

HOW TO HOST AN OLYMPIC-THEMED “PENTATHLON”



**Create a fun, easy-to-do Pentathlon event
for your students.**

HISTORY

PENTATHLON: *an athletic contest of 5 different events (penta means 5).*

The Ancient Greece pentathlon consisted of running, jumping, spear-throwing, discus, and wrestling¹.

The modern pentathlon developed in 1912, is comprised of ²:

- Shooting - laser shooting is used for safety and elimination of lead bullets.
- Fencing - using swords similar to long foil swords.
- Swimming - 200 meter freestyle.
- Horse Riding - 15 jumps over 12 jumping obstacles. Athletes are paired with an unfamiliar horse and have 20 minutes to warmup with their horse before competing.
- Cross Country Running - the run is combined with the shooting. The athletes run four circuits, stopping to shoot at 5 targets at the end of each circuit. Each time they have 50 seconds to shoot at the 5 targets.

These events were chosen to reflect skills that 19th-century cavalry soldiers (soldiers who fight mounted on horseback) were to possess and refine.

Our Olympic-Themed Pentathlon includes events from both the ancient and modern day pentathlon: javelin throwing, obstacle course, sprinting, shot put, and the long jump (minus the horse). We hope you and your students have 5 times the fun during this event.

Share a video with your students here: <https://youtu.be/GvceKOIP3sU>

Sources:

1 "Pentathlon." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 21 Feb. 2021, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentathlon.

2 IOC. MODERN PENTATHLON , IOC, 3 Dec. 2020, www.olympic.org/modern-pentathlon.

NOTES

- Spread the events out – perhaps one per week. This allows preparation time for the activity and creates more excitement for each event.
- Accumulate points and awards individually or by a group.
- Alter the events, distances, and points as needed.
- Use painter's tape to designate areas if conducted indoors.
- Keep it light-hearted and have lots of fun!



OBSTACLE COURSE:

an athletic event in which a competitor, traveling on foot, must overcome various physical challenges in the form of obstacles.

Note:

- An Obstacle Course is not an official Olympic event, but it works well in a school setting while social distancing.

Preparation:

- Use yellow caution tape, pool noodles and playground equipment to create an obstacle course.
- Use the equipment creatively, have students run around, over, or under items.

Instruction:

1. Let students run the course several times and see if they can improve their time. EZ Scan® can be used to time each runner.
2. Give points according to time of the run. For example, 5 points for less than 30 seconds, 3 points for 30-40 seconds, etc.

Equipment:

- Yellow Caution Tape
- Pool Noodles
- Playground Equipment

Award:



Tournament Toes



SPRINTS: *to run as fast as possible for a short distance.*

Preparation:

- Create a 100-meter running course with start and finish lines.

Instruction:

1. Select a time for the 100-meter course that everyone can attain. For example, the first sprint must be completed in 30 seconds. Everyone who crosses the finish line before 30 seconds earns three points and qualifies for the next race.
2. The next sprint, over the same course, must now be completed in 25 seconds, and so forth. Each successive sprint has a shorter time limit and is worth more points (perhaps 4 points, then 6 points, etc.).

Equipment:

- Spray Paint
- Cones

Award:



Champion Sneaker



JAVELIN THROW:

an athletic field event in which a javelin is thrown for distance.

Preparation:

- Create 5-yard long throwing lanes by spray painting a start line and a throw line for students to get a running start before their throw.
- Place several hoops in a row on the ground beyond the throw line. Spray paint within each hoop a set number of points, increasing for each successive hoop – 5, 10, 15, etc.
- The throwing distance to the hoops will depend on the type of javelin used.

Instruction:

1. Provide a javelin for each throwing lane. Possible items are noted to the side.
2. One at a time, students start behind the start line, run, and then throw before the throw line.
3. Points are given according to the hoop the javelin lands in or where most of the javelin lies.
4. The javelin is collected, and the number of points recorded.
5. Give each student at least 3 tries.

Options:

- Instead of the hoops, paint lines to designate a scoring ladder beyond the throwing line.
- Hang a hoop and see if students can throw a javelin through the hoop – 5 points for each javelin through a hoop, 1 point for hitting the hoop.
- Instead of throwing into a hoop, see how many throws it takes to go a specific distance - 5 points for less than 3 throws, 3 points for 5 throws, 1 point for less than 10 throws.

Possible Javelins:

- Foam Javelins
- Pool Noodles (cut in half)
- Drinking Straws

Equipment:

- Yellow Caution Tape
- Javelins
- Playground Equipment

Awards:



Dark Gold 1st Place Medal



Silver 2nd Place Medal



Bronze 3rd Place Medal



LONG JUMP: *to jump as far as possible along the ground in one leap.*

Note:

- It might be best to first have the students practice the standing long jump – they should be able to jump their height.

Preparation:

- Use an outdoor area with material suitable for jumping – pea stone, rubber pieces, sand, wood chips, etc.
- Create 10-yard long running lanes by spray painting a start line and a jump line.
- Spray paint measuring marks to the side of each jumping area. Measuring marks should note distances in 1-foot increments, starting at 3 foot.

Instruction:

1. Designate a lane for a set of students.
2. Have students attempt the running long jump, one at a time.
3. Give the number of points corresponding to the distance jumped (i.e., 3 foot = 3 points, 4 foot = 4 points, etc.)

Equipment:

- Spray Paint
- Measuring Tape

Award:



Jump



SHOT PUT: *to throw a shot as far as possible.*

Preparation:

- Create a bullseye using spray paint, or use the middle circle of a basketball court, soccer field, etc. Designate points for each ring of the bullseye.

Instruction:

1. Create tossing lines which students will stand behind when putting* the bean bag. (*Throwing a shot put is called putting.) Space the students to allow for 2-3 teams to put at the same time.
2. Show the students how to “put” the bean bag. Let them practice.
3. Students then “put” the bean bags into the bullseye. Points are awarded according to where the bean bag landed. Allow 3 puts for each student.

Options:

- The hoops or lines from the Javelin throw may also be used for this event.
- Provide one color of bean bag for each team. This makes it easier to tally points.

Equipment:

- Spray Paint
- Bean Bags

Award:



Bullseye

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