

# THE LEGEND OF THE MINOTAUR

The Minotaur in Greek Legend had the head of a bull and the body of a man. The Minotaur lived on the island of Crete. Legend has it that every nine years King Aegeus had to send seven young men and women to be devoured by the Minotaur. Theseus was the king's son.

**Theseus:** *Father, why do you look so sad?*

**King Aegeus:** *The time has come again to send seven young men and women to be slaughtered by the evil Minotaur.*

**Theseus:** *That's unfair. Send me. I will go as one of the young men.*

Theseus sets sail with thirteen others to the island of Crete. When they arrive they are dressed in the finest robes and a feast is prepared before they are sent to the gated maze where the Minotaur lived.

**Theseus:** *I do not recognise your beautiful face. Who are you?*

**Ariadne:** *My name is Princess Ariadne. You are a very handsome stranger, what is the purpose of this visit?*

**Theseus:** *I am to be fed to the horrible Minotaur.*

**Ariadne:** *Are you not afraid?*

**Theseus:** *No. I will do what I have to do for my father the King of Athens.*

**Ariadne:** *If you will marry me and take me back to Athens then I will help you escape from the Minotaur.*

**Theseus:** *How can you help me?*

**Ariadne:** *Take this ball of silken thread. When you enter the maze in search of the Minotaur, tie the thread to the inside of the door and carefully unravel it as you go along. That way, you will easily find your way out of the maze if you survive. Good luck.*

The next day the maze is unlocked and Theseus is the first to be put inside. Everyone stands outside and listens carefully.

**Theseus:** *Right, I'll take the thread and tie it to the inside of the door. Now, where did I hide my sword?*

Theseus explores the maze holding his sword ready in one hand and unravelling the silk thread carefully with the other.

**Theseus:** *I can hear heavy breathing, is it coming from down here?*

Theseus enters a large cave and sees the terrifying Minotaur, which is half man and half bull.

**Theseus:** *Take that, and that and that, arh and that! Look at my sword, it is covered in blood. Where is the silk thread? I'll follow it back to the door.*

Outside the door Theseus finds Ariadne waiting for him.

**Ariadne:** *Are you hurt?*

**Theseus:** *Just a little.*

**Ariadne:** *Then take me back to Athens and we shall be married as soon as possible.*



# THE LEGEND OF THE MINOTAUR

## Section A

Choose the best word or group of words to fit the passage and put a ring around your choice.

The Minotaur had the head of a bull and the body of a

- 1    **woman.**                      **girl.**                      **boy.**                      **man.**

The Minotaur lived on the island of

- 2    **Creek.**                      **Crack.**                      **Crete.**                      **Crunch.**

Seven men and seven women were sent every

- 3    **seven**                      **eight**                      **nine**                      **ten**

years to be eaten by the Minotaur.

- 4    **Theseus**    **King Aegeus**    **Ariadne**                      **Minotaur**

offered to be sent to Crete. He met

- 5    **Theseus**    **King Aegeus**    **Ariadne**                      **Minotaur**

the night of the feast. She offered to help him escape from the Minotaur if he

- 6    **took a ball of thread.**                      **would marry her.**  
       **found his way out.**                      **took a sword.**

## Section B

- 1    Why was the Minotaur frightening to look at?

- 2    What does the word 'devoured' mean?

- 3    Who sent young men and woman to be devoured?

- 4    How do you think King Aegeus felt about sending his own son?

- 5    Which phrases suggests Theseus and Ariadne liked each other?

- 6    What did Ariadne want Theseus to do for her?

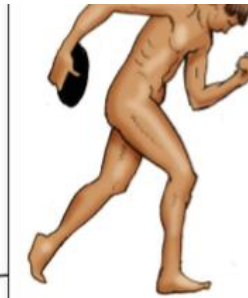
- 7    Which sentences suggest Theseus was very brave?

## Section C

Write a short story in which you have to face a fierce monster.

# THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The Olympic Games is the world's oldest athletics competition. They first took place in Olympia in Greece in 776 BC. The Ancient Greek Games ended in AD 394. The modern Olympic Games were restarted in 1896 and are now held all over the world. They were originally held once every four years at the temple of Zeus.



## Preparing for War

In the beginning Greek city-states encouraged their men to take part in a wide variety of sports as preparation for warfare. People from all over the Greek world came to watch and take part. Winners were given a wreath of leaves and a hero's welcome back home.



## The Events

Running races were held on a straight track. The pentathlon, the ultimate test for soldiers, involved running, jumping, wrestling, discus and javelin throwing by one athlete on one day. Boxing, wrestling, horse racing and chariot racing were all linked to the training of men for war.

## The Buildings

A fine group of buildings were erected at Olympia, which included a hotel, a gymnasium, a temple to the Greek god called Zeus and a running track. Buildings called treasuries were used by the City States to display their finest works of art during the running of the games.



## The Sacred Truce

Messengers would invite athletes from all over the Greek world to attend these events. Warfare was halted for the period of the games so that all could travel to the games in safety. This Sacred Truce lasted for one month before the games began.





