

Computers & Kids

NEWS

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COMPUTER
EXPLORERS®

Peace + Friendship = Olympic Spirit!

This summer's Olympic Games offer families a great opportunity for quality time and learning the central message of the games – peace and friendship! People playing and working together in peace and friendship offers a stark contrast from what families typically witness on the evening news. Use this guide to get children involved and tune in as a family on August 8th!

What are the symbols and how are they used?

Help young children understand the symbolism of the games with coloring pages of the Olympic Flag of Friends, the Olympic Torch, and more. To find coloring pages, visit First-School at <http://www.first-school.ws/activities/firststeps/olympics.htm>.

After learning about symbolism, ask your child what colors and shapes might be used to represent them or your family.

What Can A New Friend Teach Me?

Five new friends await your child at the official site of the Beijing Olympics (<http://en.beijing2008.cn/spirit/beijing2008/graphic/n214068254.shtml>) Your child will meet the five mascots, learn how they carry a message of friendship and peace to children of the world, and find out what each of their names means separately and combined. Turn your favorite mascot into a screensaver at the same site.

What Can We Learn from Friends in China?

Sites that make learning about China's culture and geography fun for young children are abundant this summer. Beyond "digging to China" at the beach, what do your children know about China? Activity Village (http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/china_for_kids.htm) offers great opportunities to try a traditional Chinese game, craft, or puzzle. Most importantly, explain to child that people are different all over the world but learning about them and from them can be a lot of fun!

I Want To Be In The OLYMPICS!

It's time again for the Olympic Games! The XXXI Olympiad begins in Beijing, China on 08/08/08. Here are some links related to this amazing international celebration.

1) What's the weather like — right now — in Beijing, China where the Olympics will take place?
Can't go to China? You can online! Visit <http://en.beijing2008.cn> and you can find the current weather, time and other facts about the summer games. You can download your own screensaver or wallpaper, or see photos of some of the athletes who will be participating. Use US Spring '08 post cards at <http://photos.beijing2008.cn>

2) Where were the first Olympics?
A) <http://www.historylink.org/learn/grades/grades/olympics.htm> you learn that Athens, Greece was the host to the first modern Olympic Summer Games, back in 1896. The very first games were held in ancient Greece in 776 B.C. to honor the Greek gods. (This site has advertising.)

3) What are the five interlocking rings used?
According to <http://www.janick.com/olympic/rings.html> the five rings represent the five major regions of the world: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

4) How do Olympic torches work, travel and stay lit?
At <http://entertainment.buzzle.com/olympic-torch.html> you learn that the torch symbolizes peace, knowledge and life. It is delivered from Greece to the host country and must stay lit the entire way! It all starts in Olympia (Greece), where a flame is ignited by the sunrays reflected off a curved mirror. Women dressed in robes, reciting these words in ancient times light the flame and pass the torch to the first runner in an Olympic torch relay that ends in the host country (this year, China). (This site has advertising.)

5) Which athlete won the most gold medals?
See <http://www.olympic.com/olympic/medals.asp> where you can see a list of all of the games that are played at the Olympics, and which ones were played on the top of water. If you have the time, keep putting around on this site. There's a lot to explore.

6) Is there a list of all Olympic medalists from over the years?
Yes. See <http://www.olympic.com/olympic/medals.asp> where you can search all the medal winners of each Olympiad.

7) True or False: Tiger Wood used to be an Olympic Sport?
True. Visit <http://www.olympic.com/olympic/medals.asp> where you can see a list of all of the games that are played at the Olympics, and which ones were played on the top of water. If you have the time, keep putting around on this site. There's a lot to explore.

Locate and print the above
Buckleitner Internet activities at
www.computerexplorers.com

Get Older Children Back to Learning on the Internet!

Warm up your older child's thinking cap before the school year begins with an Olympic lesson plan of their choice. Visit Teachology at http://www.teachology.com/teachers/lesson_plans/physical_ed/olympic/ for choices such as researching one Olympic athlete's lifetime achievements, writing a letter to Jesse Owens, or looking up Olympic records. What a great reminder that the Internet is a fantastic learning tool. Remember to reward their hard work!

Buckleitner Box

Dear Parents,

Want a cheap laptop?

If so, keep reading. I'm just back from the National Educational Computing Conference (NECC) where I noticed the increasing number of miniaturized laptops that are also tiny in price -- often less than \$500. These aren't computers with huge hard drives or fancy graphics cards, but they do have the basics needed to go online or to write a paper — such things as Wi-Fi, USB ports, QWERTY keyboards and browsers that can run just about any web-based application, including Scratch and Google. For example, the Asus Eee PC (<http://eeepc.asus.com/global/>) costs \$300 and includes a camera, 20 GB hard disk, a 8.9 inch color drive and Windows XP. From Intel, the second generation Classmate computer (<http://www.classmatepc.com>) comes with a webcam, mesh computing Windows or Linux, with prices that start in the \$300 range. But the computer that impressed me the most was the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC, a \$500 computer with a full-sized keyboard, stereo speakers, a 120 GB hard drive either Windows Vista or XP. (<http://www.hp.com/>). With this type of power at this price, the dream of giving every child its own computer is starting to become possible. And perhaps the grownups can get one, too.

Warren Buckleitner, Ph.D.
Editor, Children's Technology Review