

## Objectives

# The Olympic Torch

- ▶ To use map skills to find specific locations
- ▶ To learn about countries' cultures and customs
- ▶ To increase travel vocabulary

- ◆ Review or read the "Olympic Torch and Flame" summary with the students for background information. Emphasize the symbolism and honor attached to carrying the flame from Olympia, Greece to the current Games by hundreds of relay runners. Use the map to trace the outline of the journey of the flame in color, yarn, or other designation
- ◆ Discuss, then chart the different types of transportation that must be used to transport the flame across land and sea. After the class charts the transportation modes offered, pass out the 1992 Olympic flame relay table. Have the students identify the symbols, then find the listed cities and mark or pin them on the world map. Students may work in pairs or teams and determine which of the cities were Olympic Games sites. Place the Olympic year next to the city (Example: Los Angeles, 1984).
- ◆ How did the Olympic flame travel from place to place in 1936? What has changed since then? How did athletes, equipment and spectators travel before the invention of automobiles, trains and airplanes?
- ◆ Use the "Transportation Vocabulary" sheet to discover vocabulary and note the various modes of transportation.
- ◆ After the activity is finished, ask the students to determine whether the Olympic flame could be carried in all the manners listed. Also, list the other items needed at an Olympic Games that could be carried in this type of transport.

## Optional

- ◆ Make a model of the map depicting the flame's journey as a more permanent project of the Olympic Games.
- ◆ Using the "Transportation Vocabulary," write sentences about the Olympic Games.
- ◆ Write a class story that uses each of the "Transportation Vocabulary" words.
- ◆ On the classroom world map, place a paper runner with a torch as the class follows the progress of the flame's journey.

## Materials

- "Olympic Torch and Flame" summary.
- Map of the flame's journey to Barcelona.
- "Transportation Vocabulary" sheet.
- A classroom map of the world.
- Map tacks or stickers.

The Olympic Torch

▶ Name



## The Olympic Torch and Flame

The torch is a symbol of the harmony and goodwill which represent the ideals of the Olympic Games. The Olympic flame represents the basic spiritual significance of the Olympic Movement, a symbol of peace among peoples of the world.

The torch is usually carried hand-to-hand by relays of runners from the original site of the Olympic Games at Olympia, Greece, to the main stadium of the current Games. This tradition started with the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936. To carry the torch during any part of its journey is considered a great honor. In Los Angeles, for the Games of the XXIII Olympiad in 1984, the torch relay route covered 15,000 kilometers. The route took 82 days and 3,636 runners participated. Interested persons were able to run for one kilometer by paying \$3,000. In this manner more than \$10 million were raised to benefit youth sports organizations.

The lighting of the Olympic flame at the site of the games is an important part of the opening ceremonies. Bringing the torch into the Games stadium is both a culminating as well as a beginning event. The Olympic flame ends its journey by lighting the Olympic torch of the Games. At the end of the games the flame is extinguished, but this signifies the beginning of the next quadrennial and preparations for the next Olympic Games. In the modern era, the Olympic flame was lit for the first time at the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam.

The torch ceremony, with its ritual and symbolism sets the Olympic Games apart from other sports events; it adds aesthetic beauty to the competition of the Games. Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the father of the Modern Olympics, concluded that the torch ceremony had four specific traits: 1) historical meaning; 2) an educational message; 3) artistic appeal; 4) religious essence.

Historically, the most common use of the torches was to shed light in darkness, especially for travelers at night. Instructively, or educationally, the message for mankind was to teach people fairplay and instill a high regard for cooperation and togetherness. Artistically, the torch enhanced the elegance of the ceremonies. Finally, the religious essence derives from the first Olympic Games in 776 B.C. when young boys raced 200 yards to win the privilege of lighting the sacrificial altar fire honoring the Greek god Zeus.

Throughout the succeeding years, the torch ceremony has changed, but its symbolism has not. The flame is borne throughout the world using many kinds of transportation until it reaches its destination.

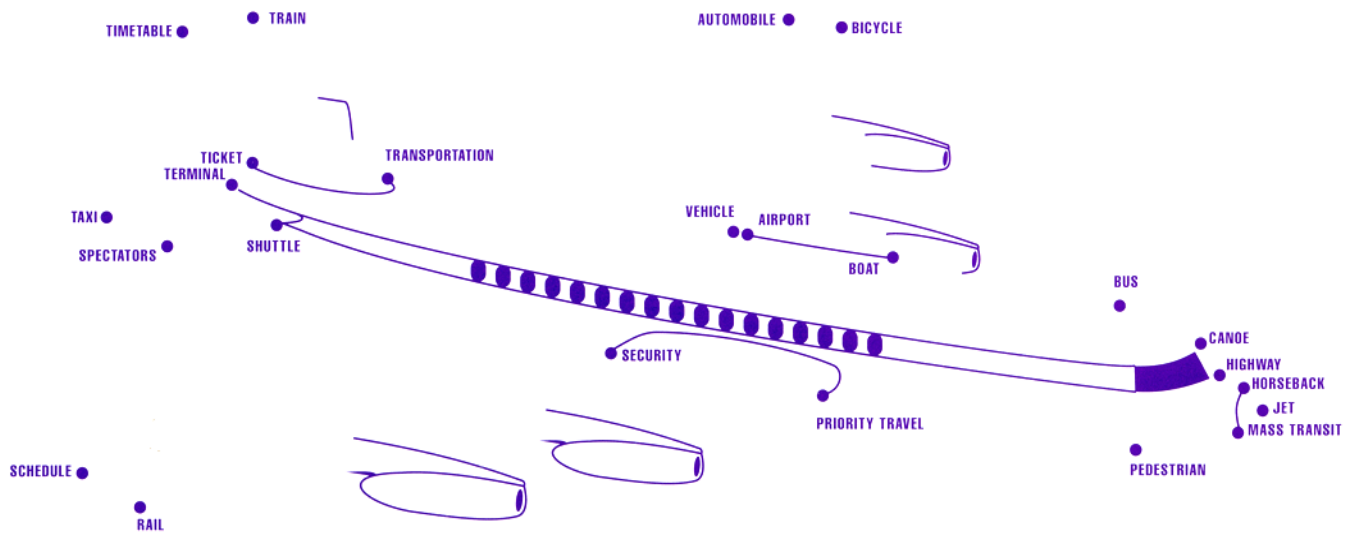
*For detailed reference on this ceremony, see The Olympic Flame, Durantez, Conrado, International Olympic Committee, 1988*

# The Olympic Torch

Name



## Transportation Vocabulary



Connect the words in alphabetical order beginning with "airport" What mode of transportation is this?