

OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

Leicestershire area event
2009 / 2010 Academic Year



The Olympic Challenge was a partnership between the London 2012 Young People's Legacy East Midlands, the Leicestershire Education Business Company (LEBC) and Business Language Champions. The Olympics and the associated pledge for its legacy for young people, provided a perfect backdrop to encourage young people to take up a language and find out about other cultures. Both the Olympics and BLC have the aim of better communication and understanding on a global scale. With this in mind, a challenge was conceived as part of the LEBC Excellence in Enterprise range of school challenges.

Students were tasked to put together a plan for hosting an international Olympics team for one month at their school prior to the Olympics in 2012, which will help the team acclimatise and reach peak fitness levels. The team had to choose their target country carefully, taking into consideration their local facilities for accommodation and sports, recreational opportunities and the cultural and language needs of the visiting team. The visiting team had to be from a country where the first language was not English. The submitted plan, which could be in any media, had to include

- their reason for selecting the nationality of the team
- what facilities the school and community could offer
- where the team would stay,

and most importantly for the sponsors

- what provision the school would make in terms of communication and
- the legacy for the school from the visit.

In addition, the team had to supply at least 200 words in the target language, that would be useful for the visiting team (e.g. signs, information leaflet).

To help them with their submission, each school was able to have the advice from a Business Language Champion, who spent up to a couple of hours with the team as they put their plan together. The entries were reviewed by judges and brought down to the final three: Wreake Valley Community College who looked at Algeria, Burleigh Community College who considered Switzerland and Leysland High School who entered Russia. Three judges then visited each of the schools in turn, where the team had to give a 5 minute presentation and answer questions from the judging panel.



The victors were Wreake Valley Community College who impressed the judges with their excellent range of very specific legacy ideas. They were also commended for their effort in making a video of their school facilities with a French voice over. Wreake Valley students won a trip down to the LOCOG offices in Canary Wharf and a tour of the Olympic Park in early July. They were delighted to bump into Tim Henman (tennis), Jonathan Edwards (athletics) and Ade Adepitan (wheelchair basketball) at the LOCOG offices.

The LEBC took this challenge one step further and modified it for a one day seminar for Year 7 pupils at two schools: Castle Rock High School and Newbridge High School. In order to modify it, students were allocated one of five countries (Switzerland, Tunisia, Belgium, Romania or Colombia). Again Business Language Champions were on hand to help out and advise.

The Olympics of course have not yet taken place, so the Olympic Challenge will be run again in the 2010/2011 academic year...but with a few changes. Principally, it will be a regional contest, and simpler submissions will be requested in order to win a place at the one day grand final in Nottingham at the beginning of March 2011. More details are now available from Sally Fagan at Business Language Champions. The fantastic prize however, remains the same.

Thanks go to both the LEBC and Gaynor Nash for the London 2012 Young People's Legacy East Midlands for making this challenge happen.

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The seven Business Language Champions taking part in the Olympic Challenge as mentors were:-

David Sly-Jex, retired Director of a Dutch multinational organisation
Ian Sasse from Agents of Change
Dips Patel, a Product Manager from Speedo International
Pearl Cole and Peter Brunt, both from the consultancy firm Cheiron
Chris Foster, an international trade adviser from UKTI
Sue Hutton, and writer and designer for websites