

Olympic Torch Relay starts in Japan

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The torch relay for the Tokyo Olympics is finally under way. The 2020 Summer Games were postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic but organizers have been determined to ensure they go ahead in July.

Members of the Japan women's football team ran as torchbearers in the first leg of the relay on Thursday. It began in Fukushima Prefecture, which was devastated by the triple disasters of the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown. The relay torch is made of aluminium recycled from prefabricated housing built for survivors of the triple calamity. Fukushima was chosen as the start of the relay to show the area has recovered, although many people say claims of recovery are a little premature.

The head of Japan's Olympic organizing committee, Seiko Hashimoto, opened the torch relay ceremony. She said in her opening address: "The flame will embark on a 121-day journey and will carry the hopes of the Japanese people and wishes for peace." Japanese people are being encouraged to look at live broadcasts of the relay and refrain from travelling to watch it amid fears of a spike in COVID 19 cases. Spectators must wear face masks, and are being urged to clap rather than cheer. Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga reiterated his commitment to stage a "safe and secure" Olympics in spite of the pandemic. He said: "We will do our utmost on coronavirus measures."

Sources: [npr.org](https://www.npr.org) / [kyodonews.net](https://www.kyodonews.net) / [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com)

Writing

Write about **the Olympics** for 10 minutes. Comment on your partner's paper.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

torch / relay / coronavirus / pandemic / disasters / earthquake / tsunami / recovery / committee / ceremony / flame / peace / spike / face masks / clap / cheer / pandemic

True / False

- a) Japan's men's football team kicked off the Olympic Torch Relay. T / F
- b) The Olympic Torch Relay began in Tokyo and will end in Osaka. T / F
- c) The torch for the relay is made of recycled aluminium. T / F
- d) Many people say Fukushima hasn't recovered from the 2011 earthquake. T / F
- e) Japan's Prime Minister opened the Olympic Torch Relay ceremony. T / F
- f) The Olympic Torch Relay will take 121 days. T / F
- g) Spectators along the relay route should clap but not cheer. T / F
- h) Japan's leader said the utmost is being done for coronavirus. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. under way | a. rise |
| 2. determined | b. disaster |
| 3. devastated | c. too early |
| 4. calamity | d. intent on |
| 5. premature | e. speech |
| 6. address | f. hold back |
| 7. journey | g. in process |
| 8. refrain | h. best |
| 9. spike | i. destroyed |
| 10. utmost | j. trip |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of the Olympic Games?
- b) What are the benefits of the Olympic Games?
- c) What is your favourite event?
- d) How successful do you think the Tokyo Olympics will be?
- e) How has coronavirus affected the Olympics?
- f) Do you think the Tokyo Olympics should go ahead?
- g) What do you think of there being no international spectators?
- h) What do the Olympics do for the host city?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. The torch relay for the Tokyo Olympics is | a. rather than cheer |
| 2. determined to ensure they | b. of the relay |
| 3. in the first leg | c. ceremony |
| 4. the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and | d. premature |
| 5. claims of recovery are a little | e. secure Olympics |
| 6. opened the torch relay | f. on coronavirus measures |
| 7. The flame will embark on | g. finally under way |
| 8. urged to clap | h. nuclear meltdown |
| 9. stage a safe and | i. a 121-day journey |
| 10. We will do our utmost | j. go ahead in July |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of the Olympic Torch Relay?
- What does the Olympic flame symbolize?
- What do you know about the history of the Olympics?
- Why might Japanese people not want the Games to go ahead?
- How good is your country at Olympic events?
- Who is the greatest ever Olympian?
- What questions would you like to ask the Olympics organizers?

Spelling

- ontoppsde due to the coronavirus pandemic
- organizers have been terenmided
- devtetdasa by the triple disasters
- housing built for srsrvruoi
- the triple ictmyaal
- a little prmraeute
- organizing comiettme
- the torch relay renmeyco
- rkmeab on a 121-day journey
- ainrref from travelling
- eartrdteei his commitment
- We will do our osmtut

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. c
6. e	7. j	8. f	9. a	10. h

Role Play

Role A – The Marathon

You think the marathon is the best Olympic event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their events. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): judo, gymnastics or hockey.

Role B – Judo

You think judo is the best Olympic event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their events. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the marathon, gymnastics or hockey.

Role C – Gymnastics

You think gymnastics is the best Olympic event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their events. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): judo, the marathon or hockey.

Role D – Hockey

You think hockey is the best Olympic event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their events. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): judo, gymnastics or the marathon.

Speaking – Events

Rank these with your partner. Put the best events at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| • Judo | • Marathon |
| • Gymnastics | • Weightlifting |
| • 100 metres | • Sailing |
| • Hockey | • Archery |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.