposed in this kit, each introduced by a logo to make them easier to identify.

They can be selected or adapted in line with pupils' ages.



### Discussion

Discussion implies a simple exchange of views and ideas. It is not always structured, and enables everyone to express their views more freely and emotionally than in a debate.



### Debate

The ability to argue a case, that is, to defend a point of view and to attempt to convince others, is a fundamental debating skill. The exchange depends on the right to free speech, but also on respecting other's rights to express themselves.

The teacher should encourage the pupils to establish the necessary distance and not to personalise statements, as individual experience cannot always be applied universally. The person chairing the debate can intervene at any time to add historical, cultural or ethical details.



### Exercises

Includes problem-solving and image-reading activities. These exercises require creativity, discernment, notions of art, logic or critical analysis, the identification of aspects of sustainable development, intercultural communication and so on.



### Role play / Simulation

Role play increases awareness of social roles by requiring interaction with classmates in order to resolve issues. This work demands creativity, and is very useful in analysing values and/or behaviour. Simulation enables pupils to imagine themselves involved in a situation which is not their own and which they do not necessarily know. Dealing with real information allows them to develop skills applicable in daily life; pupils achieve a better understanding of the complexity of problems and the way in which decisions are made.

The process can be described as follows:

- Define the nature of the problem, then imagine the context it occurs in.
- Define the interest groups. Each group should be allowed time to consider and write down its arguments.
- The representatives (one or two) of each group describe the different ways of dealing with the problem. The groups then examine the proposed solutions and democratically choose the best one.
- It is important to conclude the role play or simulation by evaluating the consequences of this choice.



### Research

A research project should only be undertaken if it corresponds to a question which interests the pupils. Based on an anecdote, personal experience or topical event, the approach may include the following elements:

- Establish hypotheses.
- Identify the means to be used to answer the question (written resources, necessary equipment, relevant people, etc.) and plan how to implement these.
- Based on experience, find arguments to validate or invalidate the hypotheses.
- Dare to be wrong and start again differently!
- Do not forget to verify, or at least indicate, the sources of information used.

## Terminology: establishing a common understanding

In this kit, a number of words recur which are worth defining.

### Heritage

Heritage is a form of legacy.

It consists of both tangible and intangible elements.

- **Tangible heritage:** buildings, monuments, historical sites, works of art, objects, books, newspapers, etc.  
**Intangible heritage:** languages, shows, films, music, scientific knowledge, customs, craftsmanship skills, etc.  
We consider that the rituals, specific movements and technical know-how of sport make it an element of intangible heritage.

### Sport

Sport is understood to mean all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction. These include play; recreation; casual, organised or competitive sport; and indigenous sports or games. (Sport, Recreation and Play, UNICEF 2004)

“Activity undertaken for pleasure and that requires physical effort or skill, usually carried out in a special area and according to fixed rules.” (Oxford English Dictionary)

The term sport appeared in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, derived from the Old French “desport” (12<sup>th</sup> century), meaning entertainment.

There are a number of languages which have no word for sport! In Finnish, for example, the word sport is translated as “urheilu”, which combines the notions of courage, risk-taking game and vainglory.

#### Olympic sport

A sport whose governing Federation is listed in the Olympic Charter.

#### Traditional sport

A sport typical of a region or community, with a long history.

#### National sport

A sport practised country-wide.

#### Olympic Charter

Code containing the founding principles, rules and regulations adopted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

### Game

1. Physical or mental activity whose only purpose is the pleasure obtained from practising it. A game may have several characteristics: simplicity, gratuitousness, futility, etc.
2. Activity organised by a system of rules defining success and failure, winning and losing.

### Games

In certain cultures: formal games held at regular intervals or on specific dates

Olympic Games: the largest international sports event. The Olympic Games include the Games of the Olympiad (Summer Games) and the Olympic Winter Games. They are held alternately every four years, with an interval of two years between Summer and Winter Games.

# I - The links between sport and culture

***Heritage can serve as a reservoir of meaning for young people concerned about their future.***

Physical activity, games and sport are not frozen in tradition. They are constantly evolving, while keeping traces of their past forms. Whether sport is considered as a culture in itself or an expression of culture, it is undoubtedly part of our cultural heritage, of the legacy of knowledge and know-how passed between generations.

## 1. Sport, a cultural legacy

Physical activities, including games or sports, are a quasi-universal phenomenon in time and space. The history of the game or sport is inherent in its movements, whether they are technical in nature or simply graceful.

Games or sports, traditional or not, are the product of diverse cultures. They belong to the heritage of humanity and are also part of the memory of civilisations around us.

	Activity
	1. Let's look at wrestling, which has existed on all the continents since the dawn of time. How many types of wrestling do you know? Research the differences and similarities between various wrestling styles.

Tradition does not imply “immobility” or “rigidity”. Each new generation is inspired by tradition, takes it up and reinterprets it. Faced with new problems and challenges, each sport will adapt. In fact, what tradition really passes on is the knowledge gained through both the successes and mistakes of the past.

To take the example of wrestling again: a so-called traditional style is not fixed, but can be modified over time depending on circumstances, changes in society's norms, the pressure of modernity and so on (see wrestling in Senegal).

	Activities
	1. How can we distinguish a traditional game or sport from a modern one? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Traditional game or sport: diversified rules, progressive, adaptable, varies according to place (name, rules, form, duration). Generally characterised by the oral transmission of rules.</li><li>• Modern sport: codified (movements and techniques), institutionalised (associations, federations), standardised (rules). Characterised by the written transmission of information in writing!</li></ul> Give two or more examples of traditional games or sports and modern sports. You can refer to the sports featured in this kit, Olympic sports, as well as those in the “Finding the Roots of Sport” chapter.
	2. Find a game or a sport which represents a regional tradition for you. Explain the reasons for your choice.

Tug-of-war was on the Olympic programme from 1900 to 1920





Today, many tug-of-war competitions are held in France, for example by the Rural Sports Federation

Certain sports and games disappear or change over time. Keeping a memory of them, developing them and encouraging their practice is part of maintaining a diverse world sporting heritage. But who decides on what will be preserved?

### Intangible cultural heritage

The practices, representations and expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage.  
[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

*Humans generally agree that it is necessary to pass on a legacy to future generations, but this does not determine what should be preserved and until when. Who makes such decisions? It is often memory, together with cultural identity, which guides these choices. And today, as seemingly everything becomes legacy, we have the impression that our society no longer knows exactly how to make a choice, that the fact of wanting to preserve, wanting to safeguard, serves as a drug to appease our guilty consciences faced with the destruction of the environment, war and poverty...  
 Adapted from J. Hainard, Museum of Ethnology, Neuchâtel*

### Activities

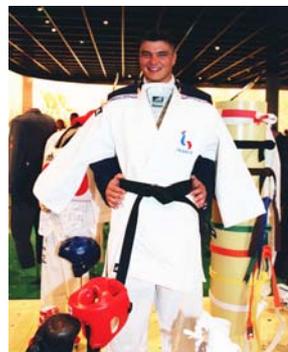


1. In the framework of a language course, examine the UNESCO definition of intangible cultural heritage and compare it with the text by Jacques Hainard, curator of the Museum of Ethnology, Neuchâtel (Switzerland). How do they differ?

- Then put yourself in the shoes of the managers of the Olympic Museum and discuss what you should keep and display from the last Games. On what criteria will you base your choice?
- Some athletes and artists keep in a showcase or a room everything that they have won during their career. What memories do you have of your "career": items from sports events, concerts, or other highlights of your life? Why are these important to you? Is their significance something that may change over time?



Athletics: discus on show at the Olympic Museum



Olympic champion David Douillet (France) removes his judogi and presents it to the Olympic Museum on 6 March 2001

## 2. But what is culture?

***Culture is everything which allows people to situate themselves in relation to the world, society and also the heritage which is passed on to them (values, behaviour, and so on).***

Culture is made up of:

- material items, both practical and decorative (household items, tools, crockery, transport, means of communication, etc.)
- certain techniques or ways of doing things (food, languages, habits, sports, games, social organisation, etc.)
- mental representations (ways of thinking, feeling, seeing, communicating, etc.).

	Activity
	1. Define your culture based on the definition above. Identify the key elements (e.g. objects, habits, ways of thinking) which make it different from other cultures.

## 3. Another definition of culture

***“Culture is the capacity to differentiate.” (Pierre Bourdieu, sociologist)***

According to this definition, which may seem very simple at first glance, having culture means not mixing things up. It means being able to distinguish, and to create difference through careful screening. Each society and individual has its own way of doing so, and this is what creates cultural diversity.

Let's try to see how this definition can work culture in different areas of culture.

### Example: Sporting and literary cultures

At the most basic level, culture allows us to distinguish:

- between Michael Johnson and William Shakespeare, that is between a sporting hero and a literary figure.

Then, at a more complex level, to distinguish:

- in literature, between *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, or their respective authors, Shakespeare and Oscar Wilde.
- in the sporting world, between Michael Johnson, the athlete, and Michael Jordan, the basketball player.

### Culture helps to identify, to provide the keys to interpretation

In this series of illustrations, you can see some figures and markings. The figures look familiar, like those in a digital display, (e.g. on watches, for timekeeping), but not the markings, whose decorative aspect can be appreciated without understanding their meaning. Still, the fact that they are superimposed makes us look for a link between the figures and the markings.



From the exhibition "Finding the Roots of Sport"

However, these markings have nothing to do with the figures!

- People who do not know the meaning of the markings (which are in fact pictograms from Mali) will want to associate them with the figures. They see a difference, but still seek a connection between the 4 and √°, for example.
- People who recognise both the figures and the meaning of the markings will know straight away that there is no connection between them. It is their cultural knowledge which allows them to distinguish between the two.

Activity	
	1. Based on the examples above, find another which demonstrates that it is culture which gives us the capacity to recognise, name and decode what is around us.

#### 4. Signs and symbols – expressions of a culture

Very ancient written communication codes exist even in civilisations with an oral tradition, for example ideograms, symbolic signs and pictograms.

**Ideogram:** association of a drawing (sometimes very far from reality) and a sound or even an idea. E.g. Chinese characters

**Pictogram :** sign, schematic drawing

Activity	
	1. Look up the origin of the word <i>symbol</i> in a dictionary. Make a list of the different symbols you see every day. Why are they used where they are used?

The pictograms of the Olympic Games illustrate the sports on the Olympic programme. For each Games, new pictograms are developed, inspired by the culture of the host country.

