



# OLYMPIC DESIGN

GRADES 4-7



**EACH GAMES HAS ITS OWN LOOK AND FEEL THAT REPRESENT THE HOST CITY AND COUNTRY. THE DESIGN OF THE LOGO, MEDALS, SPORT PICTOGRAPHS, TORCH, BANNERS AND IMAGES ALL CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING EACH OLYMPICS UNIQUE. IMAGINE THAT YOU WERE TASKED WITH THE DESIGN OF AN OLYMPIC GAMES. WOULD YOU BE UP TO THE TASK?**

## **DESIGNING THE LOOK OF THE GAMES**

Winning the rights to host the Olympic Games is a big thrill for the host city. But now the work begins! The hosts have tons of things to do before the athletes arrive in a few years. One of the first things, is designing the look and feel of the Games.

Min Wang, the Design Director for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, knows the challenge. “The Olympics is the largest, most complex design project. You are branding a city; you are branding a country.” You have to show the city to the world. This starts with a logo.

So, what goes into a good Olympic logo design? The logo represents the host city and country without being too patriotic. The shapes and colours tell the story of the Games and speak to the country’s culture, history or First Peoples. It must be functional for different uses. It has to go on everything from buildings, to medals, to ball caps. It has to be clear when small and look good in a single colour.



*Tokyo City*



**SCHOOL PROGRAM**

## DESIGN PROCESS

When a city bids to host the Olympics, they include a logo in their bid book. But it is rarely the logo used for the Games. Once they win, a new logo is chosen using a design contest. Designers from around the world send in their logos. A panel of judges chooses the winning logo.

Over 14,000 logos were sent to the Tokyo 2020 logo design contest. Artists, children and even someone who was 107 years old participated in the contest. The best four logos made a short list. Then the judges chose Asao Tokolo's logo. It is called the "Harmonized Chequered Emblem".

The logo uses a chequered pattern made by repeating three types of rectangles. This tells a story of different people coming together for a celebration. He uses the same number of shapes for both the Olympic and Paralympic logos to say that all people are equal.

The patterns and colours have strong roots in Japanese history. Chequered patterns were popular during the Edo period (1603-1867). This is a time when arts and culture thrived. In Japan, making indigo blue dyes started ten centuries ago. The dyes come from plants and the process to make them is complicated. The dyes were used to make pretty cotton clothes when poorer people weren't allowed to wear silk clothes.

Once the logo is created, all the other graphics can be designed. These create the look and feel for the Games. Often the colours or parts of the logo are used. Images or traditional art from the country can also be used. These graphics are used for banners, venue backgrounds and all other designs that are seen by athletes and fans.

## THE OLYMPIC TORCH

Since the Berlin 1936 Olympic Games, the Olympic flame has been lit in Olympia, Greece and carried by torch relay to the host country. It arrives in time for the Opening Ceremony. The torches are much more complex than they used to be. Like the logo, they use shapes, colours and symbols to tell a story about the host country. Designers also have to think about other things. The torch can't be too heavy for the relay runners. It also must be easy to hold. Lastly, the flame can't go out in the rain, wind or snow.

Tokyo 2020's Olympic torch is made from pink metal. The top is shaped like the flower of a cherry tree. In Japan, the cherry blossom is a symbol of the beauty of life and a new start. The metal used to make the torch has been recycled. It comes from the temporary houses used for the people who lost their homes in the big earthquake of 2011.

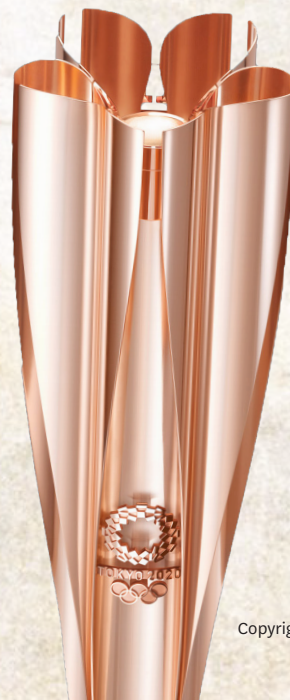
## MASCOTS

Mascots have become a much loved part of every Games. These friendly and cheerful creatures help get kids excited about the Olympics. They are a favorite at Olympic gift shops! Mascots are sold as toys and put on pins, hats and t-shirts. Olympic mascots can be animals, humans or imaginary creatures. They often have powers and a story.

