

# The Paralympics

The Paralympic Games, a global sporting event for athletes with disabilities, have a rich and inspiring history that spans over six decades. The origins of the Paralympic movement can be traced back to the aftermath of World War II, when Dr. Ludwig Guttmann, a neurologist, organized the Stoke Mandeville Games in 1948. This event, held at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in England, aimed to rehabilitate veterans with spinal cord injuries through sports.



The success of the Stoke Mandeville Games laid the foundation for the Paralympic movement. In 1960, the first official Paralympic Games were held in Rome, Italy, coinciding with the Summer Olympics. A total of 400 athletes from 23 countries participated in eight sports, including archery, swimming, and wheelchair basketball. Since then, the Paralympic Games have grown significantly in scale and scope.

One of the defining moments in the history of the Paralympic movement occurred in 1988, when the Summer Paralympics were held in Seoul, South Korea, immediately following the Olympic Games. This marked the first time that the Paralympic Games were held in the same host city and venues as the Olympics, leading to increased visibility and recognition for para-athletes.

Over the years, the Paralympic Games have expanded to include a wide range of sports and disciplines, from athletics and wheelchair tennis to powerlifting and sitting volleyball. The introduction of new sports has provided athletes with disabilities with more opportunities to compete and showcase their abilities on the world stage.

The Paralympic Games have also played a crucial role in challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusivity. Through their performances, para-athletes have shattered misconceptions about disability and demonstrated the power of determination, resilience, and perseverance. The Paralympic movement has become a symbol of hope and inspiration for millions of people around the world.

In terms of participation and viewership, the Paralympic Games have experienced significant growth in recent years. The Rio 2016 Paralympics, for example, featured over 4,300 athletes from 159 countries competing in 22 sports. The Games were broadcast to more than 150 countries, reaching a global audience of billions.

Looking ahead, the future of the Paralympic movement is promising, with ongoing efforts to further expand opportunities for para-athletes and promote inclusivity in sports. The Paralympic Games continue to serve as a platform for athletes with disabilities to achieve their dreams and inspire others with their remarkable feats of athleticism and determination.

In memory of Françoise M., Former Paralympic French Athlete

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Quiz Practice – The Paralympics

● **Choose the best answers.**

1. **The Paralympics began with the work of Ludwig Guttman. Who was he?**
  - a) a stroke survivor
  - b) an English spinal cord patient
  - c) a doctor
  - d) a World War II surgeon
2. **When were the Paralympic Games first held?**
  - a) 1948
  - b) 1954
  - c) 1988
  - d) 1960
3. **Which of the following sports is NOT mentioned as being a Paralympic sport?**
  - a) swimming
  - b) basketball
  - c) powerlifting
  - d) soccer
4. **Why were the 1988 Paralympic Games so special?**
  - a) They were televised globally.
  - b) They were held following the Olympics.
  - c) They were held in Asia.
  - d) They were attended by many people.
5. **Which of the following statements about the Paralympic Games is true?**
  - a) They have been growing in popularity.
  - b) They have been declining in popularity.
  - c) Their popularity has remained the same.
  - d) Their popularity is unclear.
6. **Which of the following statements about the Paralympic Games is true?**
  - a) They have promoted new stereotypes.
  - b) They have challenged stereotypes.
  - c) They include dance performances.
  - d) They include some able-bodied people.
7. **How many people possibly watched the 2016 Paralympic Games on TV?**
  - a) thousands
  - b) tens of thousands
  - c) billions
  - d) millions
8. **Approximately how many athletes took part in the 2016 Paralympic Games?**
  - a) 4,300
  - b) 22
  - c) 159
  - d) 3,400

● **Discuss the following questions with a classmate.**

1. What information did you find the most surprising or interesting? Why?
2. Have you ever watched the Paralympic games? If yes, when?
3. In your opinion, why do people play and watch sports?
4. International sports competitions are very expensive for host cities. Do you think the money spent on them is worth it? Why? / Why not?
5. What sports are you good at?
6. How can people “become the best”, or world-class, at an activity?
7. What more can be done to promote social inclusivity for special needs individuals?

**Level** Advanced

**Time** Approximately 20 minutes

“The Paralympics”

As **Reading Quiz Practice** – or as **Listening Quiz Practice**



Downloadable Audio File: 2 minutes and 52 seconds



## ANSWER KEY

- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. C | 5. A |
| 2. D | 6. B |
| 3. D | 7. C |
| 4. B | 8. A |

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## Grades as percentages

$$8 / 8 = 100\%$$

$$7 / 8 = 87.5$$

$$6 / 8 = 75$$

$$5 / 8 = 62.5$$

$$4 / 8 = 50$$

$$3 / 8 = 37.5$$

$$2 / 8 = 25$$

$$1 / 8 = 12.5$$

$$0 / 8 = 0$$

In memory of Françoise M.

Former Paralympic French Athlete