For the Athens Games in 2004, the inspiration for the pictograms came from two elements of Ancient Greek civilisation:



- The sober, simple shape of Cycladic figurines (Cycladic art, 2800-2200 BC)
- Ancient Greek vases on which figures appear in black on a red background (ca. 6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.)

The Olympic pictograms are the fruit of a study leading to the development of a concept. They make sports on the Olympic programme recognisable and at the same time reflect the cultural symbols of the host country.

Activities	
	1. Organise a brainstorming session and carry out research on a host country, in order to find a concept for Olympic pictograms for Beijing (China) or other Olympic Games already planned for the future. Then produce them as drawings or prints, or in any other form you can imagine.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  | <p>2. What elements of American culture could be used to create pictograms for the Games? Imagine some and draw them. Then look up the official Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games ones and compare them to yours. What are the differences? Which cultural elements were the official pictograms based on?</p> |
|  | <p>3. In this kit, a certain number of traditional games or sports are presented (Naadam Games, kurash, wushu, capoeira, sumo, Swiss and Senegalese wrestling). Think up and produce a series of pictograms for these traditional sports and games.</p>   |

## 5. Myths and sport

Every culture and society needs myths.

A myth is a model that a society or group develops (or inherits) as a guiding principle like, for example, the belief in progress or the individual search for happiness, which are myths that we find in our societies.

Ancient myths were conceived to bring together a community around a common concept of the world and man's existence. They gave concrete explanations for certain fundamental aspects of the world: its creation, natural phenomena, the status of the human being, relationships with divinity and nature or with other humans and so on.

Today, society is built on other myths which do not serve directly to explain the world but which give meaning and guide certain choices or help to justify them (myths of progress, scientific reason, economic growth, for example). These are not their only functions:

- Myths reassure. We continue to imagine because the imaginary world is richer and more fabulous than the world in which we live. E.g. the myth of Eldorado, a world in which everything is made of gold.
- Myths link. Myths link people to each other, even people who don't know each other. E.g. the whole world feels at one during the Olympic Games.

Myths allow us to cope with our situation. They can give meaning to our actions and decisions and guide us. Myths may even offer imaginary solutions for human beings to use when they are dissatisfied with their social, economic or political condition.

E.g. Roger Federer is my hero. I keep a scrapbook of newspaper articles about him and follow his career. His success in tennis and in life inspires and encourages me.

E.g. Cathy Freeman is my heroine. As an Aboriginal athlete, Olympic champion at the Sydney Games, she symbolises the cause and claims of the Australian Aborigines.



The athlete Cathy Freeman (Australia) during the 200m race at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney



As an Olympic champion, the athlete used her celebrity to talk about the situation of Aboriginal people in Australia and became one of their most prominent representatives

Unlike myths or religion, sport offers no explanation for the meaning of life. But sport provides fertile ground for the creation of myths.

### Activities



1. Sport has an important place in the myths which are created today. These new myths make athletes “gods”: spectators identify with the players, wear the same brands as their heroes, etc.
  - Give examples of athletes whom you, or society, considers, as “mythical”. Then identify the brand names (clothes, sports equipment) which increase in value because they are associated with these mythical characters.
  - Is there an athlete or famous person with whom you yourself identify, whom you admire particularly, who means something to you? If so, why this person? If not, why not?
  - Is it important for you to identify yourself with an athlete or famous person? What importance does this hold for you?



Opening Ceremony of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens: the goddess of Victory, Nike, presents the winner's crown

## 6. Identity, culture and sport

Societies feel the need to be linked to other societies and cultures, while keeping their own particularities. This need to be recognised in order to exist, to have an identity, is present at the heart of each human being and of each society. It is expressed in various ways; and sport is one of them.

Discovering a traditional sport for example, means going to the heart of a culture, just as much as studying the architecture of a traditional house or appreciating a society's ancestral tales. Sport, along with other phenomena, is part of the identity of a society or a group of individuals.

There is a risk, however, of seeing certain groups use sport for nationalistic purposes or extremist identity-building, which works against intercultural exchange.

### Activity



1. Which countries use or have used sport to mark their identity? Give some examples of sports and countries taken from this kit or elsewhere.

Don't forget that:

- Identity is constantly being created; it never exists as a given.
- It is built up during exchanges with others.
- Each culture makes its own identity:
  - by communicating with other cultures
  - by respecting the rules and laws which define the unity of the group.

Activities	
	1. What does being part of a (sports) club mean to you, in terms of identity or social status?
 	2. Imagine that you have travelled to another continent. Present your country to the local people using a meal, story, sport, an item and a photo. Then describe your own relationship to the same elements (likes or dislikes). Are there any differences? What are they and why? Which elements are cultural and which are individual characteristics?
 	3. In 2003, the Swiss-based yachting syndicate Team Alinghi won the America's Cup. How do you explain that the Swiss people were able to identify with Team Alinghi given that Alinghi is a group of sponsors and not a boat, that Switzerland has no sea, that the skipper was a New Zealander, and that Bertarelli (syndicate director and navigator) has a name of Italian origin?

### Face painting – a means of identification

Paint yourself to get noticed?



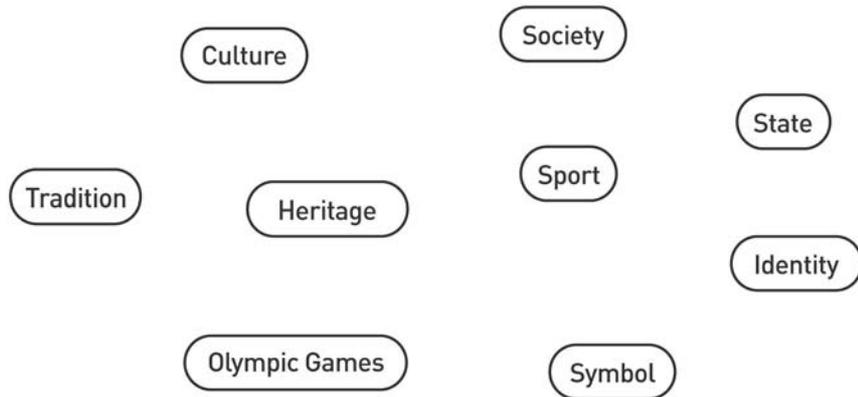
Greek, British and Norwegian supporters at the Olympic Games

Activities	
 	1. What do these face paintings mean? What is their purpose?
	2. Think of and create some face-painting motifs for yourself in line with your identity or one you would like others to recognise.
	3. Choose a friend and paint their face according to the image you have of him or her.

**Summary activity**



Organise and regroup these various elements. Be ready to explain and justify each link you have made between them.



# FOCUS ON

## Naadam in Mongolia, a revival celebrated by games



Originating in Mongolia, Naadam has existed since the dawn of time. It is a festival that brings together wrestling, horse-racing and archery competitions in an event that can have local and/or national dimensions.



### Fertility games

In the Middle Ages, the Naadam games were organised at the end of winter to celebrate the arrival of spring, with the hope of assuring the abundance of grazing pastures and the quality of the herds.

The term “Naadam” means “game”, but the word carries a sexual connotation linked to terms in the animal kingdom such as the “spawning” of fish or birds’ “nuptial parades”.

This notion is further strengthened by the name of “manly games”, also given to Naadam. Indeed, in Naadam, men must prove that they are worthy of continuing their line.

Of the three Naadam games, the wrestling bouts recall the most the perpetuation of the species through their striking symbolism. Rituals carried out by the wrestlers include the imitation of certain animal displays, courting falcons or rutting deer, for example.



The titles given to wrestlers correspond to animals chosen for their symbolic value and strength, such as falcon, elephant or lion.

### Harmony with nature through games

The Naadam games recall the cult of nature and shamanism (belief in spirits of nature). Games were organised to thank nature for the pastures, livestock and game she gave and to compensate for what humankind would take from her to ensure its survival.

### Women and Naadam

Children, both boys and girls, ride the horses during Naadam races. The presence of girls does not count, as only the mounts (always male horses) and their trainers (always men) can claim victory.

### Heat stick.

The winning horse's sweat is collected with this wooden object, in the hope of preserving a little bit of the animal's victory



Since the 1960s, women have been allowed to compete in the archery competitions. As a result, it has become the least popular of the Naadam games...



Wrestlers' hats: the medallions represent the animal corresponding to the wrestler's title – here, the elephant and the falcon

**Today: games for the national holiday**

With the introduction of the Chinese calendar<sup>1</sup> in 1267, the dates of the Naadam games were changed: since then, the games have taken place in the last month of summer, which is July for the Mongols.

The people’s attachment to the Naadam games, and the identification of a whole community with these festivals have made them an effective tool for the various governing authorities who have ruled throughout the centuries. The games have often legitimised an authority, and disseminated messages and ideologies, investing them with a political function.

Since 1921, the games have been directly linked to the national holiday, on 11 and 12 July. The major Naadam takes place in Ulaanbaatar (the capital) and opens the season of the small Naadam organised in the provinces.

**A postcard from Mongolia?**

Like kurash in Uzbekistan, Naadam is part of Mongolian identity and life.

When the State chose the Naadam games to celebrate the national festival, not only was it ensuring community bonding, but it was also hoping to use the event for economic purposes. The games are of interest to sponsors, whose names appear in the stadium where the competitions are held. For the last few years, travel agencies have included the games in their tours, and a large number of foreign tourists now mingle with the local spectators.

**Still games, or now a sport?**

Here are some signs of the games becoming more like a sport:

- Written rules have existed since 1998
- At the major Naadam games, the most outstanding wrestler receives the title of “champion” (the highest grade)
- The winners receive medals
- The wrestling and archery competitions take place in a stadium
- The archery competition is open to women.

However, the revival rituals traditional to Naadam remain:

- One month before the national holiday, the wrestlers and archers (males only!) withdraw from the world to communicate with the spirits. During this period, sexual relations are forbidden to ensure that the men do not waste any vital energy.
- In the wrestling competition, the titles preceding “champion” refer to the animal kingdom (falcon, elephant and lion).
- Before each bout, the two wrestlers carry out the falcon dance before the waiting crowd
- To signal the start of the bout, the wrestlers adopt the position of a rutting deer, aiming to intimidate the opponent.

Tradition and modernity coexist, and the changes do not alter at all the importance of these games in the minds of the Mongols, who, furthermore, like to repeat that there is never a year without Naadam. No matter what changes may occur in respect to the calendar, governing authorities or the wider world of sport, the Naadam games must take place!

