

INCORPORATING THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT INTO THE CURRICULUM OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

*In Queenstown, South Africa, the headmaster of a primary school, aged 34, Mr. Laurie J. TEMPELHOFF, devotes part of his spare time to Olympism. His love of sport is intense: he took part in rugby matches, athletics, diving, gymnastics, judo, weight lifting, tennis and cycling; at university he devoted four years to the study of physical education. He *as always, as he wrote to us, a "Scholar of Olympic Ideals".*

The pedagogic concept of miniature Olympic Games, launched by Harry OXFORD, filled him with enthusiasm. He decided in his turn to instil the olympic principle into his children.

Mr. Laurie J. TEMPELHOFF recounts his experience. Would not the pedagogues of all countries benefit by imitating his efforts on behalf of the Olympic Movement ?

The idea of introducing such a scheme into the curriculum of the primary school came from an article written by a physical education teacher, Harry OXFORD, at the Wheeling Country Day School, McLean, Virginia, U.S.A. (Newsletter 6-7, March-April, 1968, page 125).

To adapt it to local conditions and circumstances, I introduced some of my own ideas. The whole class - boys and girls between 12-13 years, participated in the project. To get the children in the right and proper mood and to prepare them mentally for the project, I spent one of the seven periods telling them about the history of the Olympic Games. Then I spent a further period on playing extracts from the 1968 Mexico Olympics recorded on tape as well as a recording of the Olympic Hymn.

The whole class (28) was divided into four European countries. The countries selected were those that the children had to study in their geography curriculum. In this way correlation was done with geography - a method encouraged tremendously by South African Teaching Authorities. Teams were evenly divided up, i.e. 7 per country. Each scholar

then made a short study of the country that he represented, and for this I allowed three periods (30-40 minutes per period). This theme was done on three sheets of foolscap paper and the scholars were encouraged to make illustrations and drawings of an Olympic Games nature, e.g. flags, Olympic insignia, athletes performing etc. All this enhanced the value of the "theme". The maximum mark value for this part of the project was 10. A further 10 marks were awarded for the "Opening Ceremony" test. In this part of the test the teams had to march on dressed in their national colours as well as having a flag bearer. Points taken into consideration were the way athletes "carried themselves", neatness, general appearance, uniformity of dress. This was done as a team event of course, and when a team scored, say 8 marks, each member of that particular team scored 8 points towards his personal tally. One period was allowed for this ceremony.

The third stage of the project was devoted to the practical test (two periods). Each scholar had to compete in either an aquatic or a running event. I selected these two types of sport because they are extremely popular at my school and each child quite naturally, indulged in either one or the other. In the running event an athlete could choose either the 100 yards sprint or the half mile. The choice in swimming lay between 100 yards free-style or 100 yards breast-stroke. The boys competed separately from the girls. In each event there were at least three competitors. First place scored 10 points, second place 6 points and third place 2 points. The victory ceremony as practised in the Olympic Games was re-enacted after the completion of each event.

After the practical test, each child's score was added up, i.e. theme + march on ceremony + practical and his total maximum was to be 30 marks. A special award was given to the scholar with the highest individual total as well as an additional prize to the team that came top.

Needless to say, both the children and I thoroughly enjoyed tackling the Olympic project.

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