

Transport and the Olympics Worksheet

A Before you read: Discuss

Share your background knowledge and discuss the questions below.

- 1] Have you visited London? Describe the road and public transport systems.
- 2] What do you know about the history of transport in London? Share your knowledge.
- 3] What pressures would the Olympic Games place on the transport system? Think about people travelling to events and returning home.
- 4] What security measures are required when organising a high-profile international event?

B Comprehension 1

Read the whole text quickly. Mark the statements below which are TRUE or FALSE, according to the article. Mark any statements where NO INFORMATION was given.

- 1] The opening ceremony was the first big test for the transport system. T|F|NI
- 2] 80,000 audience members and thousands of performers had to travel to the stadium for the opening ceremony. T|F|NI
- 3] Stadium entry was slow because of the tight security. T|F|NI
- 4] Expecting problems, many people arrived late at the opening ceremony started. T|F|NI
- 5] The Queen travelled to the stadium by helicopter. T|F|NI
- 6] Many of the key organisers started their journeys in Australia. T|F|NI
- 7] Even before the Olympics, transport systems in London are very busy. T|F|NI
- 8] After the technical rehearsal for the opening ceremony, many people had problems when leaving the stadium. T|F|NI
- 9] Apart from the main Olympic stadium, there aren't many different arenas at the Olympic park. T|F|NI
- 10] After the opening ceremony, the transport system functioned well. T|F|NI

C Comprehension 2

Read the article carefully and interpret answers to complete these sentences. Choose the correct option.

- 1] Before the opening ceremony of the Olympic games, most people expected that ...
 - a] there would be traffic chaos.
 - b] transport would function as normally.
 - c] transport would be very slow with many delays.
- 2] Many people staggered their journey to the opening ceremony because ...
 - a] they had to walk long distances.
 - b] the ceremony was very long.
 - c] they wanted to arrive early.

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- 3] Many people expected that security ...
 - a] would be stern and oppressive.
 - b] would be lax and inefficient.
 - c] would be fast, efficient and friendly.
- 4] The last time the Olympic games were in London was in 1948, so ...
 - a] most organisers could remember and use that experience.
 - b] experienced organisers of previous Olympics contributed in the planning.
 - c] the organisers were all Australian gypsies.
- 5] The organisation of the Olympics in London is difficult because ...
 - a] it is in August and most people are on holiday.
 - b] so many people have hiccups.
 - c] the normal daily business of London must continue.
- 6] When visitors saw the large numbers of travellers on the London Underground, they ...
 - a] were helpful and polite.
 - b] had not expected such large crowds.
 - c] emptied into the rest of London.
- 7] The newspapers and other media were planning to tell a story of ...
 - a] traffic jams and irregular operation of mass transport systems.
 - b] a disappointing opening ceremony compared with Beijing.
 - c] a slick and efficient operation.
- 8] The article was written ...
 - a] before the main competitive events had started.
 - b] after the closing ceremony.
 - c] before the opening ceremony.

D Vocabulary

Deduce the meaning of the words in the box from the context of the text. Use the words to complete the sentences below.

plaudits	calm	host	differ	precaution
unfair	turn up	logistics	staggered	transit

- 1] What _____ have you taken for the risk of fire?
- 2] A taxi will facilitate your _____ to the conference centre.
- 3] The criticism of our performance was _____ because it did not consider market conditions.
- 4] Maureen will organise the _____ of the office move.
- 5] What time did the CEO _____ at the office?
- 6] They _____ the preparation of the food so everything would be ready at noon.
- 7] If an earthquake starts, stay _____ and stand in a safe place.
- 8] Although the book did not win the prize, it received _____ for the clear diagrams.
- 9] We will _____ 250 international guests at the sales conference.
- 10] We all want top quality but our economic resources _____.

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E After you read: Discuss

Discuss these questions.

- 1] If your capital city was chosen to host the Olympic Games, what problems with urban transport would you expect?
- 2] The next Olympic Games will be in Rio de Janeiro. What transport problems will they have?

Did you know?

- a] The London Underground is the oldest subway system in the world starting in 1863.
- b] The London Underground extends for 130 kilometres east to west.
- c] The plan of the London Underground system was designed by an expert on electrical circuits.
- d] The Olympic park is constructed on an area of old industrial land in east London which was contaminated with poisonous chemicals.
- e] Women were forbidden from watching the ancient Olympic Games in Greece.
- f] 78 passengers can travel on a double-decker London bus.
- g] An estimated audience of 2 billion people watched the opening ceremony.
- h] The road plan of London follows roads which existed in Roman London.
- i] In the 19th century, traffic problems in London were equal to today's problems.
- j] The Olympic flame is started by sun light at Olympia in Greece.
- k] The Olympic flame was carried around Britain for 70 days before arriving at the stadium. 95% of people in Britain were able to see the flame being carried by runners close to their homes.

Transport and the Olympics

Keep on moving

Jul 28th 2012, 18:27 by R.B | LONDON

Questions about how London's transport system will hold up during the Olympics have for weeks been a running theme of the capital's preparations and coverage of the 2012 games. In recent days at least one British paper has been sending out staff to look for traffic jams to report on. Last night, when the opening ceremony played to a packed audience of 80,000, as well as thousands of cast members, was a big test. The city's mass transit systems passed with top marks.

Many were concerned that there would be crowds even getting to the stadium yesterday, so some guests took the precaution of travelling there hours early. That gave Transport for London some space as journeys east were staggered through the day.

Stadium entry turned out to be orderly and easy. Signage was good and unlike at many big sporting events security was tight but not oppressive; staff were helpful, polite and smiling.

One reason the Olympics is so expensive is that each one is the first of its kind. The know-how from previous games is not necessarily passed on to the next city; the problems of each new host may anyway differ from the last. There are now a group of people sometimes referred to as "Olympic gypsies" who approach a host city when it wins a bid to offer their skills. In London for this reason many key organisers are Australian, people who worked on the successful Sydney games in 2000 and have kept on bombing around the world renting out their Olympic skills.

In London the logistics are particularly complicated because the host city has so much else going on, events are taking place throughout the capital, and existing transport systems are already heaving with local traffic at the best of times.

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So it is particularly impressive when events work as well as Friday's opening ceremony. There may have been some hiccups that have gone unreported. But in general the operation inside and outside the stadium seemed slick and efficient.

Getting out at the end of the show had been a problem in the technical rehearsal only days earlier. I am sure that some people took a while to leave even yesterday. But the trains were running as promised, most platforms and services were extremely crowded but kept going until 2.30am to get everyone home.

Some visitors new to the tube expressed surprised at how many people packed on to it. But crowds stayed calm, the next train generally did turn up 2-3 minutes later, and Stratford eventually emptied into the rest of London. Because different structures in the Olympic park will all host events, there may yet be busier days, but Friday was a busy and successful start.

If things go mostly smoothly during the Olympics, the media may forget there was ever a story that they were planning to tell. I think that would be unfair. Operating the games in London is a huge challenge. If it all keeps running then the capital's transport systems and planners deserve plaudits. There are many more miles to go before that happens. So far they have been ready and steady.

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Teachers' Notes and Key

This article and worksheet was written before the main competitive events had started therefore it cannot reflect events which took place during the Games.

A Open answers.

B 1T, 2T, 3F, 4F, 5NI, 6F, 7T, 8T, 9F, 10T

C 1a, 2c, 3a, 4b, 5c, 6b, 7a, 8a

D 1] precaution, 2] transit, 3] unfair, 4] logistics, 5] turn up, 6] staggered, 7] calm, 8] plaudits, 9] host, 10] differ

E Open answers