**Flying the national flag**

At wrestling competitions, the winner circles the flag, thus having his victory approved by the governing authority.



Activities	
	1. Find some websites of travel agencies for Mongolia, and analyse the way in which the Naadam games are “sold”.
	2. Identify an activity or sports event in your country that could be considered as a tourist attraction. How could the activity or event be made attractive to foreign tourists? Justify your arguments.

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese calendar combines the lunar and solar calendars. It is not used for daily activities, but to determine holidays, such as the Chinese New Year, and certain festivals.

# FOCUS ON

## Kurash in Uzbekistan: promoting a culture and expressing an identity



Kurash, which means “attaining the goal using just means”, is a martial art. More precisely, it is a type of wrestling which originated in Central Asia and can trace its roots back to around 3,500 years ago. Anyone can practise kurash, whether male or female, young or old.

Practised essentially in the area now known as Uzbekistan, kurash was initially linked with public events of a recreational nature, such as anniversaries or weddings. This form of wrestling was also part of soldiers’ training, and it is said that Tamburlaine, the powerful nomad emperor of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, encouraged his troops to practise kurash to keep in shape.

Having been passed down through the centuries, kurash is today one of the most popular and respected traditions of the Uzbek people, who claim that kurash is in their blood and their genes.

### Kurash gets people talking about Uzbekistan

Conquered by the Russians in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Uzbekistan then became one of the republics of the USSR in 1924 after the Bolsheviks seized power in the October revolution. Kurash was still practised, but with no chance of becoming internationally known.

In 1991, Uzbekistan became an independent state. At this point in time, a former judoka by the name of Komil Yusupov took the future of kurash in hand. An expert in this type of wrestling which he had practised since boyhood, Yusupov’s ambition was to turn kurash into international sport. In order to do so, he modernised the traditional sport and brought it into line with international standards:

- by drawing up rules on the practice of kurash, the field of play, the length of bouts, wrestlers’ clothing and weight categories
- by creating in 1998 an administrative structure with the task of managing and representing kurash world-wide: the International Kurash Association, of which he became the President.

The modernisation of a traditional sport firmly rooted in Uzbek customs contributed to spreading the fame of kurash outside its country of origin.

### Spread of kurash around the world

The International Kurash Association currently has:

5 continental federations and 74 national kurash federations on the five continents.

As kurash became known internationally, the world’s attention in turn focused on Uzbekistan! In 1992, the first President of the new Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, spoke out in support of the idea of making kurash an international sport and thereby promoting the history, traditions and philosophy of Uzbekistan all over the world.

### Kurash has helped to popularise Uzbek culture

Because kurash is a very ancient sport, its characteristics are linked to the traditions of the Uzbek people. Any foreigner wishing to practise kurash first has to learn some vocabulary:

- Around 50 Uzbek words are used by the referees. The names of techniques and equipment are also in Uzbek and cannot be translated.

and become familiar with certain customs:

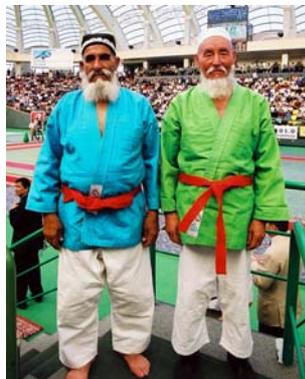
- The traditional bow (*Tazim*) – hand on heart and bow low – is performed before, during and after bouts. Executed by players and referees alike, this bow, typical of the customs of the Uzbek people, is a sign of respect and openness towards others. In the context of kurash, it shows that the wrestler respects his opponent.

### Kurash strengthens a country's identity

When Uzbekistan was part of the USSR, its traditions, culture and identity were suppressed. Upon regaining independence, Uzbekistan began to focus once again on its cultural heritage: the traditional sport of kurash has been a particularly significant medium for this.



Traditional and modern kurash wrestling outfits  
From the exhibition "Finding the Roots of Sport"



The modern outfits are in the colours of the Uzbek flag: green, blue, red and white.

Kurash, the standard-bearer for Uzbekistan?

Activities	
	1. Find Uzbekistan on a map and carry out research on the country, its language, religion and customs. Present your results in the form of an information sheet.
	2. Examine the ancient and modern wrestling outfits and note the differences between them.
	3. Can you find a sport similar to modern kurash? Compare the sport you have chosen with kurash and present your results in the form of a comparative table.
	4. Visit the website <a href="http://www.kurash-ika.org">www.kurash-ika.org</a> . Look up "Rule 28" to find out about some of the Uzbek movements and expressions used in kurash.

## II - The roots of sport

***"An interest in contemporary sport means an interest in the way the body appears and in the new rituals of society; sport provides an opportunity to reintroduce a headiness and a sacred quality into our rational and ordered world."*** (Martine Segalen, ethnologist)

Searching for the roots of modern sports is an adventure that starts with a certain number of questions:

- Where does sport come from? Did sport originate with movements performed in order to survive (e.g. fleeing, fighting)?
- What are the differences between games and sports?
- Do the rituals of contemporary sport still have anything to do with the sporting rituals of the societies we perceive as "traditional"?
- What aspects of ancient sports can be found in the modern Olympic Games?

### 1. First movements

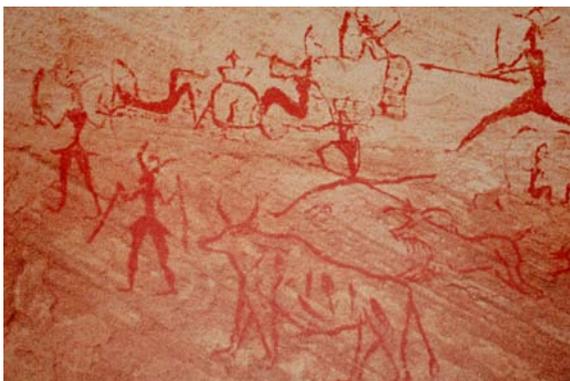
Running, jumping, throwing and wrestling are four activities that have always existed in every human society. Before being termed "sporting", certain movements had – and perhaps still have – a meaning that was linked to identity, ritual, politics or religion (see chapter "Rituals and Sport").

Archaeological relics bear witness to the importance of these movements in ancient societies. Neolithic cave paintings, Sumerian sculptures, drawings discovered in Egyptian tombs and Greek vases all show traces of physical activities such as running, wrestling and javelin throwing.



Boxing scene, Greek vase, around 525 BC

But can it be said that these movements, necessary for survival, were where sport originated?



From the exhibition "Finding the Roots of Sport"

Does the cave painting here show a hunting scene, a game or a battle? It's impossible to say for sure.

Is the vase pictured a prize for a winner, or an amphora containing a magic potion? We don't know.

Man's need to defend himself in the face of aggression from other humans or from animal predators made movements such as fleeing or fighting universal. They appear in every society and have developed into rites, games, rituals as well as sport. The need to be strong, and if possible the strongest, in the face of the predator or the enemy has always been paramount. Many means of ensuring this have been developed, such as physical aids, weapons, plant-based stimulants and magic rituals.

A gesture can be defined as a movement or a series of movements carried out with intention or for a specific purpose. A gesture may be performed consciously or unconsciously. It can also be interpreted by an observer and may in this case take on a meaning and significance not necessarily intended by the person making it.

	<b>Activities</b>
	<p>1. This drawing shows a simplified movement. In which sport(s) could you see such a movement?</p>



	<p>2. Make a simplified drawing of another movement and ask others to guess which sporting activities they come from.</p>
--	---

### The example of the javelin thrower

Only human beings and some species of monkey are able to throw objects. Throwing requires two conditions rarely found in the animal kingdom:

- A precise, powerful hand grip
- The ability to stand on two feet (bipeds).



Spears, taken from the exhibition "Finding the Roots of Sport"

The javelin (or lance) is a hunting and fighting weapon. It can be found in cave paintings, in Greek and Scandinavian mythology, and in many different civilisations. In Antiquity, the javelin was used in competition: it was part of the programme of the Games held in Olympia, Greece.



Javelin training scene, Greek vase, around 480 BC

In Greek mythology, Heracles (Hercules in Latin) was one of the first javelin-throwers.

Considered an ideal athlete, Heracles overcame the obstacles he encountered with his strength, but also by using his intelligence. His favourite weapon was the club, but he also used a bow and arrow or a javelin.

### Activities



#### 1. The 12 Labours of Heracles

- Use the internet to find a detailed list of the 12 Labours of Hercules. What does this myth teach us?
- By performing an “image” search, you will see that these labours have been often depicted in art. Choose one of the Labours and create a modern work of art based on it.
- Watch “The 12 Labours of Asterix” – a film that can be found on video, in which Caesar challenges the Gauls to undertake 12 tasks (as Heracles had done, but Asterix’s tasks are updated to the period of the Roman Empire).
- Imagine 12 sporting events which would each put a sporting value to the test (see chapter IV “The Values of Sport”).



Throwing the javelin, 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow

Throwing the javelin requires dexterity and power. In the past, it was sometimes thrown with a strap or thin cord as a propelling device in order to increase the range.

An athletics event on the programme of the modern Olympic Games, the javelin is thrown from a triangular area delimited by a line that cannot be crossed. The thrower takes a run-up, finishes with a chassé, then rotates the torso and releases the javelin with a whiplike movement of the arm.

Spin-offs of javelin-throwing have developed here and there:

- in northern France, there is a darts-like game which uses javelins. Players throw two javelins at a target situated eight metres away
- then, of course, there is the game of darts itself, which has been known for many centuries. Played throughout the world, it is often found in pubs and cafés.

## 2. From game to sport

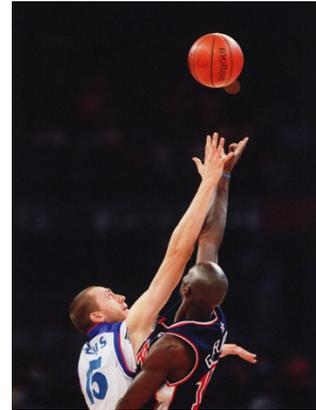
Games have always existed, and not only amongst human beings: even animals play! Measuring up to others, trying to win, respecting the rules, whether written or unwritten, and above all seeking pleasure and amusement: these are the characteristics of games. There is therefore a fine line between games and other physical activities brought together under the heading of "sport".

