

Ancient Olympic Events

Week 8 • Tuesday • Running, Wrestling, and Chariots

Reading Time

What sports did ancient athletes play? The very first Olympics had just ONE event: a running race called the **stade**, about 192 meters long. Our word 'stadium' comes from it! The first recorded champion was a cook named Coroebus.

Over the years, more events were added. There was wrestling, boxing, long jump, and throwing contests with the **javelin** (a spear) and the **discus** (a heavy disc). The **pentathlon** combined five events to find the best all-around athlete!

The most exciting event was the **chariot race**. Teams of four horses pulled small two-wheeled carts around a track at top speed. Crashes were common, and the crowds went wild! There were no team sports like soccer — every athlete competed alone for glory.

Reading Questions

1. What was the only event at the very first Olympics?

2. How many events were in the pentathlon?

3. Why was the chariot race so exciting?

Match the Event

Write the letter that matches: A = a running race, B = throwing a spear, C = throwing a heavy disc, D = horses pulling carts, E = five events in one.

Event	Match (A-E)
Javelin	
Stade	
Chariot race	
Pentathlon	
Discus	

Fill in the Blanks

stade stadium chariot pentathlon javelin

1. The first Olympic event was a race called the _____.

2. Our word _____ comes from that race's name.

3. A _____ was a cart pulled by four horses.

4. The _____ combined five different events.

5. The _____ was a spear for throwing.

Hands-On: Backyard Pentathlon

You need: a safe open space and a grown-up.

Hold your own mini-pentathlon with 5 events: (1) a short sprint, (2) long jump, (3) throw a soft ball for distance, (4) hop on one foot as far as you can, (5) balance on one leg the longest. Record your results below!

Event	My result
Sprint	
Long jump	
Ball throw	
Hopping	
Balance	

Think About It

1. Which ancient Olympic event would you be best at? Why?