Tokyo 2020 is the first Games to let kids choose the winning mascots. The mascot is named Miraitowa. It has the same blue-checked pattern as the Olympic logo. Its name combines the Japanese words "Mirai" (future) and "towa" (eternity). It has a strong sense of justice and is very athletic. The mascot's special power is to be able to move anywhere instantly.

## MAKING GAMES HISTORY

The design of the Games is part of what makes it different from other Olympics. It becomes part of Olympic history. It tells a story of the host city and country. A great design builds lasting memories and sets a mood for the athletes and fans.





## BE ORIGINAL!

Right after winning the Games, Tokyo 2020 had a logo design contest. The winning logo had a fancy “T” and used black, gold, silver and red. But there was a problem. Some people thought it looked too close to the logo from a theatre in Belgium. The Hosts decided to hold another contest to replace the first logo. This shows how important it is to be original in designs. Designers can’t copy the work of others or even make work that looks too much like other people’s art.

## DESIGNING FOR THE ATHLETES

Each Games has many design projects that create a look and feel. Sports are represented by pictographs. These are simple pictures of an athlete doing the sport. Usually there is not much detail on a pictograph because they are often used in small sizes on schedules or tickets. Sport illustrations are larger and more detailed. They try to make the athletes look heroic. Medals help tell the story of the Games. Hosts will design the medals with national art styles and materials. This helps make their medals different from all the other Olympics.



## THE OLYMPIC ART PROJECT

The PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics did something different to support the arts. They asked Olympic athletes who were also artists to create a painting of each of the winter sports. One new picture was painted each day of the 15 days of the Games. It was all part of the Olympic Art Project.



*The Olympic Art - Pyeongchang*



## Talk About It!

How are logos and designs chosen for an Olympic Games?

What makes a good Olympic logo?

Why do they have mascots?



## 1. THE LOCAL OLYMPIC GAMES

The news is just out! The biggest city in your province has just won the rights to host the Olympic Games. Once the excitement subsides, the hard work begins. There will be three design contests, and your graphic design company will bid on them all. Work in teams of 2-3 students to design the following:

**Logo:** The Organizing Committee is looking for a distinct logo that profiles the city.

They want it to represent the theme of the Games, "Coming Together in Friendship and Respect".

**Olympic Torch:** The torch relay will cross Canada.

The torch design must tell the story of Canada using shapes, colours and materials.

**Medals:** The medals must be unique. They should use the logo and tell the story of the Games.

**Write 2-3 paragraphs describing each of your designs. Tell the judges about the story of your designs and what the shapes and colours represent.**



## KOMAK

**BIRTHDAY:** December 6

**BIRTHPLACE:** Algonquin Park, Ontario

**HOBBIES:** Traveling, swimming, pin trading, giving high fives, playing sports, pursuing the Olympic journey and of course cheering on his teammates

**FAVOURITE FOOD:** Twigs and leaves from the red maple tree

**FAVOURITE COLOUR:** Maple leaf red

## ACTIVITY EXTENSION

Design two mascots for the Games. Write 2-3 paragraphs that describe their stories and personalities. Do they have special powers?



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## 2. DRAWING THE SPORTS



There is a 'pictograph' for each sport at the Tokyo Olympics. Using a simple drawing, they show the sport in action. Use the internet to find the pictographs. The pictograph style is unique to each Games, but typically it is simple and lacks detail. This is because some of their uses are for small items, like tickets and schedules.

Sport illustrations are more detailed, and their applications are bigger. The illustrations will be used on the sides of buildings, posters and banners. They often show the athlete from an interesting angle.

**Design pictographs for three sports. They should have the same style. Design a sport illustration for one of these sports.**

A large white rectangular area intended for students to draw their own pictographs and sport illustrations.

### ACTIVITY EXTENSION

What if they had Olympic Dodgeball? What if they had Olympic Four Square? *Design a pictograph and sport illustration for a playground game that you like to play.*



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