Activities	
	1. When you hear the word "sport", what do you think of? Complete the following list after a quick brainstorming: Technique, combat, recreation, ....
	2. When you hear "games", what do you think of? Complete the following list after a quick brainstorming: Win, loss ...
	3. Games and sport have much vocabulary in common. Put the words found in activities 1 and 2 into a Venn diagram of two overlapping circles.
	4. Using these two activities and the words found, build a definition of the word "sport" and one of the word "games". Then compare your definition with that of a dictionary or encyclopaedia.

The various activities proposed above show that there are numerous features common to games and sport, and that it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between them. But let's try...

Take a sport like basketball. What makes it a game? What makes it a sport?

Respecting the rules provides  
common ground for playing together



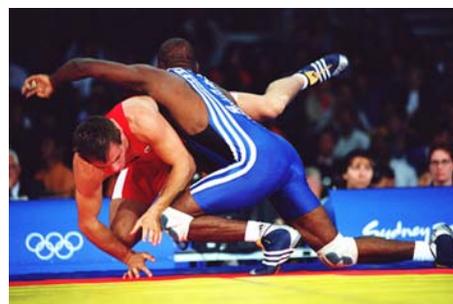
5. Research the history of the word "sport". Present briefly the different roles it has had in society.

### 3. The difference between traditional games and modern sports

The following table tries to pinpoint some of the differences between traditional games and modern sport.



Traditional Swiss wrestling



Greco-Roman wrestling at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney

	Traditional games	Modern sport
Cultural heritage	Often a remnant of the past, with its roots in religious or sacred practices.	Its sacred aura is diminished, but it is still part of cultural heritage.
Rituals	Contain numerous rituals, even if these evolve and change over time.	Consists of rituals that must be analysed according to the present context rather than the past.
Rules	The rules vary, and their framework is fairly flexible.	The rules are standardised and recognised on a worldwide scale. There are sanctions.
Institutions	There are traditional games associations, often on a regional scale. They encourage the practice of the game, and organise tournaments.	There are associations and federations on national and international scales which fix the rules and standardise the sport.
Olympic Games	Traditional games or sports cannot participate officially in the Olympic Games. They can be evoked in the opening ceremony or presented in the cultural programme (for example, wushu at the Games in Beijing in 2008).	The International Olympic Committee (IOC) decides upon the sports that figure in the Olympic programme, according to precise criteria: only the sports widely practised in at least 75 countries and on four continents by men, and in at least 40 countries and on three continents by women, can be included on the Olympic programme (Summer Games).
Identity issues	As the reflection of a culture, traditional games have a strong local and regional attachment. They can be used to proclaim a national identity.	Modern sport earns its identity during competitions where an athlete or team represents a nation. It becomes an expression of nationalism. At the same time, modern sport is also a common denominator, and a universal language in which every person can recognise him/herself. This is particularly obvious at the Olympic Games, which is the most important modern sporting event.

#### Activity



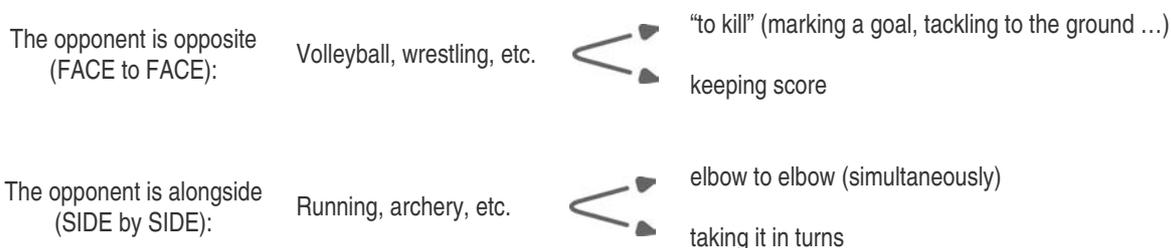
1. Take Senegalese wrestling as an example. Use the table to find the criteria that characterise it.

## Classify the sports

For a long time, specialists have been looking into the way sports and games are classified (e.g. the anthropologist Roger Caillois, the historian Johan Huizinga).

	Activities
	1. With your physical education or history teacher, look up the different classifications of sport and games. Which seems the best to you? Why?

The ethnologist Thierry Wendling proposes an original classification. He classifies sports according to the position of the opponent.



	Activities
	1. Search the website <a href="http://www.olympic.org">www.olympic.org</a> for some Olympic sports and organise them according to this classification. Then carry out the same exercise with some traditional games you know. Are the criteria still valid?
	2. In your opinion, which sports are the most attractive to watch? Develop a new sports classification system based on your own aesthetic judgements. Then compare your classification with others in the class.

## 4. Ancient sports in the modern Olympic Games<sup>1</sup>

The origin of the Olympic Games as we know them today goes back to Antiquity, more precisely to the Games held in Olympia, of which the first written traces date from 776 B.C.

It is interesting to note that even if the rituals and techniques used at that period have disappeared, we can find numerous similarities with the sports on the programme of the modern Games.

In the ancient world, the Games organised in Olympia were the most important, and the sports on the programme were often taken up at other sites, or, with some variations, in local competitions.

It is the Olympic programme we present here. On the programme, there were:

- Running races
- Pentathlon, which brought together five events (running, discus, javelin, long jump and wrestling)
- Combat sports
- Horse races.

<sup>1</sup> Fact sheet, *The Olympic Games in Antiquity*, Olympic Museum and Study Centre, Lausanne, 2002

**Activities**

1. Read, in the table below, the description of some elements of the Ancient Games, and highlight in each of the sections the elements that will enable you to compare them to modern sport.

- Look up on the website [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org) the information needed to complete the column on the modern (Olympic) sports.
- Which sports have disappeared?



Stadium in Olympia (Greece) used during the ancient Games



A stadium of the Modern Olympic Games

PRESENTATION AND PARTICULARITIES OF ANCIENT SPORTS	PRESENTATION AND PARTICULARITIES OF MODERN SPORTS
<p>Apart from equestrian competitions, which took place in the hippodrome, all the competitions took place in the stadium.</p>	<p><i>E. g.: At the modern Olympic Games, athletics events take place in the stadium, while other sports are held elsewhere.</i></p>
<p><b>RUNNING RACES</b></p>	
<p>There were different types of races:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The simple race – one length of the stadium</li> <li>- The <i>diaulos</i> – two lengths or double stadium</li> <li>- The <i>dolichos</i>, long-distance race (7 to 24 stadiums)</li> <li>- The race in armour (a <i>diaulos</i> in Olympia): the athletes wore a helmet and greaves, and carried a shield.</li> </ul>	<p><i>E. g.: At the Games, running races are part of the athletics programme. There are 12 events for men and 11 for women.</i></p>
<p>The competitors took their marks on a start line marked out by white limestone. They ran in a straight line.</p>	
<p><b>PENTATHLON</b></p>	
<p>An athlete who took part in the pentathlon was called a <i>pentathlos</i>. It was the most complete sport, and the body of the <i>pentathlos</i> was considered the most perfect. The five events:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Simple race</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Discus</b></li> </ul>	
<p>The discus was made of stone or metal.</p>	

<p><b>- Javelin</b></p>	
<p>A leather strap was fixed onto the shaft of the javelin, forming a loop. When it was thrown, the athlete inserted his index and middle fingers into the loop, which increased the distance of the throw.</p>	
<p><b>- Long jump</b></p>	
<p>The athlete used weights to gain momentum. He stood with his feet joined together, and swung his arms instead of taking a run-up before jumping forward. During the jump, his arms and legs were held in front of him, almost parallel. Before landing, the athlete threw his arms backwards (dropping the weights), a movement which propelled his legs forward and lengthened the jump.</p>	
<p>Coordinated movements were needed because of the weights. For this reason, the event took place to the sound of flute music. The weights were made of stone or metal, in various shapes.</p>	
<p><b>- Wrestling</b></p>	
<p><b>COMBAT SPORTS</b></p>	
<p>A drawing of lots decided which competitors confronted each other. There were no weight categories as there are today.</p>	
<p><b>Wrestling</b></p>	
<p>The opponents fought standing up, with bare hands. There were different holds. The person who was forced to touch the ground three times lost.</p>	
<p><b>Pankration</b></p>	
<p>A type of wrestling, pankration authorised all blows, apart from biting, scratching eyes out, and putting fingers up the opponent's nose.</p>	
<p><b>Pugilism</b></p>	
<p>The competitors' hands were protected by long leather strips. Metal pieces of were even added on the knuckles, making the blows much more violent.</p>	
<p><b>EQUESTRIAN COMPETITIONS</b></p>	
<p>Chariot racing and horse races took place in the hippodrome.</p>	
<p>The chariot races were spectacular, and especially appreciated by the public. There were <i>quadriga</i> races (chariots pulled by four horses), and <i>biga</i> races (chariots pulled by two horses).</p>	
<p>The charioteers were known as <i>auriga</i>. Unlike the other athletes, they were not naked, but wore a long tunic.</p>	
<p>For the horse riding races, the jockeys were naked. They rode bareback and they did not wear spurs.</p>	
<p>Thanks to the equestrian competition, women took part indirectly in the games! As stable owners, they could run their horses in the chariot or riding races, with an <i>auriga</i> or jockey.</p>	

<b>PRIZES</b>	
Only the person finishing first was recognised as a winner. He received a ribbon and an olive crown.	



Olive wreath, as awarded to the winner at the ancient Games in Olympia



Medal as awarded to winners at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens

<b>MUSIC AND SINGING</b>	
Music and singing contests <b>were not part</b> of the programme of the Olympic Games. They were a particularity of the Delphian Games.	
Well before the appearance of sports competitions, musical competitions were organised in Delphi. They consisted of songs accompanied by the <i>cithara</i> (a type of lyre), flute solos or songs accompanied by the flute. Music and singing continued to be on the programme even after the integration of sports events. There were also poetry and theatre competitions.	



Playing the double flute, Greek vase around 470 BC



Fanfare at the 2000 Games in Sydney

<b>Activities</b>	
 	1. Referring to the programme of the modern Olympic Games, list the sports which were absent from the Ancient Games.
	2. In your opinion, why were there no team sports in the Ancient Games?

# FOCUS ON

## Wushu in China, the result of diverse influences



Wushu is a martial art originally from China – “*wu*” means war and “*shu*”, art. Hundreds of different practices have existed during its long history, but some moves, as well as the fundamental principles of good health, combat and public demonstrations of one’s art, are common to them.

### Kung fu or wushu?

In the west, the term *kung fu* is generally used for this Chinese martial art.

