

Olympic success

Victory for one city in its bid to host the Olympics in 2016; bitter defeat for the three other candidates. However, is it really such a blessing to host the summer Olympic games?



1 Complete the names of the cities which hosted / will host the Olympic games in:

1996	2000.....	2004
2008	2012	2016

2 Scan the article and match the following headings [a-d] to the correct paragraphs [1-4].

- (a) 2020 (b) The challenges (c) A new world order (d) The announcement

Games on [1] 'The Games of the 31st Olympiad are awarded to the city of ...'. The envelope is opened; the world holds its breath; the announcement is made. The last round of bidding for the 2016 Olympics started two years ago, in May, 2007. That was when the four shortlisted cities, Chicago, Madrid, Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo, began planning their respective campaigns. Each of the bidding cities invested huge sums of money as they promoted their cities in search of the ultimate sporting prize. But there can only be one winner. This time, it was 'Brazil's turn'.

[2] This is the first time the games have ever gone to South America. Rio's slogan is 'live your passion'. In becoming the next Olympic host nation, Brazil will aim to showcase the passion, energy and creativity of the whole of the continent. The decision is seen as a recognition of our changing world, of the rise of the emerging nations. Brazil is the world's 10th largest economy; many of its exports, like coffee, are in great demand worldwide. The decision is also seen as the way to attract millions of young people to the Olympic movement.

[3] The choice of Rio is not without critics. There are big issues about transport, similar to those facing London, the 2012 host city. Also, Rio is seen as a dangerous place, increasing fears about security. All the usual problems of hosting the games remain, such as cost: the games have always needed massive public subsidies. The UK games are currently estimated to cost \$15 billion, and many believe this will inevitably rise. The facilities must be built to time and budget; and just what happens to the Olympic buildings afterwards is never clear.

[4] Brazil believes it is ready to face these challenges; no-one could hide the joy which erupted on Copacabana beach as the announcement was made. The government had already secured the necessary financial backing for the infrastructure budget. Moreover, the city of Rio has recently hosted the Pan American Games and the 1992 Earth Summit. Whether hosting the 2014 World Cup followed immediately by the Olympics is taking on too much remains to be seen. This victory surely paves the way for the last remaining continent never to have hosted the Olympics: Africa.

3 Read the whole article. Summarise the key points in each paragraph.

4 Decide if the following words are nouns (N), verbs (V) or both (B).

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|---------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| award | bid | announce | shortlist | slogan | economy |
| attract | critic | host | estimate | challenge | backing |
| budget | campaign | invest | promote | export | infrastructure |

5 Complete the task in small groups. Be ready to report your ideas to the class.

Your city / capital city is considering bidding for the 2020 Olympic games. Decide if your group is **in favour of** or **against** launching a campaign. Consider issues such as: *benefits / infrastructure / cost / transport / security*. Take a vote if necessary. Announce your recommendation to the class with the reasons for reaching your decision.