# THE OLYMPIC GAMES

## Section A

Choose the best word or group of words to fit the passage and put a ring around your choice.

The Olympic Games is the world's oldest

1 climbing athletics swimming motoring

competition. Greek city-states encouraged men to take part in sports to prepare for

2 competition. holidays. warfare. good health.

The Sacred Truce, a period of no fighting, lasted for

3 one two three four

month/s before the games began. Boxing, wrestling, horse racing and

4 chariot racing fence building trench digging

were all linked to training men for war. A fine group of

5 shops towers flags buildings

were erected at Olympia. Buildings called treasuries were used to display their finest

6 carved statues. soldiers uniforms.  
works of art. collections of medals.

## Section B

1 Fill in the table:

Ancient Greek games first took place:	
Ancient Greek games ended:	
Modern Olympic Games introduced:	
Olympic Games originally held every:	Years

2 What were Ancient Olympic winners given to wear?

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3 Who invited the athletes to the Ancient Olympic events?

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4 What did the 'pentathlon' involve?

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5 Why do you think the 'pentathlon' was the ultimate test for soldiers?

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6 What do you understand by the phrase 'a hero's welcome'?

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7 Why do you think 'warfare was halted' for the period of the games?

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## Section C

Write an account of an imaginary race held at the Ancient Olympic games.

*Want to keep your mind healthy and your body fit? Visit the....*

# ANCIENT GREEK OLYMPIC FESTIVAL

**Where and when:**

**Time** – Midsummer

**Where** – Olympia Valley near the Temple of Zeus,  
9 miles East of Pyrgos, Greece

**Duration** – 5 days

**Following Event** – 4 years time

**Attractions include:**

Athletics

Art and sculpture exhibitions

Poetry recitals

Merchants selling food and other wares

Men only event

**You will see:**

The athletes take the Olympic oath

Grand processions, prize-giving and feasting

Winners awarded their 'wreaths of olive leaves'

**Athletic events include:**

Running races, wrestling, boxing, horse racing, the pentathlon and chariot racing

Contests for boys and men

No slaves allowed

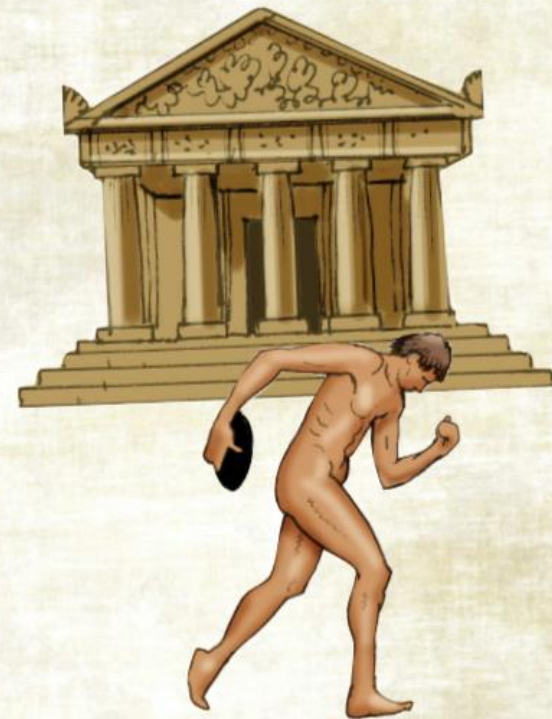
**Accommodation:**

Purpose built hotel

Camping outside the stadium

**Guaranteed  
Safe Travel  
to and from  
the Event**

**Entry Fee:  
One Silver  
Coin**



# ANCIENT GREEK OLYMPIC FESTIVAL

## Section A

Choose the best word or group of words to fit the passage and put a ring around your choice.

This poster advertising the Ancient Greek Olympic Festival contains lots of information. The games take place in

1 **early spring**      **midsummer**      **late autumn**      **winter**

near the Temple of Zeus,

2 **seven**      **eight**      **nine**      **ten**

miles east of Pyrgos, Greece. The attractions include art, poetry, food as well as

3 **swimming.**      **football.**      **tennis.**      **athletics.**

You will see the winners awarded

4 **gold medals.**      **wreaths of olive leaves.**  
**wreaths of holly leaves.**      **silver cups.**

There are contests for men and

5 **boys.**      **slaves.**      **girls.**      **women.**

You can camp outside the

6 **Temple of Zeus.**      **east of Pyrgos.**      **hotel.**      **stadium.**

The entry fee is

7 **one silver coin.**      **two silver coins.**      **three silver coins.**

## Section B

1 Where did the Olympic Festival take place?

2 How long did the event last for?

3 What does a 'merchant' do?

4 Name four different athletic events at the festival.

5 How would visiting this event help to keep your 'body fit'?

6 How would visiting this event help to keep your 'mind healthy'?

7 Only 'boys and men' were allowed to enter the athletics competitions. Why do you think this was the case?

## Section C

Design a poster encouraging people to visit your school sports day or another event organised by your school.