However, *kung fu* (or *gongfu*) literally means “skilful”. It can therefore apply to many different areas, from sport to cooking.

This mistaken usage probably comes from the very popular films of Bruce Lee where the term *kung fu* is used in the sense of “ability to fight”.

*Wushu* is the correct term.

### Work of the body... and the mind

Wushu is practised with the bare hands or with weapons such as the sabre, epee, baton and spear.



From the exhibition “Finding the Roots of Sport”

The sequence of movements (*taolou*) varies from one style to another, with a common base of about 10 movements which allow one to develop stability, coordination and even mobilise energy flow.

The psychological aspect is important in wushu: on one hand, the warrior mindset must be cultivated, with the emphasis on courage and obedience; on the other, self-control is essential in order to stay calm and concentrated, even during a fight.

### From the east to the west, exchanges between China and the ancient Greeks

Recent research focused on the links between Greek and Chinese sporting cultures reveals certain similarities. The athletes of Ancient Greece, like those who practise traditional wushu, maintained their physical shape while cultivating their minds as well.

The meeting of these two geographically distant civilisations can be explained by the Silk Road that linked Asia to Europe. The empire of Alexander the Great, which extended to central Asia, brought the training principles of the palaestra and the gymnasium to the Buddhist civilisations along the way. Similarities in terms and movements, as well as a number of archaeological finds, seem to confirm Greco-Chinese exchanges in the art of combat.

### From the Shaolin monastery to Hollywood

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the arrival of the Indian monk Boddhidarma at the Buddhist monastery of Shaolin (China, Henan province) did not pass unnoticed. Indeed, he found the monks in very poor physical condition, which, he said, prevented them from practising meditation properly. He explained hygiene and medicine to them and taught them a series of 18 exercises to keep their bodies in good health. Legend has it that the creation of modern *wushu* dates from this time. It should not be forgotten however that martial arts were already present in China as early as 2700 BC.

The Shaolin school is based on 10 commandments: exercise with constancy, improve yourself morally, do not be aggressive, respect your teachers, treat people of the same generation with kindness, do not oppress the weak by taking advantage of power, do not demonstrate martial arts unwisely, and abstain from drinking wine, eating meat and indulging in sexual pleasures.

Today, "Hollywood"-style kung fu shows aimed at tourists are organised not far from the monastery of the Shaolin monks. The monks themselves perform twice a year in other countries.



### **A modern sport**

Wushu comprises two styles: traditional and modern. While the first promotes the passing down of ancestral knowledge and a philosophical practice, the second is established as a modern sport, somewhere between gymnastics and dance. Wushu has an International Federation (recognised by the International Olympic Committee, IOC), a system of marking and championships. It is practised on the five continents and has more and more followers. *Sanshou* is the official combat sport of modern wushu. Its rules take into account a wide variety of punches, kicks, throws and sweeps.

<b>Activities</b>	
	1. <i>Wushu</i> has many movements whose names are linked to an animal. Using the internet, look up five names and their meanings.
	2. Using the internet, look up the history of <i>wushu</i> or the legend of Shaolin. Today, the Shaolin Buddhist monastery is known worldwide and attracts many tourists. What are the advantages and the disadvantages of such media exposure?
	3. Draw a link between the Ten Commandments of the Shaolin school and the charter or rules of your school.
	4. Look for the dates of <i>wushu</i> performances by Shaolin monks in your country, and, if you have the opportunity, go to see them.

# FOCUS ON

## Capoeira in Brazil: between game and combat



Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art, characterised by its kicks, jumps and feints, as well as its spirit of improvisation and sense of rhythm. It is a sport which develops strength, suppleness, balance and coordination.

Capoeirists “play” together, rather than fighting, and their interaction is known as a “game”. Capoeira is accompanied by percussion, songs and hand-clapping. While waiting their turn, the participants form a circle, known as a *roda*, which delimits the area in which the game is played.

The *ginga* is the basic step which guides the capoeirists and creates rhythmic, continual movement on the ground. The *ginga* is the basis from which actions and reactions are initiated (jumps, blows, etc.).

### A product of slavery becomes a means for promoting culture

Capoeira is a product of Afro-Brazilian culture. It was born among the populations of African slaves who worked in Brazil’s sugar cane plantations or mines.

The extremely difficult living conditions of the slaves pushed them into developing a combat technique to defend themselves and allow them to stand up to their masters. As they were not allowed to carry weapons, their combat movements were based on gestures carried out in their work cutting sugar cane or breaking rocks. This allowed them to develop their art of combat as they went about daily life. The end result was a sort of dance, made up of spectacular kicks and jumps and accompanied by music and singing. The game thus seemed inoffensive to the Portuguese colonial masters, while it was really a preparation for combat.



Maculelê. This dance, practised with machetes or sticks, is sometimes introduced into the game of capoeira

In 1890, capoeira was banned after being used by criminal gangs in confrontations with the police. Nearly 50 years went by before it was authorised again and recognised as an essential element of Brazilian culture.

The emergence of a cultural movement emanating from Afro-Brazilian communities encouraged the revival of formerly marginalised practices like capoeira. Today, not only can capoeira claim the status of a national sport in Brazil, but it is also widely practised around the world.

## How can modern capoeira be defined?



The *berimbau*, a musical instrument that initiates the *roda*, and indicates the rhythm and tempo

### A martial art?

Some movements take their inspiration from Asian martial arts. In the spirit of capoeira, hierarchy and respect are important notions. Knowledge is imparted by the Masters.

### Dancing to music?

Music accompanies all the movements. Singing gets the energy going, which is necessary for a good game.

### A game?

There is no winner. The aim is to produce a satisfying game: other participants are neither enemies nor opponents, but partners.

Activities	
	1. What musical instruments accompany capoeira? Make a list and describe them.
	2. Do you know any other sports where music plays an important role? Show what place music has in these sports.
	3. The trousers worn by the capoeirists are called <i>abada</i> and the belt (whose colour varies) <i>corda</i> . What other sports use different coloured belts? Draw up a list, identifying the meaning of each colour.

# III - The rites of sport

*There is no religion without rites or ceremonies. (Henri Bergson, philosopher)*

*Rites serve to distinguish the sacred from the profane. (Emile Durkheim, sociologist)*

## 1. What is a rite?

Baptism, circumcision, bar-mitzvah, marriage, Christmas, New Year, Ramadan ... all these are rituals which mark the life of an individual and society.

Such events are rites which accompany or permit a transformation or progression in life.

Activity	
	1. Add to the above list of rites using ancient or modern, sporting or warring rites from your own country or elsewhere.

Within a culture, **rites** are social activities, a collection of codified and formalised actions which are full of meaning. They are often associated with the supernatural, with magic or religion.

In some societies, physical activity plays a large role in the funeral, coming-of-age or other ceremonial rites (such as ensuring a good harvest or bringing rain). Such rites hold sacred and religious significance.

In our contemporary societies, rites are still alive and well, in sport as in other activities!

Sport can contain rites:

- in its celebration ...

Examples of some rites from the Olympic Games:



Several months before the Games begin, the Olympic flame is lit in a ceremony held on the site of ancient Olympia (Greece)



Brought by relay-runners into the stadium where the Games are being held, the flame is then used to light the ceremonial cauldron, which remains alight for the duration of the Games



The Parade of Nations

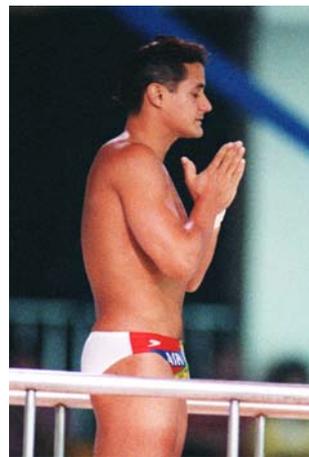


The arrival of the Olympic flag in the stadium



An athlete pronounces the Olympic oath, holding the flag with one hand

- in its practice (an athlete may make a particular gesture before or after a competition)



In moments of quiet concentration, the public ceases to exist

 	<p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>1. Based on the definition and quotations above, look for rites in the games and sports activities that you know or practise.</p>
---	---

## 2. Links between sport and religion

There are similarities between sporting ceremonies and religious ones. The succession of rites in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games bears a certain similarity to that of a religious ceremony.

Behind the objective, rational and measurable practice of sport lies the search for access to a further reality, a quest for the sacred. We can find rites in the practices of games and sports, and these can help us to understand a society or culture.



The flame-lighting ceremony at Olympia is carried out by actresses in the role of priestesses

### Activities



1. Is it true that sport has become a religion? Do you think it should be? Organise a debate on the subject.



2. Cut out a series of articles from the sports pages of various newspapers. Study the titles, words and images used. What do they tell you? Do sporting journalists use vocabulary from other areas (religion, the military...)?



3. Choose an article and highlight all the words that could be linked to religious or sacred imagery. What effect is the journalist trying to achieve by using these words, and how does the reader interpret the article?

According to the ethnologist Christian Bromberger, a rite is a series of practices and words which implies:

- a break from daily routine,
- a specific setting (church, mosque or temple) in space and time,
- a programmed, cyclical scenario,
- the use of specific objects,
- an obligation to participate,
- a system of symbols which give meaning to the ritual practice.

### Activity



1. Based on this typology, identify what could be seen as religious in a football match. Do the same for the Olympic Games.

## 3. Rites of passage

In many human societies, rites of passage, or initiation rites, mark the biological and social changes an individual's life.

A rite is a way of performing a transformation on a person.

It most often takes place in three stages, which can be illustrated with the image of the threshold:

- before the threshold: moment of separation and preparation when the individual is isolated from the group
- crossing the threshold: part of the transition when the ritual or test takes place
- beyond the threshold: return to the group or integration into a new group.

In sport, a competition is a test or transition.  
 We find within it rites which allow this transition to take place.

*“Each Olympic Games is a great rite of passage, in which millions and millions of people are, so to speak, taken on a voyage: away from their routine and daily lives; through a special time and space; and then returned. Some, like the athletes, who are now “Olympians”, are changed permanently by this voyage.”*  
 (John MacAloon, professor at the University of Chicago).



