

History of the Paralympic Games

An English doctor by the name of Sir Ludwig Guttman had a dream! As a neurosurgeon, he worked with many patients who were disabled. After the Second World War, there were hundreds of young men in Austria and Germany who had lost limbs. Many of them were skiers before they were wounded and wished to continue their favorite sport. Dr. Guttman looked for a way for them to ski and compete at an international level. He wanted an event equal to the Olympic Winter Games in which athletes with disabilities could compete.

A Dream Come True

In 1948, Dr. Guttman organized the Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Games that ran parallel to the Summer Olympic Games. This event was held in England, with just a few athletes. The event was created to enhance the quality of life for people with spinal cord injuries and was the foundation for the Paralympic Games.

The first Paralympic Summer Games was held in Rome, in 1960. Four hundred athletes representing 23 countries competed in those Games. Although ski races for the disabled had been held since 1950, it was not until 1976 that the first Paralympic Winter Games were hosted in Sweden.

The number of athletes participating in Paralympic Winter Games has increased from 250 athletes in Sweden to an estimated 550 in Salt Lake City.

PARALYMPICS WINTER GAMES CHRONOLOGY

NO.	YEAR	HOST CITY
I	1976	Ornskoldsvik, Sweden
II	1980	Geilo, Norway
III	1984	Innsbruck, Austria
IV	1988	Innsbruck, Austria
V	1992	Tignes-Albertville, France
VI	1994	Lillehammer, Norway
VII	1998	Nagano, Japan
VIII	2002	Salt Lake City, Utah, USA



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Vocabulary

- 1. NEUROSURGEON:** a doctor who specializes in surgery involving the brain or spinal cord
- 2. AMPUTATE:** to remove all or a portion of a limb
- 3. PARALLEL:** with, similar, like
- 4. SPINAL CORD:** the thick cord of nerve tissue which extends from the brain down through the backbone and from which nerves branch off to various parts of the body
- 5. DISABILITY:** a physical, intellectual or sensory state that causes limitations with body function
- 6. MOBILITY IMPAIRED:** an individual who requires a wheelchair or has impaired balance when walking

Paralympic Games & History

After reading the Overview, Paralympic Winter Games and the History of the Paralympic Winter Games fact sheets, consider the following questions and activities.

Primary Grades:

LANGUAGE ARTS: Getting to Know the Paralympics

What are the Paralympic events? Select a Paralympic event. Imagine what you would see, hear and feel when attending this event? If you had the opportunity to interview a Paralympic athlete what questions would you ask? List your questions.

Who came up with the idea of the Paralympic Games? State the purpose of these Games?

SOCIAL STUDIES: The Best Place

Locate the site of each Paralympic Winter Games on a world map. List the reasons why these sites might have been selected.

P.E.: Getting Stronger

Paralympic athletes are very strong, healthy and fit. What are the many, varied things you should do each day to make sure that you stay healthy and strong. Set a goal to improve your health or fitness in some way.

P.E.: You Can Do It

Have you ever hurt your arm or leg so badly that it could not be used? What challenges did you face? What surprises did you discover? How does this help you understand the challenges of disabled athletes?

Intermediate Grades

(Adapt Primary Grade ideas)

ART: Mind, Body, Spirit

The three comma shapes called "Tae-Geuks": found on the Paralympic symbol, represent Mind, Body, and Spirit. Gather illustrations, photographs, headlines, and articles that illustrate these three ideals. Create a collage for each one.

ART: Recognizing Logos

A logo is a distinctive name or symbol designed for easy recognition. Coca-Cola and Nike have designed successful logos because most people around the world can recognize them. List other logos that are very well known. Cut out logos from magazines and newspapers or view the samples on www.thelogowizard.com and www.logo-mojo.com. Identify the logos you think are effective. What traits do they have in common? Logo designers put a lot of thought into their work. Every line and shape must have significance. Make a list of skills a person must have to be a good logo designer. Practice these skills by designing a logo for your school or family.