

Olympics 2012: the bidding begins

Level

Intermediate

Tasks

- Matching short texts to the cities they refer to
- Matching collocations relating to the pros and cons of hosting the Games
- Deciding and giving reasons for which city should host the Games in 2012
- Discussing whether the modern Olympic Games have become too commercial

How to use the lesson

1 Ask students if they can name any of the cities that are in the race to host the 2012 Olympics after Athens (2004) and Beijing (2008). (Note: some cities have confirmed their intention to submit bids, while others are still in the process of making a decision, e.g. Havana has confirmed; Brazil will select either Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo on July 7th; Toronto is considering rebidding after its 2008 loss; etc. See www.GamesBids.com for updated information.)

2 Students skim read the texts and use the informational clues to match them to the six cities.

Answers

a New York b Madrid c Moscow d Leipzig e Paris f London

If relevant, draw students' attention to adjectives and verbs in the texts that collocate with *bid*: an ambitious bid (text a), an Olympic bid (text b), support/back a bid (text f), submit a bid (worksheet introduction). Introduce other useful collocations e.g. a successful bid, the lowest/highest bid(der), a takeover bid. See the *Macmillan English Dictionary* for other expressions.

3 After the matching exercise, ask students if they can think of any other pros and cons of hosting the Games e.g. improved sports facilities, raise the profile of the host city/country.

Answers

Advantages: feel-good factor, tourism boost, increased employment, improved infrastructure, economic benefits, investment opportunities

Disadvantages: rising crime, prohibitive costs, traffic congestion, security fears, terrorist attacks, environmental impact

4 Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to discuss the questions in 4. Refer students to the following websites for information on particular cities: www.timeout.com; www.greatcities.com.

Optional self-study

Students produce a short city profile outlining the case for its Olympic bid, and present their ideas to the class.

Related websites

- www.GamesBids.com
- www.olympic.org
- www.athens.olympic.org
- www.timeout.com
- www.greatcities.com