Athletes from all over the world – and their luggage! – arrive at the Olympic Village

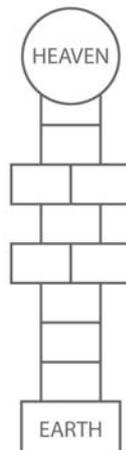
**Activities**



1. What is your experience of transitional moments?  
 Think of an important event in a sport you practise or a school exam you are going to sit. Answer the following questions in relation to it:
  - What are my rituals (actions) and efforts to prepare myself for the event?
  - Where do these rituals come from? Who taught or passed them on to me?
  - At what point do I actually begin the competition?
  - What marks this transition?
  - How do I show my fear or anxiety when I feel it?
  - What do I do to relax and concentrate?
  - What word or expression best describes the final hour before an event?
  - How do I feel after the event?
  - What is my attitude and behaviour after an event (do I want to be alone or with the group)?



2. Hopscotch  
 Hopscotch simulates a series of tests between “Hell” (the earth) below and “Heaven” above. Played all over the world, it represents an individual initiation journey. The most common form of hopscotch in Europe consists of using the foot to push a marker over a course drawn on the ground.
  - Use internet or look in a book on games around the world to find different types of hopscotch and their rules.
  - Look up how the word hopscotch is translated into other languages and the dialects of your region.
  - Invent a new form of hopscotch (think up rules and criteria), draw it and create it.



## 4. Habits, rituals and routines

Rites are linked to sacred and religious practices. In our societies, these terms have taken on another meaning. Rather than talking about “profane rites”, we use the words habit, ritual or routine. Like rites, these are regulated, unchanging practices.

### Rituals for success

A match or event begins long before the whistle or starting gun sounds. Each athlete prepares in their own way and at their own pace. Everyone has their “little habits”, a routine they repeat before each event. As the person who wins would probably say “It’s irrational but it works!”.

A recent advertisement for mineral water featured the French football (soccer) star Zinedine Zidane. It went like this:

“First the left sock, then the right one, then the left boot, ... and a mouthful of XXX. Every time.”

According to the advertisement, this is how Zidane prepares for his football matches...

Such habits and rituals allow athletes to focus their attention on one thing, and reduce the anxiety which they may feel before an event. But they may also have the opposite effect if it is not possible to carry out the ritual!



Everyone has their own way of preparing for the race



German snowboarder Katherina Himmeler has a mascot – a “Marsupilami” - stuck to her board. (2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City)

### Activities



#### 1. “Ritual” object

- Do you have an object that you always carry with you for an event or competition ?
- Is a mascot a ritual object? What is the point of it?
- Why is there a mascot for every Olympic Games?
- Is a mascot a symbol?



One of the two mascots of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens



## 2. Your own habits or rituals

- Why do you think these will help you succeed?
- Compare your own habits with those of your class mates.
- How do you explain not winning if you have done everything, rational or irrational, in order to succeed?

## 5. Magic rites

Despite the best efforts of reason and science, the human mind and nature still contain unexplained mysteries. People have always tried to understand the inexplicable.

Magic is the belief in the existence of living beings (gods or spirits) who live in parallel with the visible world and can interact with the magician or wizard to obtain knowledge that cannot be accessed otherwise.

In Ancient Greece, magic corresponded to a collection of practices which enabled those who knew them to understand divine mysteries and achieve perfection (e.g. Medea).

Some magic rites are still used in traditional games and sports.

### Activities



1. Who was Medea? What powers did she have? Use internet to find out.



2. Find out about some of the magic rites used in sport, such as teams who carry out certain rites or magic practices before matches.



3. In the photo below you can see the magic powder used by wrestlers in Niger. What do you think this powder is made of and how does it become "magic"? What are the powers or knowledge a wrestler tries to acquire?



From the exhibition "Finding the Roots of Sport"

# FOCUS ON

## Japanese Sumo, a way of life



Sumo is Japan's national sport. It is a form of wrestling whose origins go back more than 1,500 years. Sumo wrestlers are characterised by their size and the belt they wear, the *mawashi*.

The aim of a sumo bout is to make one's opponent fall or touch the ground with any part of his body, or throwing him out of the wrestling ring (*dohyo*). To achieve this, different holds are used; these include pushing, throwing, pulling, grabbing and even striking the opponent.



### Professional sumo, guardian of tradition

Sumo attracts many competitors both in Japan and abroad. Wrestlers can be either professional or amateur. The Japanese Sumo Association in Tokyo governs the professional side of the sport and ensures that the traditions and values inherent to sumo are respected and maintained. The world of professional sumo operates on a fairly strict kind of caste system and remains a relatively closed aristocracy. It is only during tournaments that it is – at least in part – revealed to the public.



### Living gods

There is a strong sacred element in sumo. In the past, bouts were seen as an opportunity to intercede with the gods to ensure a good harvest. Today, sumo retains rituals which recall this relationship with the divine. These rituals give sumo an aura of mystery, which heightens the interest and curiosity of the public. A wrestler is regarded as an initiate, and the higher his rank, the greater the admiration, or even veneration, of the public. In Japan, the top wrestlers are regarded as living gods.

Master Fujishima

### Ceremonies and ritual movements

Before bouts, ceremonies consisting of a series of rituals take place. According to their rank, the wrestlers parade on the *dohyo* wearing a heavy silk apron, the *kesho-mawashi*.

The highest-ranked wrestlers wear, over their apron, a massive rope which is tied at the back and has paper strips hanging in a zigzag pattern at the front. These are religious symbols found in Shinto temples.



Once they come face-to-face, the wrestlers still have a number of rituals to perform:

- throwing salt on the *dohyo* to purify the ground
- clapping their hands to attract the attention of the gods
- holding their arms out, palms upward, to show that they are carrying no weapons
- lifting one leg after the other and stamping on the ground to drive away evil spirits.



At the end of the bouts, the bow dance expresses the wrestlers' satisfaction.

## Learning humility



The pupil Minemura

A wrestler's career begins around the age of 15 or 16. The apprentice joins a stable (*heya*) where he receives instruction from a Master. Starting at 5 a.m., each day is devoted not just to training, but also to domestic duties such as housework and preparing meals.

### Objective: round stomach and big thighs

To achieve the much-desired shape of a sumotori, there is only one solution: eating *chanko-nabe*, a meat or fish stew served with vegetables and large amounts of rice.

Each pupil goes through difficult moments, which he must learn to deal with without complaining:

- it is not easy to gain weight: to achieve this, wrestlers must eat specially designed meals
- the exercises are intensive, and sometimes painful, as a combination of suppleness, agility, strength and endurance is required
- falls on the hard floor of clay and sand cause many injuries.

In the *heya*, the pupil learns to respect the hierarchy by serving older or more experienced wrestlers. This is part of his job and his education. Once he becomes an experienced wrestler, he will be able to appreciate properly the services he receives from others.



Minemura gets ready to take the Master's towel

### The Master's strictness helps the pupil towards excellence

To become a good wrestler, the training must be both physical and mental. A pupil may be hit during his training. The aim is to make him angry, to provoke his fighting spirit and force him to give the best of himself. A blow is regarded as an encouragement to reach the higher ranks of sumo.

Activities	
	1. Perform research on Japanese culture and its values. Based on what you find, explain why, in your opinion, sumo is so popular among the Japanese.
	2. An ideal of beauty? Look for images which show athletes' bodies which are very different (athletics: 100m, marathon, swimming and Greco-Roman wrestling, for example). Compare these bodies with that of a sumotori. Comment (in writing or verbally) on your observations. How does a sport "sculpt" the body? Which parts of the body more developed than others?

# FOCUS ON

## Senegalese wrestling – the power of rituals at the service of a national sport



Wrestling “with strikes” is a national sport in Senegal, and is even more popular than football! It is a bare-handed combat technique practised mainly in the capital of Dakar.

### Wrestling popularity

The wrestling season starts around October-November and finishes at the end of July or beginning of August. Covered by television and the daily newspapers, the bouts always take place on Sundays and attract thousands of spectators. Seats can be very expensive, depending on the reputation of the wrestlers.

### A world of professionals

Young talents are sought out at night-time bouts in districts called *mpatte*. If they wish to turn professional, the wrestlers must become members of a stable. The stable issues their permits and takes care of contracts and insurance.

Becoming a professional wrestler involves:

- a contract
- a salary
- the application of rules
- the presence of sponsors
- media interest in the bouts
- daily training.

### Wrestling stables

There are some 23 stables in Dakar, each one with about 100 wrestlers.

There is a great deal of rivalry between them!

### No fights without mystical preparation

In Senegalese wrestling, mystical preparation is as important as physical training. Marabouts (Muslim religious figures), witch doctors (traditional healers) and travelling poets and musicians (who pass on traditions orally, and who sing the praises of the person they are serving) are part of the wrestler’s universe, and accompany him throughout his career.

A wrestler does not hesitate to travel long distances in order to find good marabouts. The marabouts say prayers, make sacrifices, and break eggs to enhance the wrestler’s chances of winning, make him popular and so on. The witch doctors make the lucky charms – known as *gris-gris* – that protect him and make him invincible, and the travelling poets/musicians compose songs in his honour. Before a bout, the mystical preparation can last more than an hour.

### No fights without rituals

Rituals are inseparable from Senegalese wrestling. They not only add to the spectacle of the bouts, but they are also an integral part of wrestling.

The wrestler is accompanied by about 20 people (25 maximum). The way he enters the arena is dictated by the marabout, who tells him whether to pass through the stands, over a wall or some other way. Once in the arena, the wrestler, dressed in multi-coloured loincloths, starts to dance. He approaches the tom-toms and uses the energy transmitted by the music to “activate” the *gris-gris* he is carrying.



The famous wrestler Tapha Gueye “activating” his *gris-gris*

The wrestler then starts to chant a “back”, listing the names of all the opponents he has beaten in previous bouts. Such chants are used to intimidate the opponent and impress the public. Each wrestler has his own repertoire, and the originality of the backs can sometimes contribute to his celebrity.

After removing his loincloths, the wrestler proceeds to the purification stage. He douses himself in water blessed by the marabout, which is contained in a *canari* (a terracotta pot).

The bout can then begin.



The Senegalese population is composed of several ethnic groups (wolof, diola, sérère, lébou, etc.) According to their origin, the wrestlers introduce into their rituals movements or objects that are characteristic of their ethnic group. A paddling movement, for example, suggests lébou fishermen.

The dances performed in the arena have choreography that is specific to wrestling. They are not found in any other context.

The same goes for the chants: wrestling has its own repertoire.

### Traditions enlivened to attract media coverage?

The requirements of modernity do not seem to have taken away the traditional aspect of the bouts. However, with an increased audience, and with the presence of westerners among the spectators, for example, the rituals can only be understood by insiders. For the others, the chants, choreography and ritual movements take on a folk dimension and are appreciated only as a show. If we compare this situation to the Naadam games, we can see that here too tradition coexists with change, and that this situation does not prevent in the slightest wrestlers from undertaking their traditional training seriously and sincerely.

