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DEBATE KIT: HOSTING AN OLYMPICS IS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR THE HOST CITY'S POPULATION

TEACHING RESOURCE

DEBATING

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Introduction

The first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896, and since then, cities from around the world have continued to compete to host the event through a self-nomination process. The experience of hosting an Olympic Games is often considered an honour for a host city, with positive benefits, both social and economic, expected to eventuate. However, the negative impacts – social, environmental and economic – have soured the experience for some host city's population and created issues that linger well beyond the closing ceremony.

In the past, host cities have benefitted from an economic boost during the Olympic Games, due to job creation in the lead up to the Games and increased tourism. Social benefits, such as an increase in people participating in sport and the fostering of civic and national pride, can also provide long-term value for the host city's population. On the other hand, increased government spending on Games infrastructure and the need for more land on which to build it, can create or inflame issues of urban overcrowding or housing shortages.

In recent years, fewer and fewer bids have been made to host the Olympic Games. Prior to the 2024 Games, only two cities – Paris and Los Angeles – submitted a bid to host, and for the upcoming 2032 Games, Brisbane was the only city to submit a bid. A lack of cities prepared to bid to host an Olympic Games puts the future of the Games as we know it in jeopardy.

Within the last decade, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has created new policies that aim to make hosting the Olympic Games more sustainable, both environmentally and financially, in the hope that more cities around the world apply to become host cities. It is hoped that this will allow the goal of the Olympic Games – “to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity” * – to continue into the future.

* Quote taken from article titled “What is Olympism?”, found on the IOC website: <http://bit.ly/4IGlspE>

Debate topic: Hosting an Olympics is a positive experience for the host city's population

Affirmative arguments

- Hosting an Olympics provides a boost to the economy through the creation of jobs, tourism income and income from broadcasting rights.
- Hosting an Olympics can provide the impetus for the construction of new “legacy” infrastructure.
- Being an Olympic host city can create social benefits, such as increasing the physical activity of the host population, creating opportunities for inclusion, and the promotion of culture and community.
- Hosting an Olympics allows a city or country to showcase its best aspects to the world and in some cases, overcome political rivalries.

Negative arguments

- Hosting an Olympics requires government spending that competes with funding for basic needs of the host population, such as healthcare, housing and roads.
- Without proper planning, infrastructure created for the Olympics can fall into disuse once the event has passed.
- The Olympics has major impacts on the environment due to the emissions of large numbers of people travelling across the world, as well as through the construction of infrastructure.
- Hosting an Olympics can draw unwanted political attention to a host city or country, and prompt protests or civil unrest.

Web links

Hosting an Olympics is a postive experience for the host city's population

Topic	Web link
Becoming an Olympic Games host	http://bit.ly/4msxN2X
The Economics of hosting the games	http://bit.ly/47apQL6
International Olympic Committee: The New Norm	http://bit.ly/478G3Ao
Brisbane 2032: Legacy and Impact	http://bit.ly/4mT3OJ0
The Conversation article: <i>What makes Brisbane different from Paris?</i>	http://bit.ly/4p4NAa3
ABC News report: <i>Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games could worsen homelessness, Q Shelter reports</i>	http://bit.ly/4mYjao0
Behind the News: <i>Brisbane Olympic Bid</i>	http://bit.ly/41KLUIw
ABC News In-depth: <i>Olympic fails</i>	http://bit.ly/3HLyzc7
Britannica article: <i>7 Ways Hosting an Olympics Impacts a City</i>	http://bit.ly/3Jva7w5
The Conversation: <i>Does sports participation boom during (or before, or after) the Olympics?</i>	http://bit.ly/4lI2i3L
Olympic Spirit: The story of Korea's unified ice hockey team at the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics	http://bit.ly/4oLcye3
SBS News In-Depth: <i>A look at politics and the Olympic games</i>	http://bit.ly/4ml9Fz8
The Conversation: <i>Are the Olympic Games politically neutral?</i>	http://bit.ly/45KH5Ai
New China TV: Paris Olympics bringing people together	http://bit.ly/4ICSHeg



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