

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210130-tokyo-olympics.html>

Will they or won't they? There has been much speculation recently about whether or not the Tokyo Olympics would take place in July. On Wednesday, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach vowed that the event would go ahead. He said: "Our task is to organize the Olympic Games and not to cancel them." He added that the IOC is working "day and night" to host a safe event. IOC spokesperson Dick Pound said he was "confident" the Games would go ahead, saying: "I think unless some drastic changes occur, this is a manageable proposition and I hope that we're able to pull it off." He added: "There are no certainties in life and what might happen with the virus."

The Games are due to open on the 23rd of July. It is a logistical nightmare for authorities, who have to secure the safety of 11,000 athletes, the world's media and spectators. More than 25,000 journalists attended the Rio de Janeiro Games in 2016. Tokyo is currently under a state of emergency amid a third wave of infections. Officials are hopeful warmer weather and a vaccine rollout will see safer conditions. Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga is adamant that the Games will take place. However, an anti-Olympics group in Tokyo said: "The government is obsessed with hosting the Olympics. It's becoming clear during this coronavirus disaster that the Olympics would sacrifice people's lives."

Sources: <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/01/27/asia/tokyo-olympics-logistics-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-olympics-insurance-idUSKBN29W10L>
<https://apnews.com/article/yoshihide-suga-thomas-bach-tokyo-sports-asia-coronavirus-pandemic-6f9df2d9985d9ec9167cb615c84d3ac9>

WARM-UPS

1. THE TOKYO OLYMPICS: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about the Tokyo Olympics. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

speculation / July / Olympics / president / organize / cancel / event / confident / life / due / nightmare / safety / athletes / media / vaccine / obsessed / hosting / disaster

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. TOKYO 2021: Students A **strongly** believe the Tokyo Olympics should go ahead; Students B **strongly** believe they should be cancelled or postponed. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. GLOBAL EVENTS: How important are these global events? What are the challenges in hosting them? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	How Important	Challenges
The Olympics		
The Oscars		
The G8 Summit		
The FIFA World Cup		
UN Meetings		
Pokemon Conference		

5. SPECULATION: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "speculation". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. OLYMPICS: Rank these with your partner. Put the best Olympic sports at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- 100 metres
- Javelin
- Marathon
- Archery
- Judo
- Weightlifting
- Wrestling
- Sailing

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. speculation | a. Likely to have a strong or far-reaching effect; radical and extreme. |
| 2. vowed | b. A piece of work to be done or undertaken. |
| 3. task | c. Promised to do something. |
| 4. host | d. Be successful with something that looked difficult to do. |
| 5. drastic | e. The forming of a theory or opinions without firm evidence. |
| 6. proposition | f. Be the place in which a party or sports events takes place. |
| 7. pull it off | g. A statement or assertion that expresses a judgment or opinion. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 8. logistical | h. A terrifying or very unpleasant experience or prospect. |
| 9. nightmare | i. The official launch or introduction of a new product or service. |
| 10. spectator | j. An act of giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy. |
| 11. amid | k. A person who watches at a show, game, or other event. |
| 12. rollout | l. Refusing to be persuaded or to change one's mind. |
| 13. adamant | m. Surrounded by; in the middle of. |
| 14. sacrifice | n. Relating to or involving organization and planning. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210130-tokyo-olympics.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. There has been little speculation about the Tokyo Olympics taking place. **T / F**
- b. The IOC president promised the Tokyo Olympics would take place. **T / F**
- c. The president said the IOC is working around the clock. **T / F**
- d. An IOC spokesperson said life has no certainties. **T / F**
- e. Around 11,000 athletes are due to participate in the Tokyo Olympics. **T / F**
- f. Over 25,000 athletes participated in the 2016 Rio Olympics. **T / F**
- g. Japan's Prime Minister really want the Olympics to go ahead. **T / F**
- h. An anti-Olympics group fears the Olympics will be sacrificed. **T / F**

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms. The words in **bold** are from the news article.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. speculation | a. assured |
| 2. vowed | b. job |
| 3. task | c. preoccupied |
| 4. confident | d. organisational |
| 5. drastic | e. conjecture |
| 6. logistical | f. determined |
| 7. spectators | g. give up |
| 8. adamant | h. promised |
| 9. obsessed | i. extreme |
| 10. sacrifice | j. watchers |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. There has been much speculation | a. with hosting the Olympics |
| 2. Bach vowed that the event | b. changes occur |
| 3. unless some drastic | c. of infections |
| 4. I hope that we're able to pull | d. in life |
| 5. There are no certainties | e. people's lives |
| 6. amid a third wave | f. recently |
| 7. a vaccine | g. would go ahead |
| 8. Suga is adamant that the Games | h. rollout |
| 9. The government is obsessed | i. it off |
| 10. the Olympics would sacrifice | j. will take place |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210130-tokyo-olympics.html>

1. What does the article say there has been a lot of recently?
2. What is Thomas Bach's position within the IOC?
3. When did Thomas Bach say the IOC is working?
4. What did Dick Pound say would have to happen to stop the Games?
5. Where did a spokesperson say there are no certainties?
6. What kind of nightmare does the article call the Games?
7. How many journalists attended the 2016 Games in Rio?
8. What two things might create better conditions for the Games?
9. How does Japan's Prime Minister feel about the Games taking place?
10. What did an anti-Olympics group say the Games would sacrifice?

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2101/210130-tokyo-olympics.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'Tokyo' and 'Olympics'.

Tokyo	Olympics

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• speculation• president• task• night• confident• occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• nightmare• 2016• third• safer• obsessed• disaster
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THE TOKYO OLYMPICS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'Tokyo'?
3. What do you know about Tokyo?
4. Should the Tokyo Olympics go ahead in July?
5. How interested are you in the Olympics?
6. Should the Games go ahead but without spectators?
7. What damage would be done if the Games did not go ahead?
8. How safe do you think the Games would be?
9. How do you think the athletes feel?
10. Are there any certainties in life?

Organizers say Tokyo Olympics will go ahead - 30th January, 2021
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THE TOKYO OLYMPICS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'Olympics'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you know about the Olympics?
15. Why are the Games a 'logistical nightmare'?
16. How has the coronavirus affected you?
17. How would cancelling the Games affect Tokyo?
18. Do you think the Games could 'sacrifice people's lives'?
19. What will the world be like in a year from now?
20. What questions would you like to ask the IOC?