Activities	
	1. Choose the traditional sport that has the most instant appeal for you. Try to explain the reasons for your choice. Did the country in which the sport is practised influence you? What are the most exotic, the most strange, the most unusual aspects of the sport you have chosen ? Make a list.
	2. Identify the traditional sport or sports in your country. What relationship do you have with this/these sport(s)? Do you know the names of the stars of this/these sport(s)? Do you go to the competitions? Do you practise this/these sport(s), or would you like to? Organise a discussion to evaluate the role of traditional sport in your country, or the role you would like to see it have.

## IV - The values of sport

Sport is a microcosm of all that is positive and negative in society. This means that all the features and qualities of society, as well as its less pleasant aspects, are reflected in the sporting world.

- Is it fair to say that in our society sport is based on the values of **commitment, brotherhood, team spirit, respect, progression** and **exceeding oneself**?
- Why do some people claim that sport encourages competitiveness, the race for profit, consumerism and violence?

Activities	
	1. Define the terms listed in the two questions above (commitment, respect, competitiveness, etc.). Then organise a debate based on the two points of view they represent.

	2. Based on the definitions above, decide what <i>your</i> values are. Can you apply them to the games and sports activities that you practise? How?
---	--

### What is a value?

What I consider important in life, that which helps me decide what is right or wrong, for myself and for others... and which cannot be bought.

	3. Find other definitions of what a value is and then create your own definition. Give examples to support your definition.
---	---

### 1. Conflicts of values

In an ideal world, individual values would be acceptable for (and accepted by) the whole of society. However, there are often oppositions, which can generate conflicts.

Activities	
	1. For example, the coach of a national team identifies a talented basketball player in a school playground. He offers the player the opportunity to train with the national team. The young player refuses saying that he plays basketball for pleasure and that competition does not interest him. His classmates tease him. What are the values in opposition in this situation?
	2. Give an example of a conflict of values that you have experienced in a game situation. As a group, think of possible ways of overcoming this conflict. In reality, how was this conflict managed?

### 2. Universal values

Not all people have the same values. Values are linked to a given social circle, a culture or to personal interests.

Some people favour success, money, winning or competition. Others prefer friendship, solidarity, respect and generosity.

The States and persons who have chosen to live as a democracy by respecting human rights have theoretically a base of common values: equality, tolerance, respect, humanity, honesty, fairness and liberty.

In this way, sport brings together democratic values.



From the exhibition "Finding the Roots of Sport"

**Activities**

1. On entering the exhibition, visitors find themselves face-to-face with a list of words. Here are some of them: *unity, peace, globalisation, opponent, emotion, religion, symbol, respect, fair play, folklore*. Which words refer to values? What can you say about these in relation to sport?

2. Illustrate each value through a situation that you know or have experienced in the field of sport.

3. What are the values illustrated in this photograph?



4. As a class, can you come to an agreement on the common values for sport?

- List the values that we ought to find in sport.
- Agree on the five most important values.
- Give a definition for each value that is accepted by everyone.
- Why is this not an easy exercise?

### 3. Sporting ethics



Rivalry doesn't mean not showing courtesy and respect towards one's opponent

Ethical behaviour is behaviour that is not only governed by the law and rules.

More simply, behaving ethically means distinguishing between what is the right thing to do and what one has the right to do.

#### Ethics

Refers to all values shared at a given time by the members of a community, which are illustrated in their attitudes and their behaviour.

Activities	
	1. Examine the following phrase: “what is right to do and what I have the right to do” What are the different meanings of the word “right” that it plays upon?
	2. Find newspaper articles on sport featuring examples of ethical and non-ethical behaviour.

The UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (1978) states in Article 7.1 that, “Top-class sport and sport practised by all must be protected against any abuse. The serious dangers with which phenomena such as violence, doping and commercial excesses threaten its moral values, image and prestige, pervert its very nature and change its educative and health promoting function.”

Activities	
 	1. What are the abuses that we currently see in sport? Give examples.
	2. How can we fight these abuses?
	3. On <a href="http://www.swissolympic.ch">www.swissolympic.ch</a> or <a href="http://www.fairplay.ch">www.fairplay.ch</a> , you will find the Sports Ethics Charter (in FR, DE, IT) and its seven principles. Choose the three principles you consider most important. In relation to a sport you know well, explain what encourages or limits their application.

## 4. Olympic values

The **Olympic spirit** is based on a number of **values** which have been developed by athletes at all levels as well as ordinary men and women in their daily lives.

### Extracts from the Olympic Charter (2004 edition)

Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of the good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.

The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.

Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.  
(*Fundamental Principles 1, 2 and 4*)

This is first expressed on an individual level by:

- knowing oneself: discovering one’s possibilities and limits
- the spirit of mutual support: helping one other by being there, by sharing experience and understanding
- excellence: giving the best of oneself
- fair play: respecting one’s opponents and the rules

then, on a more global level, for the whole of mankind, through actions aiming:

- to give access to sports practice for all, with no distinction regarding race or religion
- to encourage world peace
- to build a better world.



Olympic flag: the five interlinked rings represent the union of the five continents and the gathering of athletes from the whole world for the Games. Among the colours of the rings, every nation will find at least one of the colours of its flag. The Olympic rings symbolise the universality of the Olympic Movement



Olympic Games Closing Ceremony with the flags of all the delegations

Symbol of the Olympic Truce: a dove of peace with the Olympic flame in the background. This symbol represents one of the IOC's ideals and challenges: building a peaceful and better world through sport



To sum up, we can say that if these values are applied, sport allows us to adopt a lifestyle respectful of oneself and of others.

Activities	
	1. "Mens sana in corpore sano." What does this expression mean? What is its origin? Is it in line with the Olympic spirit?
	2. Respect promotes exchange rather than confrontation. It is perhaps also respect that can transform a match into a sports "meet"! For each of the marks of respect, give a sporting example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respecting what others say</li> <li>• respecting one's physical and psychological integrity</li> <li>• respecting one's emotions and those of others</li> <li>• accepting one's errors and respecting those of others</li> <li>• ... (complete the list)</li> </ul>
	3. Choose a sport that you practise or know well. What are the differences between professional practice and amateur practice of this sport? Are there any values which tend to disappear with professionalism? Why do you think this may occur?



4. The following text<sup>1</sup> defines one of the important values of Olympism and sport in general. Determine which one.

*The competitor more than anyone else in sport can set an example. He seeks to win but must not do so by any means, for example by cheating or fouling or taking drugs prohibited by rule. He must accept victory and defeat with serenity. Through his steadfast observation of the rules, his sensitivity to the spirit of competition and his constant and absolute respect at all times for the referee, team colleagues, opponents, spectators, he can illustrate to the full the meaning of.....*



5. Which value(s) do(es) the logo opposite illustrate?  
Have you already seen it somewhere?



## 5. Olympic spirit and/or competitive spirit?

It was Pierre de Coubertin, the “reviver” of the Olympic Games, who introduced their motto:

***Citius Altius Fortius***

which means “faster, higher, stronger”.

It sums up the behaviour of an athlete who seeks to attain a sporting objective: to reach or exceed his personal goals and to give the best of himself. In the Olympic spirit, one competes against the others with the aim of exploring one’s own limits, not only with the aim of winning.



### Activity



1. Analyse the Olympic motto. What are some of the different interpretations possible?



Taken to its extreme, competition in every sphere of life can only lead to conflict. Competition based on Olympic values seeks to avoid such extremes by working towards a greater understanding of oneself and of others and by aspiring to the ideal of peace.

Analyses at the anti-doping laboratory

<sup>1</sup> Extract adapted from the “Declaration on Fair Play” established by the ICSSPE in cooperation with the IOC and with the support of UNESCO

The current evolution of sport and society (in financial and commercial areas particularly) calls into question the ideas of Pierre de Coubertin and the Ancient Greek concept of sport: health, philosophy, tranquillity and beauty.

The athlete, like the spectator, remains free to choose between acceptable and unacceptable practices, according to his own judgement. The fact remains that athletes have a certain responsibility, as do other public figures, and that we expect them to set an example!



In the footsteps of champions ...

Activities	
	1. We live in a competitive society which at the same time preaches equality. Are there contradictions? Give some examples. How do you feel about them?
	2. Which sports do you practise? With what purpose? Do you have a very competitive spirit or more of a participative one like Pierre de Coubertin? Why?
	3. If sport for performance is a way of exploring one's own limits in relation to others, what is sport for pleasure? Who practises it and why?
	4. Look up the definitions of "rivalry" and "emulation" in a dictionary. How are these two words linked to competition?
	5. Has sport been hijacked by brand names? Give some examples. What are the values at stake? Should we ban advertising in sport? Why? Organise a debate.

Summary activity	
	<p>A little-known athlete has succeeded in becoming an Olympic champion. Imagine his/her triumphant return home. The following people are there to mark the occasion: his/her parents - his/her coach - a representative of the National Olympic committee - a group of sponsors - media representatives - a local member of Parliament - a former classmate that hasn't been in touch in years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imagine a role-playing exercise with these different people. Choose a situation in which they all meet together, for example, a gala dinner. What are the needs and interests (financial, commercial, emotional, sporting) of each of them? Act out the situation.</li> <li>Hold a debriefing afterwards. How did the actors feel? Analyse what happened and discuss other possible outcomes. What were the positive and negative points of the meeting for the athlete? Did the situation produce any doubts or conflicts which he/she had not anticipated?</li> </ul>

# FOCUS ON

## Traditional wrestling in Switzerland, an expression of sporting and patriotic values



Originally practised as a game or form of entertainment by the farmers and shepherds of the Swiss Pre-Alps, traditional wrestling became a sport in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

This type of wrestling is characterised by the wearing of jute shorts over the trousers. The typical starting position sees each wrestler reach behind the back of his opponent with the right hand to seize his belt, while holding the edge of his opponent's shorts with his left hand. The idea is to gain a hold while keeping one hand on the shorts.

When fighting, wrestlers seek to cause their opponent to fall - but that is not enough! Once on the ground, wrestlers continue fighting until one of the competitor's shoulders touch the ground.

### Going a round in the sawdust

Bouts are contested in a sawdust circle 10-12m in diameter and 20cm deep, which represents 300kg of sawdust and a volume of 23 m<sup>3</sup>! This natural mattress absorbs impacts and prevents injuries. Containers of water are placed close to the circle so the wrestlers can wash their hands and face between bouts.

### Wrestlers break down the barriers

Switzerland is composed of several linguistic regions, the two biggest ones being German-speaking Switzerland (the majority) and French-speaking Switzerland. People often say that communication between the two is not always easy, and that a psychological barrier (the *Röstigraben*, literally the "rösti trench") separates the two regions between which mentalities, opinions and cultural references differ.

**Rösti**  
fried potato  
cakes, a  
Swiss-German  
specialty.

As the names of certain holds indicate ("Kurz", "Brienzer", "Fusstich", "Hüfter", etc.), traditional wrestling originated in the German-speaking area. It has, however, been practised for several decades in French-speaking Switzerland, and the number of practitioners is growing. The problems referred to above do not seem to bother the wrestlers, who proclaim their membership of the larger wrestling family, irrespective of language problems or mentality differences. Strong friendships exist between wrestlers, who respect and value one another. Wrestling allows many contacts to be made and links established between German-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland.

### A school of life

Traditional wrestling is a sport which attracts enthusiasts. In addition to their professional activities, wrestlers train around six hours a week (or even double that number for the most experienced). This requires a considerable personal investment of will and strength; it is also a sign of social integration, as anyone who practises wrestling belongs to a club and is thereby involved in the life of his village, town or region.



Wrestling helps to build character: practising wrestling means accepting the referee's decisions unquestioningly. It also means knowing how to accept defeat! Anyone who shows anger by refusing to shake his opponent's hand has a quarter of a point deducted.

It is likewise extremely important to pay attention to one's opponent before a bout: the two wrestlers must look each other in the eyes and shake hands. After the bout, it is the winner who brushes the sawdust off the loser's back before shaking his hand once again.

Fair play, respect, solidarity and good humour are all key values a wrestler is required to have: just being in good shape is not enough!

*"There are no real winners or losers, as the real winner is friendship."*

Juste Monnard, former President of the Vaud Cantonal Wrestling Association

## Traditional wrestling: a patriotic cliché or an expression of traditional values?



At all wrestling championships or Federal wrestling festivals alphorns, brass bands, flag-throwers and bell-ringers abound. They bear witness to the rural traditions of daily life in the mountains and countryside; the music and the singing recall the pastoral origins of traditional wrestling. Some people regard this kind of wrestling as quaint folklore or the expression of a somewhat outdated patriotism. For others, it is a link with the values of a country whose traditions are essentially agricultural or alpine. The prizes on offer underline this link with tradition: they vary from a cow to a foal, from a bell to hand-made wooden objects.



### Activities



1. If you live in Switzerland, look for posters announcing wrestling festivals (from May to September) and attend one of them. Act as a journalist and produce a report on the event. Then write your article - you could also do a photo reportage. If you live in another country, do the same thing with a traditional sport practised in your region.



2. If you are not familiar with Swiss traditions and symbols, look on the internet for information on: alphorns, yodelling, flag-tossing or hornuss.



A crown of oak leaves is awarded to the champion of the Federal wrestling festival

# Recommended references

## **Finding the Roots of Sport: - DVD-Rom\***

Age: 12 and over

Olympic Museum, FED, 2005

SFR 30.00

This interactive DVD-Rom brings to life the traditional sports treated in the educational kit. It contains commented film sequences of the demonstrations which took place at the Olympic Museum during the summer of 2005 and interviews with the various sports practitioners. Print-quality photos, as well as the full text of the teacher's kit, are also included.

## **Olympism**

### **[www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)**

History of the Olympic Movement and the Games, information on IOC organisation and current sporting news.

A large number of documents on the Olympic Movement and the Games are produced by the Olympic Museum and Studies Centre.

One of the principal resources available for schools is an **educational kit** covering the principal themes of Olympism (the Games in Ancient Greece, the Modern Games, the Olympic Movement, Olympic symbols, the Olympic flame and torch relay). It can be consulted and downloaded at [www.olympic.org/education](http://www.olympic.org/education)

The IOC Library, situated on level -1 of the Olympic Museum, is one of the most significant information centres on Olympism and the world of sport.

The Library has put together a collection of bibliographies which can be accessed online under the "PASSION" link on the [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org) homepage

**The majority of works listed below are available from the IOC Library.**

Girginov, Vassil and Parry, Jim. **The Olympic Games Explained: a student guide to the evolution of the modern Olympic Games**, Routledge, London, 2005.

Provides an overview of Olympism from its origins in Ancient Greece to the modern-day phenomenon of the Olympic Games. Specially adapted for student users.

De Moragas, Miquel et al. **Olympic Ceremonies – historical continuity and cultural exchange**, Bellaterra, UAB ; Lausanne, Olympic Museum, 1996.

Collection of papers given at the International Symposium on Olympic ceremonies held in Barcelona and Lausanne in November 1995.

## Sports in general

### **Sport – Enjeu global\* (available in French, German and Italian only)**

DDC, Education and Development Foundation, CT of charities, 2005

16 posters, in colour, A2, with teacher's guide

Age 12 and over

SFR 18.00

More than a billion people around the world practise sport regularly. This series of 16 posters explores a variety of themes in relation to sport (human rights, peace, development, integration and exclusion, the environment) in order to help students fully understand the phenomenon that is sport. The teacher's guide offers suggestions for class activities, further information and useful links.

### **Sports, un monde en mouvement\* (available in French, German and Italian only)**

Student's worksheet

CT, FED, DDC, 2005

Age 8 -12

SFR 0.50 per copy

A set of eight worksheets which use games and portraits of young people from different countries to bring students into contact with daily life and culture in other places. The teacher's guide is included at no extra cost. It can also be downloaded from [www.sport2005education.ch](http://www.sport2005education.ch)

Brockman, Wils *et al.* (ed.). **Games and Sports**, (The Roots of Civilisation, vol.5), Danbury, Grolier Educational Corporation, 1993.

Compares and contrasts the different forms of leisure originating from European civilisations.

Council of Europe. **The significance of sport for society : health, socialization, economy**, Council of Europe Press (Sport), 1995.

Corbett, Doris *et al.* **Unique Games and Sports around the World**, Westport, Greenwood Press, 2001

Reference guide to traditional games and sports the world over. Each sport or game is presented in detail, including rules, equipment, number of players, cultural context, etc.

Laker, Anthony. (ed.) **The Sociology of Sport and Physical Education**, London / New York, Routledge Falmer, 2002.

An introductory reader to a vast subject.

### **UNESCO International Year for Sport and Physical Education 2005**

[http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=38192&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=38192&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Education home page which contains links to sport and physical education initiatives in 2005. (In English).

### **<http://www.sport2005.ch>**

The Swiss site for the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005. (In French, German and Italian).

### **<http://sport2005education.ch>**

The educational campaign "*Sport – enjeu global*" is centred on social and political aspects of sports development. Reference material can be downloaded from the "materiel" section. (In French, German and Italian).

### **<http://www.baspo.admin.ch>**

Important site with numerous links to current initiatives in the area of sport and physical education in Switzerland. Contains links to the Federal Office of Sport's multimedia library, which offers the possibility of ordering teaching material online.

## Individual sports

### Football (soccer)

#### Football mondial\*

DVD

CT, FED, DDC, Films pour un seul Monde, 2005

Age 10 and over

SFR 60.00 (Public libraries, Fr. 100.–)

The five films in this set use football as a starting point to explore some very different themes, such as games in general, human rights issues and intercultural exchange. They offer students the possibility of getting acquainted with girls and boys in Africa, in Asia (young Tibetan monks) and in South America, as they evoke their hopes, dreams and plans for the future.

### Wrestling

Petrov, Raiko. **Olympic Wrestling throughout the millenia**, Budapest, IAWF, FILA, 1993.

Presents the history of wrestling, generally considered to be one of the most ancient sports.

### Senegalese wrestling

Bordas, Philippe. **L'Afrique à poings nus**, Paris, éd. Seuil, 2004.

Photographic essay and diary of meetings between the author and the worlds of Senegalese wrestling and Kenyan boxing.

### Swiss wrestling

**Die Wagsten und die Besten des Landes** (The Bravest and Best in the Country). Film by Matthias von Gunten, Suisse, 2003

### Sumo

Small brochure published by the Japan Sumo Association (in English, available at the IOC Library during the exhibition *Finding the Roots of Sport*)

### Wushu

Site of the International Wushu Federation

[www.iwuf.org](http://www.iwuf.org)

### Kurash

Site of the International Kurash Association

[www.kurash-ika.org](http://www.kurash-ika.org)

### Tug-of-war

Site of the International Tug of War Federation

[www.tugofwar-twif.org](http://www.tugofwar-twif.org)

## Culture

Huizinga, Johan. **Homo ludens, a study of the play-element of culture**, London, Routledge, 1998 (re-edition).

Fundamental work on the unique characteristic of human beings: their capacity to play.

MacAloon, John J. (éd.) **Rite, drama, festival, spectacle: rehearsals toward a theory of cultural performance**, Philadelphia, Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984.

A study of the signification of cultural performances in our society.

**<http://www.globaleducation.ch>**

The Foundation for Education and Development is the Swiss national resource centre for education within a global perspective. It offers support to teachers of all levels and seeks to encourage educational approaches which embrace sustainable development and world solidarity. Intercultural exchange is one of its principal themes.

***The documents marked with an asterisk (\*) are on sale at the Education and Development Foundation (FED), Avenue de Cour 1, 1007 Lausanne, tel. +41 21 612 0081, fax +41 21 612 00 82, fed@lausanne.globaleducation.ch***

## **Imprint**

Publishers: **Olympic Museum and Education and Development Foundation**

Authors: **Myriam Bouverat and Anne Chevalley**

Translation: **IOC**

Graphic design: **Fiona Prezioso**

Printing: **IOC**

Photo credits:

**IOC, R. Juilliart, J.-P. Maeder, M. King, G. Locatelli, T. Kishimoto, H. Sugimoto, W. Abe, Olympic Museum Collections, H. Tobler, A. Chevalley, T. Kishimoto, J. Donatsch, T. Mifune, Y. Nagaya, J.-J. Strahm, B. Torres, M. Drakopoulou, C. Jenny, S. Tanaka, C. Nicholson, M. Bouverat.**

**Getty Images / IOC, S. Munday**

**International Kurash Association**

**This document is also available in French and German.**

**© IOC, Olympic Museum / FED 2005**